

# Near and Present Danger

by Jim Cymbala

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being aware of the dangers of false prophets and teachers, and the need to study the Bible and pray regularly to discern between truth and false teachings.*

**Duration:** 42:21

**Scripture:** 2 Peter 2:1

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the need to defend the faith that God has entrusted to his people. He warns against the influence of ungodly individuals who promote immoral living under the guise of God's grace. These false teachers are described as grumblers and complainers who seek to satisfy their own desires and draw attention to themselves. The speaker emphasizes the importance of building oneself up in the most holy faith, continually growing stronger and filling oneself with the Word of God. He also prays for discernment to identify swindlers and preserve resources for righteous purposes.

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## Transcript

One of the features of the Bible is something called prophecy, where God inspires people, Old and New Testament, to speak about the future. That is called foretelling. Prophecy has two elements to it, a foretelling from God's heart, where a singer or a preacher or someone can speak something prophetic, which is coming from God's heart right at that moment for the people that are listening to them.

Like the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, that's not foretelling so much, it's foretelling. It's Jesus speaking to their situation, no holes barred, and this is where it's at. Classical prophecy is to say, like the prophets did, one day is coming where the Jewish people, because of their disobedience and their idols, they're going to go into captivity, and God is going to use the Assyrians or later the Babylonians to pull down the Jerusalem, the walls, and to put the people in captivity.

It happened years, generations before it occurred. In fact, some scholars believe that one of the greatest proofs of the validity of the Bible and its uniqueness is the fulfillment of prophecy. Before Jesus was born, it was prophesied, not only that he would be born, the Messiah, but where he would be born, how he would be born, the trouble that would attend his birth, that people would try to kill him.

It foretold how he would die, down to the excruciating details of the massacre of his human body and the bloody mess that he was left to be. There's another kind of prophecy in the Bible which talks about the

future as it concerns Christians, and that has two parts to it, outside trouble and inside trouble. Outside trouble for Christians is the Bible foretelling through Jesus, through the apostles, that difficult times would come on the church.

You can't speak it away. You can't do a faith trick on it. It's going to happen, because Jesus and the apostles said it would happen.

You will be persecuted. You will be hated by all men for my sake, and so on and so forth. These are real prophecies.

They have to be acknowledged if we're going to be serious Christians, and unlike the selling of Christianity, the marketing, make it look pretty so people will buy into it. That is not a good thing to do, because it is what it is. If we suffer with him, we will reign with him.

How many say amen? Now, we don't know much about suffering here, maybe a little pressure, a little mocking, but you go to some of the places that I've been, that some of you have been. You talk to the underground church leaders from China, half of whom in one audience that I spoke to, hundreds and hundreds of them, half of them had been in prison for Christ's sake. That's something we don't identify with, but the Bible speaks about it plainly.

But there's another kind of prophecy in the Bible, which talks with the same authority of the Holy Spirit about inside trouble for Christians, inside the church trouble. Not only this is what's going to happen on the outside, this is what you're going to have to live through. If they hated me, they'll hate you, so on and so forth.

We're seeing that now really growing in its strength right here in our culture, in our society. But the Bible speaks about stuff that would happen inside the church, and that raises some real questions, like if God knows that's going to happen, why does he permit it to happen? It's one thing to have the world up in your grill and at you, but another thing to say, wait a minute, these things are going to happen inside the church, and it's true. During this week in our reading program, we read interestingly from two books that speak about inside trouble.

I'm calling it Clear and Present Danger. And it happened back then, 2 Peter touches on it, and so does the mystical little book called Jude. 2 Peter is written by Peter, who was one of the 12 disciples, and who was the leader there after Christ left the earth.

Jude is written by Jesus's other brother, James, who wrote James, was his half-brother, same mother, different father. Jesus was born through the Holy Spirit. But James had a brother named Jude.

He never was as famous a leader as James was, who seemed to be a leader of the church in Jerusalem. But Jude wrote a book, which is part of the New Testament. And both of these books, 2 Peter and, or letters, 2 Peter and Jude, both of them talk about warnings to the Christian church about stuff that's going to happen, and you better be prepared and be ready for it.

Some of you are not familiar with that part of the Bible, or you don't think in those terms, but it's something we all have to be aware of. 1 Peter was a warning, you're going through suffering, you're going through trouble, so hang in there, be strong in the Lord, endure, and all kinds of encouragement. 2 Peter and Jude are both along this line, watch out because there's some junk going to get in the church.

