

PP Jude-Christian...Fight with Confidence!

Part 2-1:1-2

9/14-15

Pray and prepare

*The reality show, Preachers of LA, premiering next month, goes behind the pulpit to see the lifestyles of millionaire preachers in Los Angeles

*Here is a clip of their promo, and I want you to listen carefully with discernment

PP Video The prosperity gospel has been exported from America around the world With a basic teaching that God wants all His children wealthy, healthy, and living lives of ease Today, we look at the opening greeting of the little book of Jude, and we will see what true prosperity looks like, and how we can pray for others to possess it in abundance

PP 1-And the first truth Jude shows us is *the humility every Christian should have*

“Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,”

Jude says of himself, I am *‘a bond-servant of Jesus’*, a slave for life of Jesus

Slavery in the history of God’s people was not, listen, not like the slavery we are familiar with God’s law strictly protected slaves from abuse, and gave them rights, and eventually freedom But a bond-servant was one who *voluntarily* gave himself in a permanent relation of servitude to another

This is a person who, for love of his master, wanted no other life than a life of service to him Jude saw himself as a slave set free from the cruel bondage of the law and its condemnation by Christ’s sacrifice, and gave his life to serve his new Savior

This is humility...a glad devotion of service to one Who deserves infinite glory...Jesus!

How remarkable this is when you remember that at one point, Jude thought Jesus was crazy

PP “And when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.” Mark 3:21

But after His resurrection from the grave, His family believed in Him and was saved From that moment on, Jude yielded his own life’s plans to the plan of his Savior, identifying himself as his glad, willing slave for life!

This is humility and it is where we begin as we learn to contend for the faith and discern false teaching and preaching

Humility friends, means to lie low, to exalt others rather than yourself

It doesn’t mean to think less of yourself, but to think of yourself less

And the *extent of a person’s humble service is the criteria for his or her greatness*

But prosperity preaching, at its defiled and ugly core, presents a God Who exists to satisfy us!

What a contrast is our author Jude, though a brother of Jesus, calls himself His bond-servant

PP 2-Jude shows us the identity every Christian possesses

We are about to be commanded to fight for the faith of the gospel, but before we step into that ring, we need to know who we are

Christian, I want you to hear this clearly...verse 1 tells you who you are: ***“To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ”*** **1**

PP a) You Christian, are ‘called’

PP ‘called’, not invited, but *summoned*, and it’s related word, *chosen*

PP In fact **Revelation 17:14** shows us that called and chosen go together: *“They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with Him are called and chosen and faithful.”*

PP It is this summoning grace that we see in **John 6:44**, *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”*

While there is a general invitation to every human being, and the power of the cross is sufficient to save them all, this calling, this summons is the internal moving of God’s grace, turning the warring heart to one of glad and willing response

Christian, God chose you before He created this world, but at a specific point in your life, He issued to you the summons by grace, and drew you to Him for your salvation

You are the called, and those who teach deliberate falsehood are not!

No matter how good they look, the degrees they have, the verses they quote, they are wolves!

PP b) *You, Christian, are ‘beloved in God the Father’*

Some translations say ‘sanctified’, but that is not accurate of this word... ‘beloved’

This is the only place in the New Testament where ‘beloved in God the Father’ occurs

Notice that Jude didn’t say we are *beloved by God the Father*, but ‘beloved in God’

Let me get technical but for a moment...we see here in the Greek the perfect participle

Meaning Christian, we are in this love, manifested in the past and continuing forever!

It is the reality of our position the moment we’re called into our salvation through Jesus Christ

It is a permanent position, the beloved *in* God for all eternity

PP And *“neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* **Romans 8:38-39**

Now I want to show you the greatest teaching on this truth, from the prayer of Jesus for us: **“I**

PP *have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”* **John 17:25-26**

Father, put Our love, the love we share, put it in them, those You have called

I am in them, I have joined to them through their faith as a man joins with a woman in marriage

Christian, listen to me, and take this back to the Scriptures to discern its truth

The heavenly Father does not love you any less than He loves His own Son

He loves you with that same, unbreakable, powerful, enduring love!

Listen, this is who you are in Christ, the identification on your spiritual driver’s license

Here’s the name tag fixed on your soul, the names that God has written there: you are the called, summoned by grace into God’s redemptive story as His servant, and you are the beloved, joined to Him in an eternal relationship of love, having entered into that same unbreakably powerful love shared between the Father and Son

PP c) *And You Christian, are ‘kept for Jesus Christ’*

My brother used to do a really weird thing every Easter when we all received a chocolate bunny He wouldn’t open the box but would place it on a bookshelf with all the others from years before

Years would go by and those bunnies would reshape into near unrecognizable, inedible blobs
 We would ask him why, oh why would you do this with this precious chocolate?
 His answer was that he was keeping them...but never answered what he was keeping them for!

