

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church-WELS

Sermon by Pastor A. Schultz
8th Sunday after Pentecost
July 14, 2013 Jude v. 17 to 23



A Call to Persevere

¹⁷ But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” ¹⁹ These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. ²² Be merciful to those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear – hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Children of our Heavenly Father – precious in His sight for Jesus’ sake:

Never give up! Never surrender! We say that around my house – all the time. Never give up! Never surrender! If you look at the news on the Internet – there are new videos all the time. There was one that caught my eye the other day – High Speed Good Deed for the Day! That’s a funny thing – professionally speaking – this idea that every day you are supposed to do a “good deed” – to “pay it forward” – to intentionally accomplish at least one thing – that makes this world a better place. High Speed Good Deed for the Day! I clicked on it! There is an SUV going down the two lane divided highway by a place that was spelled almost like Oreo, UT. This SUV has a little ledge by the tailgate – I have one of those – a ledge about 8 inches – with a travel mug of coffee sitting on it. The good deed doer on a motor-cycle – sees it. He chases this SUV down the highway even making a right hand turn – closer and closer he gets – reaches down – snatches the coffee. Then he chases the SUV – holding out the coffee cup until the lady driving the SUV sees him and rolls down her window! The guy pulls beside her to hand her the coffee – and what does she say? “Thank you! Thank you!” No, she says, “My daughter – like that’s who’s to blame – my

daughter!" Then she dumps the coffee out onto the highway! What's that about? Just about now you might be tempted to think to yourself – no good deed goes unpunished! All that trouble and for what!? It's when you are tempted to be discouraged that God's Word says, Persevere! With all the troubles in this sin infected world – all the painful difficult frustrations – not just physical frustrations – but spiritual frustrations and the hurtful attacks of the devil – by the grace of God--

We Will Persevere!

I. Jesus predicted scoffers.

II. The Holy Spirit will build our faith!

This is the 2nd of what will be with Jesus' permission 3 Sundays looking at the letter of Jude. 1st, 2nd Peter, 1st, 2nd, 3rd John – Jude and Revelation. Jude – a ½ brother of the Lord Jesus – James, Joseph, Simon and Judas – Jude! Jude – just 25 verses long – with very much overlap with 2 Peter chapter 2. Jude – who points to the apocryphal books – *The Assumption of Moses* and *The Book of Enoch*.

God's Word says, ¹⁷ **But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." Scoffers!** Don't just think of people who publish books like, *Atheism for Dummies* – on sale for \$15.46. It says, "Often wildly misunderstood, atheism is a secular approach to life based on the understanding that reality is an arrangement of physical matter, with no consideration of unverifiable spiritual forces...As the number of atheists worldwide continues to grow, this book offers a broad understanding of the subject for those exploring atheism as an approach to living." Then there's the DVD *The God Who Wasn't There*. "It irreverently lays out the case that Jesus Christ never existed." *Irreverently* – means without respect – mocking – ridiculing – scoffing at the concept of Jesus of Nazareth – the Son of man and the Son of God. It mocks Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*...and ridicules the Bible as if it were one more urban legend. The scoffers Jude is talking about are even more dangerous than this. They are scoffers – false teachers within the organized Church. They are theologically trained pastors and professors who doubt and question and criticize the inspired, infallible,

inerrant biblical Word of God. They are people within the outward Church—who deny the historical and geographical and scientific parts of God’s Word. They believe in Evolution instead of the Biblical account of Creation in 6 days of 24 hours. They “decriminalize” adultery and tear down the Biblical concept of marriage between one man and one woman. They defend abortion and deny the existence of hell and the final judgment. They count all the different world religions as of equal value as long as you are sincere! **Jude writes that these people are scoffers, divisive, worldly and without the spirit of God. Counterfeit money**—in our world with computers and laser printers—it would seem easier and easier for counterfeiters to print money that is just like the real thing—but it isn’t! How can you tell a counterfeit bill? They say the more real money you handle—the more real money you touch and hold and feel—the quicker you are to say, “This just feels funny! There’s something wrong here! This one just feels different—I don’t know just what—but something’s not right!” It’s the same with God’s Word. The more you read your Bible—the more you hear it—the more you study it—the more sensitive you will be—if someone tries to tell you something that just isn’t right! You will know! You will know false doctrine when you hear it!