It's not only in the church, more is coming. That's strange. If God doesn't want it, he should just stop it if it's not good.

But life is a little bit more complex than that. In fact, one of the testings of who's a real Christian is who's going to discern and hang to the truth and stay with the truth even when there's nasty stuff coming and wrong teachings and wrong behavior. How we deal with that is one of the signs whether we are, as the Bible calls it, the elect, those who persevere to the end.

He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved. It's not only enduring from outside pressure and people taking shots at you. It's, oh God, no, I'm going to cling to you no matter what other people are saying who are supposedly Christians.

So this is serious, this subject, right? This is no joke. Nothing about Christianity is a joke. Christianity is very serious, amen? If it costs God his own son to save us, then this is no laughing matter.

This is something sacred and very worshipful. So here it comes. I'm doing a different thing.

Instead of taking one passage and saying, this is what the passage is teaching us, I'm taking from two places in 2 Peter and also Jude, talking about the same kind of problems, clear and present danger to the church. Now, there are warnings everywhere about what's happening to the society. And I'm not a great believer in what's happened to America because America is not in the Bible as far as I can see it.

It's a pagan nation. It's a Gentile nation that needs to be evangelized. Nationalism is not something that Christians should be into.

We should be very nationalistic because we're a holy people, a chosen nation, amen? But our home is not here. How many are happy your home is not here? We're going to go to heaven and we're going to be there forever. But on that journey, we have to be careful about stuff that is going to creep into the church.

Got to be alert to it. So turning a negative into a positive, let's look at these passages, okay? 2 Peter. But there were also false prophets in Israel.

This is from the New Living Translation. Just as there will be false teachers among... What in the world? There were false prophets in the Old Testament, and now the writer says, but there's going to be false teachers in your churches. Well, then how do you know who they are? Well, that's the whole point.

There will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies. Notice, their wrong doctrine is destructive.

That's a very strong word in the Greek. One translation has it. It's fatal.

When you believe it, you're done for. And even deny the master who bought them. Notice, he doesn't use Jesus's name.

They will deny the master who bought them. The hint could be they will say, you're in charge. You're not servants of Jesus.

He doesn't run everything. You run it. And you use Jesus when you're in a jam.

They'll deny the master. The false teaching will be along the lines of, he's not Lord of all. He's not running your life.

You haven't been bought with a price. You do what you want. You go where you want.

You move. You have fun. You do anything you want.

And if you run in a jam, you call on Jesus. No, no, that's the false teaching. They'll deny the master who bought them.

How did he buy them? On the cross. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. Many will follow their evil teaching.

God, don't let that happen. You don't want that to happen, God. Why would many follow that? Peter says, this is the way where it's at.

Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. In other words, so many people are going to get hooked up to these people that the true Christianity will be looking bad.

It'll be denigrated. It'll look negative. Why? Because people have followed these con artists who are teaching false doctrines.

This is serious stuff. How many say amen? In their greed... Notice we're trying to capture now what these people were like that Peter was talking about. In their greed, they will make up clever lies.

They'll be storytellers. They won't preach the word. They're going to make up stuff which nobody can prove or disprove.

They will make up clever lies to get ahold of your money. Ooh. It was even back then.

But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed. Then going on later in that chapter, they commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed.

One translation has they're experts at greed. They live under God's curse. But get this.

It's all happening in the church. No, no. It's not happening outside.

This is inside what's recognized as Christian circles. This is not pagan attacks on the church. This is Satan's other tool and device, get inside where you can do damage.

They have wandered off the right road. Notice they've wandered off the right road. They were once on the right road.

Now they've wandered off the right road. It wasn't that they never knew the right road. They were on the right road once.

But they've wandered off the right road and have followed the footsteps of Balaam, son of Beor. Balaam was the prophet in the Old Testament who loved to earn money by doing wrong. He was one of those guys, if you pay me enough, I'll say whatever you want.

That's what Balaam stands for. Hey, put the money and I'll give you the sermon you want. What do you want to hear? Just pay me the money.

I'll give it to you. Is it right? I don't care if it's right. Do you want to hear it? Pay me and I'll give it to you.

