

# Building Up Yourselfes

by Bill McLeod

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of building up ourselves on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the love of God, and sharing Christ with others.*

**Duration:** 28:34

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 16:14, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 1 Timothy 1:8, 2 Peter 2:3, Jude 1:20, Jude 1:22-25

**Topics:** "Edification"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of reviving the gift of God within oneself. He encourages Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord and highlights the three stages of faith: the blood of the Lamb, the word of testimony, and surrendering oneself to the cross. The speaker also emphasizes the need for believers to lay down their lives for others, just as Christ laid down his life for us. Additionally, he emphasizes the significance of sharing the message of Christ with others and how it is essential for maintaining a deep walk with God.

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## Transcript

The second last book of the Bible, the book of Jude, has just one chapter. We're going to look at some things that God has to say to us through that chapter this morning, this afternoon, and almost is. If you study 2 Peter chapters 2 and 3 and the book of Jude, you'll see there's many, many points of similarity, many of them.

Some Bible critics think that Jude copied from Peter. I don't believe that at all, but they're both listening to the same Holy Spirit. That's the proper answer.

One man talks about certain people being wells without water. The other man talks about certain people being like clouds without rain. The analogies are similar, very striking.

People who profess to be religious, but they're like an empty well, or a cloud that never drops any rain. Both of them give us a stark picture of conditions in the world prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Very stormy scene morally, politically.

It seems as if there's clouds, dark clouds, thunder, lightning, and finally the sun setting in a sea of blood. That's how they see it. They're not the only ones.

Paul told us that in the last days perilous times would come. Dangerous times, he means. And we're living, of course, in such days today.

Luke 21, Jesus talked about it. Upon the earth, distressive nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Peter and Jude both talk about the fact that in the last days there would be scoffers, mockers, walking after their own lusts.

You know, in the world they have a saying, if somebody is slow, they'll say he's as slow as the second coming of Jesus Christ. Mockers and scoffers. And we can do very little to change the situation out there, but there's some things we can do.

And he turns a corner, Jude does, and suddenly he says, but let the world be the way it wants to be. He said these people are sensual, they separate themselves. In the Old Testament God talked about certain people in Ezekiel 14 that separated themselves from Him.

He said, from Me. And God said, I'll separate them unto evil. These be they who separate themselves.

Sensual, that's carnal, the ruling passion of their life is the flesh. Carnal, having not the Spirit. They may pretend to be religious, but they don't have the Spirit of God.

And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. So then he says, but you, beloved, the word means divinely loved ones, but you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith. Which, of course, immediately suggests that there are some things I can do to build myself up as a Christian.

You know, sometimes we pray and say, God, make me strong. Then I neglect the things that God has ordered that will make me strong. And then I'm just tempting God by asking Him to make me strong.

Building up yourselves. For example, when Paul finished his address to the elders of the Ephesian church in Acts chapter 20, he said, now brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up. So if I neglect leading the word of God, and especially the word of God that deals with the grace of God, then I'm neglecting one of the means God has ordained to build me up.

Building up yourselves on your most holy faith. Giving all diligence, add to, actually in Greek word there is en, in, add in your faith, virtue, in your virtue, knowledge, and so on. Seven things in a row, concluding with love in 2 Peter chapter 1. But it all begins with faith.

Add in your faith. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith. There are no less than 20 things in the New Testament dealing with faith and some aspect, 20 different aspects of the Christian life.

For example, we're saved by faith. We're kept by faith. We stand by faith.

We walk by faith. We run by faith. We work in faith.

We war by faith. We are sanctified by faith. We have access to God by faith.

We obey God by faith. Twenty different things. Now it's in Galatians 1, 2 Corinthians 5, 7. We walk by faith, not by sight.

And it's a faith walk all the way. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith. But faith works by love.

Galatians chapter 5 verse 6 tells me that. Faith works by love. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Love believes all things. When I'm in a right relationship with God, I can believe God for anything. Now, listen carefully.

Faith is believing the promises of God. Now I'm never weary of telling people that there are 13 less than 7,500 promises in the Bible. Faith is believing the promises of God.