We, Christians, are being kept by God for His Son, for we are the church, the bride of Christ
 He is keeping us with His preserving, enduring, and protecting grace

PP Jesus prayed, *“Holy Father, keep them in Your name...While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.”* **John 17:11-12**

I have had a recurring nightmare that I was helpless to prevent an injury or loss of one of my children

I would wake up from that dream in tears, until I realized it was only a dream to which I thanked God a hundred times and prayed for their protection

Then I get up and implant location devices in their wrists, strap on chest harness, and zip them up in bubble suits

I just found chest harnesses that will fit my teens so I can take now take them to Musikfest

Parents, we want to protect our children, the thought of losing them terrifies us

God will not lose one of His children, for He has the power to keep them for His Son!

So listen to how Jude is preparing the church to deal with apostates and false teachers

The false teacher was never called, never participated in that love, and was not kept by God!

PP *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”* **1 John 2:19**

Christian, this is who you are, and if you are going to step into the ring and contend for the faith, know that God has called you to salvation so enter His fight as a servant; know the love you have entered into and share, and know that the very power of God guards you and keeps you for His Son Jesus Christ!

Be fearless and get in the fight!

But there is one more critical part of Jude’s greeting!

PP 3-Jude shows us the true blessings every Christian should pray for

Listen to this short clip from Jan Crouch of TBN, an organization of which owns 30 homes, a motor home for their dogs, and reaps nearly a half billion a year from givers, many who live in the south and are on low-income subsidies

PP Audio

If you listened closely, you heard what is central to prosperity teachers

Name the blessing you want, repeat it over and over until you believe it-positive confession-and God will give it to you hundredfold as you give it to Him

Which is what you’ll see in this **video** of Dr. Leroy Thompson, who pastors with Pastor Creflo Dollar the World Changers Church, International in Atlanta, Ga.

PP Video Leroy Thompson

PP *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as*

for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith.” 1 Timothy 6:10-12a

God does want us to prosper, but His riches are spiritual, and are found in and through Christ!
And Jude tells us what they are: *“May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.”*

PP Peter prayed, *“May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.” 1 Peter 1:2*

PP And again, *“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” 2 Peter 1:2*

Jude says, here are your incredible riches in Christ, and I will pray they are multiplied to you

PP a) *So, pray for ‘mercy’ to be multiplied*

Our greater need is not money, not affirmation from others, not to love ourselves, our greatest need is the mercy of God every day to undo the effects and misery of personal sin and sin committed against us

There is never a moment when we don’t need God’s mercy and because we are in his love, there is never a moment He does not grant it!

What a privilege it is to be able, like Jude, to pray for more and more mercy for other Christians
Lord, meet them in their need, take away their misery their sins have brought, let your kindness increase toward them every moment!

What a privilege to pray for mercy for those who are under the wrath of God for their sins!
God be merciful to them, save them, rescue them through the gospel of Jesus Christ!

PP b) *Pray for ‘peace’ to be multiplied*

Never is there a biblical greeting that starts with peace and then proceeds to mercy or grace

The mercy of God has made peace possible, a word that can be summed in the phrase, *friendship with God*

Jude was a missionary evangelist, not a pastor at a single church

He traveled and taught the faith, and led people to Christ, and they gathered in churches to worship and grow and love each other

But now false teachers are secretly slipping into these churches and he’s exposing them, and calling the people of God to battle for the faith!

PP I wonder if Jude recalls what John wrote as Jesus prayed for His followers: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” John 14:27*

Jude knows that these Christians will experience terrible pressure as they fight for the faith
May peace be multiplied to you, that your friendship with God will give you strength to endure

PP c) *Pray for ‘love’ to be multiplied*

God’s love for us does not increase toward us, but the realization of that love does!

It multiplies and fills our minds as we walk with Him, and know who we are in Christ

PP It is this love that *“has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” Romans 5:5*

What our English don’t make clear is that this pouring still constantly continues every moment!!

What an incredible blessing for every Christian to walk securely in: our God loves us every moment of every day with the same love He has for Jesus His Son!!

So Jude prays that love would be multiplied in them, brought to its fullest understanding and practice

These are our blessings Christian, so battle falsehood with courage!

We have mercy, peace and love in untold measure...we have true riches in Christ!

And all of this, not because we deserved any of it, but because of the incredible grace of God!

Christian, do you know who you are?

God has called you to salvation, you have forever entered into the love of the Father, and His power guards you and keeps you for His Son Jesus Christ!

So serve Him faithfully, with humility, and know in increasing measure your riches in Christ

You are unfathomably rich in His mercy every day, His friendship and His constantly outpouring love

Pray