That's what Balaam's about. Now to go to Jude. Dear friends, Jude wanted to write about the faith and then strengthen them, but he got caught by what he heard was going on.

So now he changes the purpose of his letter. Watch. Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share.

That's when he sat down to write. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives.

The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only master again and Lord again, Jesus Christ. Not just savior, but master and Lord. These people, verse 16, are grumblers and complainers, living only to satisfy their desires.

They brag loudly. They're full of themselves. They brag loudly about themselves and they flatter others to get what they want.

In other words, they're the ultimate con artist. The spotlight is on them, not Jesus. It's all about them.

They might mention Jesus, but if you're discerning, it's all about them. They're the center of attraction. They know how to say things people like to hear so they can get your money.

They will tell you what you want to hear so that you'll relax and boom, their hand is going to be in your wallet. But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith. Pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.

These are some solemn verses. This is part of the Bible that a lot of us, especially in the day that we live in, everybody's, I'm okay, you're okay, don't be judgmental. You couldn't sell that to Peter and to Jude.

Jude and Peter were saying, you better know what's going down. You better know what's going down. Not everything that looks good is good.

You better know the truth of God's word because there are going to be a lot of people talking smack. It's total junk and it's demonic, but it's very tricky because they're not coming like the devil. They're coming like a preacher.

They're coming like a teacher. They're mentioning verses, but they're twisting the verses so they can get over on you. So this is for Christians who are serious now.

This is for us who want to endure to the end. Notice this lure is so strong that he says to the believers he's writing to, now you better build yourself up in the most holy faith. You better keep praying in the Holy Spirit or you can get sucked in.

Oh no, I'm standing on the rock. I know, stand on the rock, but you better build yourselves up every day in the most holy faith. Every time you come to church, make the most of it.

At every prayer meeting, pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep fellowshiping with Christians like I might have to drop you from my Facebook. That is a new teaching, but I like it.

It sounds right to me. Why? Because the thing is so strong. The suction is so strong.

Did you know they tell good swimmers who go out when there's a bad undertow, they tell even good swimmers, you can't go out and swim now, the thing will pull you out to sea. No, but I'm a great swimmer. You don't know the undertow.

You could be an Olympic swimmer. It'll still pull you out. So now the Bible is saying here, you got to build yourself up in the most holy faith.

I'll give you a great promise at the end of this, but it also says then keep praying in the Holy Spirit. Let the Holy Spirit direct your praying. Why? Because this is something that for whatever reason God permits, it's going to be in the church and you and I can judge whether it's happening today or it just ended in Peter's day and Jude's day.

You and I can judge that. Come on, you've been around. You've heard some stuff.

So the Bible tells us here the two things that we saw there before we talk about what characterizes these false prophets, these false teachers, what's the bacillus, what's the virus that's going to attack the church. We find out first thing is they're going to introduce destructive heresies, false teachings and doctrines. But how would we know that unless we know the true doctrine? How would you and I know what's false unless we know what's true? That's why Satan wants to keep all of us from Bible study and from prayer meetings and church on Sunday and more importantly daily reading of God's word.

You have to study and be serious. You know what you have to do? It's the hardest thing for a human to do is you have to concentrate. Someone has said very few people can concentrate on anything then for more than 40 or 50 seconds.

Concentration is hard. You can't read this casually. You've got to analyze it and know what is the truth so that when some joker comes around with what's false, I'll know get out of here.

That is not in keeping with scripture. Jesus would never say that. Jesus would never do that.

That's a false manifestation of the Holy Spirit because the Bible says everything is done to edification and that doesn't edify the church. That's just a bunch of junk. I don't care how long they've been doing it, how tradition lives, white church, black church.

It's not in keeping with the scripture. The scripture is our only rule and guide. How many say a strong amen? The scripture, not pastor, symbol, not some bishop, not some apostle, not some televangelist.

Everyone who speaks, you judge them by the word of God. No, that is not according. That spirit is not of Christ.

Christ would never do what that minister just did or say what that minister just said. That's horrible. That's horrible.

No, but you can't be judgmental. You better be discerning. You and I better be discerning or you get the hook in your mouth and then it's too late.

So we have to be discerning, not judgmental, but discerning. We've got to contend for the faith. I just saw some horrible charlatan on TV.

I got to stop channel surfing on those church channels. I got to do it. I'm going to go on a program just to get delivered from that.