And prayer is pleading the promises of God back to God. Like David said, when he sat in the temple, after he got that message from Nathan about the future and God's blessing on his life and family, he said, Lord, do as you have said. Do as you have said.

Now he's pleading the promises back to God. Within a matter of minutes after having received these promises to the prophet Nathan. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith.

God has given us, as Peter reminds us, exceeding great and precious promises that by these you might become partakers of the divine nature. By the promises of God. By believing them.

And then by pleading them back to God. There are many things I can do then to build myself up in this holy faith. He says, praying in the Holy Spirit.

Praying when the Spirit leads me to pray. Praying the things the Spirit leads me to pray. That's part of praying in the Spirit.

In Ephesians 6, verse 18, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And Paul adds the words, and for me. And then here in Jude, praying in the Holy Spirit.

Now I do not believe this is praying in tongues. I believe it's praying as the Spirit leads. When the Spirit leads.

Quench not the Spirit. What's the context? Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.

In everything give thanks. This is the will of God and Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit.

As when He leads. As He leads. We know not what we should pray for as we are.

Teach us what we shall say unto Him, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness. We know not what we should pray for as we are. But the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

When He leads. As He leads. That's praying in the Holy Spirit.

God ordered praying. And as some of us have so properly said, prayer that begins with God will most surely end with God. If I'm praying as the Spirit leads, if I pray when the Spirit leads, I'll surely gain the ear of God.

And that's the object of all praying, is to gain the ear of God. Praying in the Holy Ghost. Then He says, Keep yourselves in the love of God.

Notice, He doesn't say keep yourselves saved. You can't do that. We're kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

He holds our soul in life, kept by the power of God. He's able to keep me from falling. Jude says, And to present me faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

This is why in 1 Peter 4.19 the Bible says, Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their soul to Him. In well doing. As unto a faithful Creator.

Commit the keeping of your soul to God. You can't keep yourself anymore than you could save yourself. Leave that in God's hands.

But do keep yourselves in the love of God. There are many Christians who are not walking in the love of God. They're cold.

Yes, they're critical. They're hard hearted. They're not easy to be entreated.

They seek their own when the Bible says, Love seeks not her own. And obviously they need the work of God done in their heart. The Bible says, Walk in love as Christ also has loved us and has given Himself for us in offering a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling fragrance.

Walk in love. In the men's meeting we noted that verse. 1 Corinthians 16 Let all your things be done with love.

And Paul said, And this I pray, That your love may abound yet more and more. And in writing to the church at Thessaloniki he said, As touching brotherly love you have no need that I write unto you, for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another. He said, Indeed you do it towards all the brethren that are in Macedonia.

But he said, Brethren, I beseech you that you increase more and more increase in love. But keep yourselves in the love of God. We could look at it differently and put it this way, which wouldn't answer it entirely, but looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.

Satan's favorite method of moving Christians out of the love of God is to make them bitter over something with somebody else. And I don't have the slightest doubt there are Christians here this afternoon, this morning, that have bitterness in their hearts. And sometimes such people say, If you only knew what I had to go through, you'd understand, you'd sympathize with my bitterness.

No, I wouldn't. I can never sympathize with bitterness. Nor should any Christian sympathize with bitterness.

You have no right to be bitter with anybody over anything. I know bad things happen. They happen to me too.

But don't ever allow yourself to become bitter. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be you kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Do you forgive as freely as Christ forgave you? The Bible says, Receive you one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

We received Christ. He received us. Now He calls on us to receive others into our hearts the way He received us into His.

Am I doing that currently? Am I that kind of a Christian? Keep yourselves in the love of God. Pray daily for God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and with the love of God, because the love of God is poured out, the Bible says in Romans 5, in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. No, the Bible talks about your love in the Spirit.

It talks about the love of the Spirit, Romans 15, 30. We have the reference in Colossians chapter 1. The love of the Spirit, your love in the Spirit. You want to be filled with the Spirit and not filled with the love of God? Forget it.

It will never be. It will never work before I can be filled with God's love. I must be emptied of all bitterness, the essence of self, so God can fill me.

It's a very, very simple thing for God to fill you and I with His love when once we're emptied out of the things that prevent Him from doing it. You, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God. That's a warning, an injunction, a commandment if you like.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Do you ever go through a day that you didn't feel your need of the mercy of God? I don't think I ever go through a day where I don't feel my need of the mercy of God. What about Hebrews 4.16? Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace.

