

Jude 20-25 ESV

God is Calling Us to Action as We Wait for Jesus!

Sunday, November 22 at 8:00 & 10:45 (No Monday, see below)

Last Sunday in the Church Year – 2015

We are now switching to our Special Services Schedule:

- ◆ The Last Monday Service in 2015 was *last week* on 11/16
- ◆ Thanksgiving Eve Service this Wednesday on 11/25 at 7 PM
- ◆ Services on Wednesdays in Advent at 11 AM & 7 PM (12/2, 12/9, 12/16)

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Where are we today? We are in between Jesus' *first* and *second* comings! So now what? Since we are *aware of* and *sorry for* our sins, *and know we have God's gift of forgiveness through Jesus*, God is calling us, *through the book of Jude*, to particular actions as we await Jesus' return.

These words are right before today's text: "...you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, 'In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.' It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" (Jude 1:17-19 ESV).

So some people are *scoffers or mockers*; such people are following their sinful desires. Even though some people proceed in sinful ways, we should not; *we who know Jesus should be the opposite!* Today's text lays out what God is calling us to do; then it identifies *the power* by which such things can be accomplished.

1. **What Is He Calling Us to Do?** ²⁰ **But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith[,] and [by] praying in the Holy Spirit [to know and live God's Word],** ²¹ **keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.** // God told us what to do: Keep yourselves in My love! How? **By** *praying* according to God's Word and **by** *doing* according to God's Word! In both cases, we must **know** God's Word *before* we can **do it!** Why are such things important? The Bible says, "The LORD keeps all who love Him; But all the wicked, He will destroy" (Psalm 145:20 NAS). We show our love for God *by trusting in Him*; we show our trust in Him *by doing whatever He says!* Then, *when we are firmly in Christ,* God calls us to reach out to others:
- a. Those who doubt God's Truth: ²² **And have mercy on those who doubt;** // We should *not* put them down *but* ▶be kind to them, ▶show them God's Truth, and ▶be available to answer their questions.
 - b. Those who believe false teachings: ²³ **save others by snatching them out of the fire;** // We snatch them out of the fire by kindly showing them their sins – *from God's Word*; **then,** *when God's Law has done its work,* we show them the good news of Jesus' finished work to remove their sins. **Then** we let God do His saving work!
 - c. Those who could pull us into sin: **to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.** // So we should be kind, *thus merciful,* to all sinners, but we should do so

with fear; as we try to pull them away from sin, they could pull us into sin. Also, as there is a connection between *a dirty body* and *dirty clothes*, let us also see a connection between *sin* and *things stained by sin*. Then, *let us hate sin and the things it touches and stains!*

2. **How Is It Possible to Do Such Things?** For us *on our own* it is *impossible* to do such things; therefore, in this section we focus on **God the Father** who is able to ➔keep us from stumbling and ➔use us to be an eternal blessing to others.

a. ²⁴ **Now to him [God the Father] who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, //**

- i. God the Father works **by** the Spirit **through** the Word to keep us from falling away from our Lord Jesus Christ:
1. The Bible says that **God** “**who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus**” (Phil. 1:6 NIV). How does God do that work?
 2. The Bible says that “**All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work**” (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NAS, RSV).

- ii. Notice our great blessings: “**blameless**” *through Jesus* and *filled “with great joy”*; therefore, Christians live in this way, the Bible says: “**Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor. 10:31 NAS). Since we fall short of the glory of God whenever we sin, *we do all to the glory of God whenever we do God’s will!*
- b. ²⁵ **to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.** // So God the Father is our Savior! He did His saving work through our Lord Jesus Christ. But how? *He worked through Baptism and the Bible to unite us to Jesus!* Since He is *so wonderful* and *so powerful*, let us give Him all the glory, majesty, dominion, and authority ▶before creation, ▶now in time, and ▶in eternity!

Conclusion: Now, *saved through Jesus and awaiting His return*, let us ▶trust in Jesus, ▶be obedient to God’s Word, and ▶reach out to others – never in our own strength, but always relying upon our Father in heaven!

And all God’s people said: **Amen!**

CONNECT WITH US → Website: www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com

Podcast: Benefit from the Bible | Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230