²⁰ **But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,** ²¹ **keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. The People’s Bible says, “False teachers cannot harm you if you are armed and armored, shielded and protected.”** I was walking on our treadmill the other day—watching TV—*National Geographic*—**soldiers in Afghanistan.** They were behind a very thick mud and stone wall—peeking over the top watching. They squinted into the rising morning sun. They said this was the direction from which the enemy would attack—trying to hide in the bright sunshine. There were walls of buildings, rocks and boulders, murder holes—that is holes in the soil from which they would pop up and shoot. They watched and waited. They said their enemy was not a very good shot—but once they fired—and you knew where they were—we would blast away—with automatic weapons—Abram’s tanks, Blackhawk helicopters and if need be fighter jets. The ultimate outcome of the battle was never in doubt. And yet—they needed to be very watchful—very careful—very focused—lest the enemy pick them off. So the final

outcome of our spiritual battle is never in doubt – as Jesus has won the ultimate victory for us. And so – let us watch and pray – lest we fall into temptation – into misbelief and despair and other painful hurtful sin and vice!

²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Say your prayers! Say your prayers before you drink your fresh squeezed orange juice or cranberry juice with just a splash of pomegranate. Say, “**Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest...**” In your jammies while eating your instant oatmeal with peaches and little dehydrated apple squares painted orange – and your cup of fresh brewed Highlander Grogg. Say, “Come Lord Jesus...” with your children and grandchildren at Culvers or McDonalds or Applebee's or Red Lobster. You don't need to shout it – but you don't need to whisper it – like you are trying to hide it – either! Say, “Come, Lord Jesus...” At supper time. And then talk with each other. “And how was your day?” “And how was your day?” “And how was your day?” And don't make that a time – to grumble and complain and find fault. Try making it a rule – that the only things you can talk about – are blessings – things you are sincerely and truly thankful for! Encourage and build up one another. Have devotions with your children. Grow in faith and grow closer as a family – closer to Jesus and to each other.

²³ save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear – hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. Save others by snatching them from the fire... There is a commercial **on the radio encouraging people to donate blood.** It is the first person account of a guy – we'll call him, “Bob”. Bob was riding on his motorcycle when he was hit head on by a drunk driver. Bob was severely injured – losing one of his legs – and thinking he was going to bleed to death – when someone stopped and stopped the bleeding. That's when Bob says, “I never did find out the name of the person who saved me...” But now Bob donates blood – like people donated blood to save him. That's nice. But back to the guy who saved Bob by stopping the bleeding! Would you rest – could you rest – without actually finding that guy? I don't mean to criticize Bob – but – wouldn't you be on a crusade – a quest to find that guy? And next – wouldn't it be a crusade – a quest to figure out how to

thank him? I mean – a card every year on the anniversary wouldn't seem enough – would it? Or dinner at a really nice restaurant on the anniversary? That would seem to fall a little short, too, and so? Think about it! To thank Jesus for snatching us from the fire? One hour a week – to pray, praise and give thanks isn't much to ask, either, is it?

Save others by snatching them from the fire... Every once in a while – this happens **quite literally – snatching someone** from earthly flames. When the 777 airliner crash landed in San Francisco the other day – a lady flight attendant named Lee set about rescuing all sorts of people in danger from the literal flames everywhere. The last person she literally saved from the fire was a little child that she held on her back – presumably their arms wrapped around her neck as she held on to them tightly! Again – a lifetime would not be long enough – to repay someone who quite literally saved your life. Eternity will not be too long – to thank Jesus for laying down his life – to save our immortal soul from the forever flames of hell. We thank Jesus now and will praise him forever in Heaven. Amen!

To God alone all glory!

Pastor Anthony E. Schultz