Why? Why? That we may obtain mercy. That's where it all begins. Every time you come to the throne of grace in prayer, the first thing you must seek for is the mercy of God for your sins, your failures, the fact that you're not conformed unto the image of Christ perhaps as you ought to be.

But come boldly. God will grant mercy. But God who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins has quickened us together with Christ.

By grace you are saved. The mercy of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life until the day you die or until the Lord Jesus Christ comes every day.

A day of mercy. You know what would happen, dear people, if God should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath? Well, that's discussed in the book of Job. You know what it says? All flesh would perish together and man would turn again to dust.

There wouldn't be anything living left in the world. Every bird would hit the ground with a thump. All the fish would come belly up in the ocean.

Every person would fall over. Every animal would fall over. There wouldn't be a sound.

If God should take His Spirit, every tree would die, every plant, every blade of grass. If God should take out of the world His Spirit and His breath. People, every time you draw breath, every time your heart beats, that's by the mercy of God.

Don't ever forget it. Don't be proud. We have nothing whatever to be proud of.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for by the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. Love found a way to redeem my soul because God cared. I don't know why He did.

I don't know why He did. I don't suppose I'll ever fully understand it. But I thank God for His mercy.

I thank God for His grace. Every day I thank Him. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Then what? Then He talks about reaching out to the lost. He first of all refers to some people who are honest doubters. Some have compassion who are in doubt, one translation says.

There's a few like that. One time, you know, a young medical student came to me and he had about 30 questions on a sheet of paper. He said, If you can answer my questions about the Bible, I'll become a Christian.

I said, How much time have you got? He said, All day if we need it. I said, Okay. So he started and went down to this list of what he thought were contradictions in the Bible.

And I said to him, I said, Now listen, let's not leave one single point unless you feel 100% that I've honestly answered the question. He said, Okay, that's a deal. It took us some hours.

We got through it all. And he said, Well, I can see it was just my ignorance of the Bible. I didn't know what the Bible really said.

And I said, You made a promise a few hours ago. What about it? He said, I meant it. So we knelt together and he gave his heart to Christ.

He was an honest doubter. There are not many like that, but thank God there are some. He says, And others say with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Christian, what do you think Paul meant when he talked about our feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace? He was not talking to Christian workers but to ordinary Christians. And he's saying to you and I, Be a soul winner. Be a witness.

They overcame Satan. How? How did Christians overcome Satan? Revelation 12, 11. By the blood of the Lamb.

This is as far as many of us ever go. And by the word of their testimony. And they loved not their lives unto the death.

There's three stages, three thoughts there, not just one. It's not just the blood of the Lamb. It's the word of my testimony.

And then the fact that I've surrendered self to the cross. I don't love my life. I'll die for Christ.

I'll die for the work of Christ. Hereby we perceive the love of God because he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Get involved in soul winning.

Let me say something. I think it's true. I wouldn't say it.

It is not possible to maintain a deep walk with God or what you might call a spiritual glow if you're not sharing Christ regularly with other people. It is not possible. I dealt with a man.

He'd been a missionary in Nicaragua for eight years. Then he'd come to Canada to take more training. He came to me for counseling.

He said, I'm a Christian worker, but my life is flat, it's empty, it's dry. Can you tell me why? Well, when people start counseling, you shoot up prayers, you ask God for guidance, you know. So I asked him this question.

It just came to my mind in power. So I said, Do you share Christ with other people? He dropped his eyes and looked at the floor. He said, Bill, I think you hit it on the head.

You don't have to say any more. He said, You know, the years I was in Nicaragua, I avoided sharing Christ with other people. He said, Here, I don't do it at all.

He said, In the last two years, I don't think I've shared Christ with anybody. And he met God on those terms. He dealt with that problem.

Let me say it again. You can't maintain a deep walk with God, a spiritual glow in your life, if you're not sharing Christ with other people. Now, I can just hear somebody saying, Can I hear it? Yeah, I can hear somebody saying it.

That is in my soul I can. I don't have an evangelistic gift. That's what people say.

