

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 10



*Contend
for the faith
which was
once delivered
to the saints*
Jude 1:3

THE CALL TO ACTION—PART 1

Scripture Text: Jude 20

Abraham told the rich man in **Luke 16:26**, “Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.” There is always a gulf between the righteous and the unrighteous. This gulf is clearly depicted in the contrast of **verses 18-19 to verse 20**. **Verse 18** speaks of “mockers” and “ungodly lusts.” **Verse 19** refers to the apostates as “sensual, having not the Spirit.” **Verse 20** mentions *building up yourselves, holy faith, and praying in the Holy Ghost*. What a difference in interests, attributes, and characters!

MEMORY VERSE: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58).*

Exercising Your Experience

But ye, beloved, building up. From **verse 20**, throughout the balance of his letter, Jude admonished the *beloved*. In **verse 20**, he used two action words to portray what the saints must continually be doing to remain victorious in the face of apostasy: *building* and *praying*. Maintaining a victorious experience in the midst of a swirling sea of apostasy requires a high level of activity and effort on our part. Jesus said, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate” (**Luke 13:24**).

The Greek word for *strive* is *agonizomai* (our English word *agony* is derived from it). It is the same Greek word used in **John 18:36**. There it is translated as “fight.” It is also used in **Colossians 4:12** and is translated as “laboring fervently.” **1 Peter 4:18** states, “And if the righteous scarcely [the Greek word here is *molis*, which means ‘toil, much work, much difficulty’] be saved . . .” Each of these words represents action and effort.

The words *building up* are in direct opposition to the words used in the previous verses. There Jude spoke of ones who were endeavoring to tear down the work of God. However, **Nehemiah 4:17** tells us that when God’s people were working to rebuild the wall, “everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.” This Scripture helps us to understand what we must do to “fight the good fight of faith” (**1 Timothy 6:12**). The admonition, to be *building up*, is a call to take the trowel in hand while not allowing the enemies of truth to hinder the work of God.

No Time to Quit

Building up yourselves. There are many truths portrayed in the word *building*. The act of *building* infers a present, continued, and life-long task. The Apostle Paul said in **Philippians 3:12-13**: “Not as though I had already attained . . . Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.” This is where all who have fallen under the spirit of apostasy have erred: they accepted the thought that they had arrived, so to speak. **1 Corinthians 10:12** gives us this warning: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

The thought of *building*, as something we continually need to be doing, reveals to us that what we have done today is not sufficient to carry us through all the way. The foolish virgins made this error. **Matthew 25:3** states, “They that were foolish took their lamps [what they had presently], and took no oil with them [or made no provision for the future].” They thought what they had then was enough to carry them all the way. What a fatal error!

There is no place for us to settle down and become complacent. Jude said to be *building up yourselves*. That means we must be active participants in our own salvation. God will do what men cannot, but He will not do what men can. **Philippians 2:12** says to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” God will work it in us, but it is up to us to work it out. He will enlighten us and provide us grace, but we must do the “work.” **2 Corinthians 7:1** tells us to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.”

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Adding to Your Faith

On your most holy faith. Our faith is the basis of our experience, but it is not the end of it. In the Emphatic Diaglott, **Hebrews 11:1** says, “But Faith is a Basis.” A “basis” is not an end result but rather a foundation upon which one can build. *Webster’s New World Dictionary* says it is “the base, foundation, or chief supporting factor of anything.” **2 Peter 1:5-7** says: “Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.”

In the thought of *building . . . on your most holy faith*, Jude was saying that those who have fallen prey to apostasy have done so because they first allowed their individual experiences to stagnate. If you want to be immune from the infection of apostasy, you must keep exercising your experience. “Exercise thyself rather unto godliness” (**1 Timothy 4:7**). Do not let your experience become stagnant. It is in stagnant water that frogs make their homes. Religious “unclean spirits like frogs” (**Revelation 16:13**) will try to move in on you if your experience becomes as a stagnant pool.

Praying in the Spirit

Praying in the Holy Ghost. In this last phrase in **verse 20**, Jude issued another call to action. Several truths are in this phrase: the first one is that genuine prayer is an insulation against apostasy. Many dear souls would never have made the moves they made had they really prayed and listened to the Holy Spirit. The second truth is that we ought to pray from the heart, not merely say or recite prayers as much of religion does.

The third truth is that real *praying* must incorporate the *Holy Ghost*. He must be involved if our praying is to really constitute prayer. Real *praying* is not just speaking our minds but yielding to the leadership of the Spirit. **Romans 8:26** tells us that “we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us.” Real prayer brings the flesh into subjection and allows the Holy Spirit to commune with God. **Romans 8:27** tells us, “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” *Praying in the Holy Ghost* allows Him to direct the praying.

The fourth truth is this: we should not only speak but listen. *Praying in the Holy Ghost* not only allows us to speak to God, it also allows Him to speak to us. The reason that many people have made and are making poor decisions concerning apostasy is that when they are done speaking to God, they get up and leave. To receive divine guidance and direction that will keep us from being moved by the spirits of the day, we should take time to reflect and repose, allowing the Holy Spirit to commune with us.

JUST A THOUGHT

When you pray, do you stay until you hear what He has to say?