This guy, a white minister program, black guy was talking, just shows that heresy is biracial. The guy was saying Psalm 51 says, talking all like spiritual stuff. He didn't know a thing he was talking about.

So Psalm 51 talks about deliverance and prayer for your loved ones, which it doesn't, that can come back. And God is full of mercy, which Psalm 51 does talk about. Right now with the anointing that's on me, I want to tell you that if you send the check for \$51, because it's Psalm 51, your children will have a spirit of prayer.

My wife screamed and I screamed. Meanwhile, people all over America are writing the checks. That's blasphemy that you can buy God's mercy.

It's blasphemy. We're so used to it. We think it's a joke.

It's blasphemy. We ought to cry at it. Always to the money, but before we characterize them and I close.

So here are the two things that Jude and Peter said are coming. There'll be destructive heresies. Tenors, Carol wants you to know your note when you sing and you do, you sing good.

I don't care about your note. I care about, do you know your Bible? Altos, look at me. Do you know your Bible? Do you live in it every day or you're texting the universe and have no time for the word of God? No, I'm dead serious.

What good is it to sing in the choir if you're going to get hooked by something false? I know, but they seem right. They mentioned Jesus. Well, of course they're going to mention Jesus.

What do you think? If they didn't mention Jesus, that would totally put you on guard. It's just which Jesus? There's about a hundred out there. Right wing conservative, Caucasian, political Jesus, a black power Jesus against the man and all these other fake Jesuses, prosperity Jesus and all that.

How in the world will you know the difference unless you hear the word of God in your heart and you'll get your mind renewed. Second thing he said about this is that there would be such immorality and loose living attendant with these ministers, that their followers would be like that and the way of real Christianity would be brought into disrepute. Christians would get a bad rap, a bad name.

Why? Because of these crooks and their followers. People would look like they must look... Sometimes when you see these characters carrying on and you think of some unbeliever turning on Christian television, don't you want to scream? Don't you want to cry and you want to say, that's not Jesus. That's not Christianity.

Don't listen to that guy. He's a crook. He's talking about a Jesus, but it's not the Jesus of the New Testament.

If you don't feel that, then there's no zeal in your bones for the house of the Lord like Jesus had when he went into the temple. Read John, what we've been reading this week. He went in and cleared the temple.

Why? But your crooks were in there selling their stuff, making a profit in God's house. My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people and you've made it a den of thieves. You're all looking for money, not serving people.

You want your money. That's all you think about is money, money, money. You're changing the currency into the currency that will be accepted for the offering, but you're making a big profit on it.

When the animals have to be inspected before they can be offered, you're selling and making a profit and taking advantage of poor people. So those are the two characteristics that we see as we see these passages and kind of drink in. So now let's sum it up and you tell me if it fits or it doesn't fit.

I'll let you judge. Number one, false teachers in the church, in the church. This is the frightening part of this.

This is the part that get your nerves going and your heart beating a little faster. This is not somebody outside. This is in the among the true believers.

It's not Christian, science, Mormons, the cult, Jehovah Witnesses. I'm not talking about that. That's another whole thing.

We're talking about in the church. The first thing is that they will bring a teaching and they will carry away about them that will twist the grace of God as an excuse for immorality. Instead of making people fear sin and hate sin, their teaching, notice they're going to use the grace of God.

Peter mentions this I think in his first letter when he says, now our brother Paul writes things that are hard to understand about the grace of God. Some take it and twist it to their own destruction. So they say God is love.

God wants me to be happy. This makes me happy. Thus God is for it.

What? He would not want you to be happy. He wants you to deny something. He would want you to say, no, that's wrong.

No, that's also black and white. No, God is love and God's grace. So you can do whatever you want.

Sleep with whoever you want. Look at whatever you want. Do whatever you want.

Because in the end, it's nobody's perfect. Come on, Pastor Jim. Nobody's perfect.

So what are you making a big thing about it? They twist the grace of God as an excuse for immorality. So loose living is fine. Clinging to wanting to be like Jesus and not to be contaminated by the world, that's like, that's dinosaur teaching.

You're never going to build a church talking that kind of talk. You just live any way you want because remember, you can always go back to God. And he loves you and he would never hurt you.

In fact, maybe he doesn't hurt anyone in the end. Maybe there's no judgment. I don't want to hear about hell.