I don't have an evangelistic gift either. I'm not an evangelist. That's not my calling.

I fail sometimes, but I try to share Christ with people. I've been able to lead a few people to Christ over the years. A Christian friend of mine, God expects every Christian to share the gospel.

You keep it best by giving it away. And as you give it away, you get stronger all the time. I was telling somebody yesterday, and I used to be in my office when I was a pastor in Saskatoon, and I'd go cold calling some, usually one afternoon a week, go out and ring doorbells and talk to people about Jesus.

So I'd pray before I went, and I'd pray for a while, and I never seemed to have too much liberty praying before I went, but when I got back, I could pray for an hour. As I thought of those sin-darkened souls I talked to, the attitude of some. I called at a house one time, and there was a bunch of kids there having a pot party, and the kid that came to the door and he found out who I was, he said, Jesus Christ was a mushroom, and he slammed the door shut.

When I got back to my office, I had a long time of prayer for those guys. I couldn't help it. I had such a burden in my soul.

Christ said, I have meat to eat that you know not of. What was he referring to? He was referring to the fact he'd shared the gospel with a woman at the well of Samaria. It did something for him as well as for her.

And when you give it away, it does something for you. And many of us, dear people, we're struggling with sin that we'll never find victory over until we swallow our pride and start sharing Christ with the lost. And when we start doing that, so often the victory comes.

Because basically, a failure to share Christ is an evidence of pride. The reason I don't do it is, I don't want people to laugh at me. I don't want people to think I'm a Jehovah Witness, which some of them will of course think.

The old pride problem. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. Do you have beautiful feet? God doesn't look at your face.

And God doesn't look at your figure. And God doesn't look at your clothes. And God doesn't look at your home or your car or the money in the bank.

He looks at your feet. That's where God looks. Do you have beautiful feet? It's all part, friend of mine, of building yourselves up in the holy faith.

I say again, the reason many Christians are stumbling and they're weak all their days is because they're ashamed of Jesus Christ. You know, Paul saw this problem in Timothy and he wrote about it in 2 Timothy 1. He didn't deny that Timothy had a true faith. As a matter of fact, in the context, he said he did have.

Which 12th person is his mother and his grandmother. But he said, Timothy, you've got a problem. He said, stir up.

One translation says, stir into flame. The Spanish Bible says, revive the gift of God. Revive the gift of God which is in you with the putting on of my hands.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a disciplined mind. Timothy, be not thou therefore ashamed. Oh, Timothy was ashamed.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Timothy was not an evangelist, but Paul said, do the work of an evangelist. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me as a prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel.

Satan will hate you if you share the gospel. What are demons called? What is Satan and the demons called in Ephesians 6? They're called the rulers of the darkness of this age. And they hate anybody who tries to bring the light of the gospel into the prevailing darkness in the world.

That's why it's so hard to share Christ because the demons are opposing that. And you wrestle against demons every time you try and share Christ with somebody else. They're there to oppose you, to lie to you, to appeal to your pride, and all the rest of it.

Some of us may know our Bibles very well. You may have all your doctrine figured out. You know all about prophecy in the future.

You've got it all figured out. There may be many books in your library on it. But those are baby doctrines.

Remember from last night? Let's go on into perfection, not laying in the foundation of repentance from dead. What was one of the things he mentioned? The resurrection of the dead. The second coming of Jesus Christ.

That's a baby doctrine. You may not know all about that and still be a babe in Christ. That's one of the milk doctrines, you see.

Let's go on into perfection. Making a difference with some who are honest doubters and then others saved with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

And then now unto him that's able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, this only wise God our Savior. Dear friend of mine, are you doing these things? Are you building yourselves up? Are you stronger now than you were a year ago? The Bible says they go from strength to strength. Who does? He that has clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

Clean hands and a pure heart. Stronger and stronger as you walk with your God. And remember again, Revelation 12, 11, they overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, that's foundational, and then by the word of the testimony.

In my own life, how often the power of Satan has been broken when I've opened my mouth for Jesus Christ and shared the gospel, maybe in a difficult situation. Oh, the joy that comes. Oh, the blessing that comes.

But oh, how Satan wars to keep us from doing that. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

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