I don't want to hear about judgment because that's so negative. I need a positive vibe to start the day. So Peter and Jude are warning us that these false teachers in the church will make light of sin.

But if you and I understand the cross that Jesus died for our sins, why would we want to go back and hurt him again? I'm not talking now about people who battle and fall and struggle, but no, it's wrong. I'm not talking about that. All Christians do that.

I'm not talking about perfection. I'm talking about even if you love the Lord with all your heart and you want to live in the light, we have all slipped up and messed up. If you're with me on that, just raise your hand.

We've said things, done things, thought things, they're wrong. But boy, when you're a true believer, you feel it. Do you not feel it? Do you not feel it? Do you not want to run and be cleansed and restore peace with God? But this teaching will be, there is no wrong.

There is no wrong. Why do you feel bad about it? That's not the... No. Don't you let somebody judge you and squeeze you into their way of thinking.

These people, by the way, are anti-authority. It says over and over again, they despise authority, the authority of God's Word, the authority of a pastor, the authority of anything. They despise authority.

So the Bible tells us these teachers will not only be using the grace of God as an excuse to excuse immorality and perversion, but they will be experts in greed. They will get your money. Listen to me, everybody.

When you hear sermon after sermon by these characters, and it all ends up on you giving money to them, how could that be the teaching of Jesus? I'm asking you. I have the sermons from the New Testament. I have them here.

I have the book of Acts. I know the letters of Paul and Peter, and you know them too. I have the teaching of Jesus.

At the end of every ministry, did he hawk money from them? I'm asking you. Did he do that? Wait a minute. Didn't he get on his knees and wash their feet? That's the spirit of Jesus.

It's about the people. It's not about the minister. Who cares about the minister? The minister is just supposed to do his job and then get out of the way.

He's not a superstar. He's a follower of Jesus. He's a brother with weaknesses, just like everybody else, or a sister with weaknesses.

So Peter and Jude say, there's a terrible day coming. These guys are expert con artists. They'll use religious talk, and they will always go after your money.

Notice they never say, give your money to your church if you want this blessing from God, which of course you can't buy any blessing. Give it to your church or to a missionary. No, it's got to come to them.

Don't you get it? They believe in prosperity, theirs, not yours, not mine. Can we put our hands together and say amen to that? And finally, they don't have the spirit. I was down in Trinidad a couple weeks ago talking to ministers.

I was talking bluntly because I'm only one time with them a couple hours. So I said, let's do real talk, Brooklyn style, just real talk. I'm not a pontificating minister, and that's another thing.

Always remember, when someone's acting in the pulpit, hold your wallet and look for the exit, because God never anoints someone who's acting. Spirit is the spirit of truth. If you find me different in my office than I'm talking to you right now, then I'm a fake.

All acting behind the pulpit, whatever kind, it's horrible. It grieves the spirit. The spirit, if you want a show, go to Broadway.

You're not supposed to get a show in church. You're supposed to get the word of God. Can we say amen to that? And all that stuff going on with the mystical talk or the Lord said, huh, huh, huh, huh.

For what? I just had lunch with that dude. He didn't talk like that. Why is he talking like that in the pulpit? But listen, it's become a culture for us, and people love to go and get that entertainment and stand and go, yes, ooh, yeah.

That's not Jesus. Look at me, everyone. That's not Jesus.

Don't say the apostle Paul did that. Jesus never had two voices, never put on an act for anyone. What you see is what you get with Jesus.

How many are happy for that? So happy. It got quiet. It got very quiet, didn't it, in Trinidad when I was talking to those ministers, because they got a lot of con artists coming down from America, ripping them off of their money.

And then what's worse is those ministers make that paradigm, and they follow that. That's their goal, to be like that guy, the flashy center of attraction, drawing all the attention, the mystical man of God. They don't have the spirit.

I close. They don't have the spirit. Do they have gifts? Yep, but not from the Holy Spirit.

They have the gift of gab. They have the gift of a used car salesman. Some of those can be really good, can't they? Haven't you had anybody sell you something? It's not anointed, but they have a gift.

They can be eloquent. They have gifts. They have gifts, but they don't have the spirit.

That's something how the Bible just describes them. They don't have the spirit. That's how you and I have to be trying to be discerning when we hear stuff.

Is that the Holy Spirit sparking that, or is that, look, musical people have gifts doesn't mean that's the spirit. There's great singers everywhere. You go to opera, they make you cry.

It doesn't mean it's the spirit. Preachers can carry on and use the mic. They can work the people in a frenzy.

When the people are going home, you say, what did the guy preach on? I don't know, but it felt good. Praise God. It felt good.

Peter and Jude are saying, no time for that kind of play. No, no, no, no. These people don't have the spirit.

They're instinctive. Actually, they're called like animals. I didn't read that part.

They're instinctive. They know what to do. They know what to do, but they don't have the Holy Spirit.

So what's the charge in the Bible? First of all, contend for the faith. Peter says to us, now you got to fight for the real faith. Faith not meaning your faith, but the faith as what Christianity is about.

You got to fight for it. You got to contend for it. No, that's wrong.

Get out of here. We won't have that. Don't you think, come on, let's do real talk.

Don't you think that there are some of these characters that I could have come and speak here that have enough followers because they're on TV where they'd be just, you couldn't fit all the people in. Don't you think I know that? But who knows what they'd say to you. And then who knows how you would look at me the next Sunday and say, why'd you let him in? Why'd you let him say that? Do you believe that? Pastor Simba, do you believe that? Why'd you have, no, I want to draw a crowd and then they give more money.

Maybe the people will come back. I know a lot of men who have ruined their churches like that. They just have anybody because they draw a crowd.

I don't want to draw a crowd. I want to draw the Holy Spirit. I want to draw Jesus Christ to the church.

I want God to be pleased. You got to contend for the faith, but then you better know what the faith is. You better be able to have the courage.

It's going to take courage to contend for the faith. You got to say, stop. That's nonsense.

That's nonsense. I thought you had love. I do have love.

I love the truth. That is nonsense. That is false.

I'm going to contend for the faith. I don't know how many churches are prepared to fight for the truth rather than just give in to the flow, not in a legalistic, harsh, elitist way, but in love saying that is not in the Bible. I had someone just this week trying to convince me on the phone that a certain sin is fine.

Even when I read him the passage to prove it, he said, well, that's your interpretation of it. I said, look, if you have another interpretation, just give it to me. I'm not going to go by you or your childhood.

I don't care about your feelings or my feelings or how I grew up. My dad was an alcoholic for 22 years, so does that justify for me to do anything bad? No. We have to contend for the faith.

Then Jude says this. You got to build yourself up in the most holy faith. You got to get stronger every day.

You can't stay the way you are. I learned playing basketball a long time ago. You either get better every day or you start losing some of your skills.

There's no such thing as a holding pattern. You're either going to go out there and learn a crossover, double, triple crossover, and you're going to learn to just be better on defense, and you're going to get in better shape or you're going to get in lesser shape. There's no holding ground.

Jude says you got to build yourself up. Choir, build yourself up in the holy faith. Build yourself up.

Fill yourself with the word of God. Get strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Doesn't matter what other people are doing.

If you look at other people, you can get sucked down yourself. Build yourself up in the most holy faith. That's the word of God for all of us today.

Contend for it. Be strong. Share the gospel.

Tell more people about Jesus. Don't be ashamed of it. It doesn't matter if they laugh or snarl or whatever they do, you keep sharing it, and you keep defending it, and you keep building yourself up in it, praying in the Holy Spirit.

Spend time with God. He'll sort things out for you. Pray in a chair with an open Bible and read a verse and meditate on it, and God will teach you, but pray.

Pray for other Christians. Pray for pastors because we're in a fight, and if it was only outside, it would be easy, but it's inside the house. It's inside the house.

But look at what the last verse says in Jude, the last thought. Look at it. Praise God.

Now all glory to God who is able to keep you from falling away, and he will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. Praise God. Praise be unto God who is able to keep us from falling.

Can we say amen? So notice, build yourself. Notice the two. This isn't some passive mental positivism.

Oh, the word says this. No. Build yourself up in the most holy faith.

Contend for the faith. Keep praying in the Holy Spirit. Seek the Lord.

Draw closer to him. Get to know him better, and as you do that, remember God is able to keep you from falling and to present you. I had a friend who bought a house in Mississippi near a lake.

Spent a lot of money. His wife went in to the house one night in the kitchen, and there was a snake in the kitchen, and what they learned was two days later, they opened the toilet to use the bathroom, and there was a snake in the bathroom. It's nasty, right? They brought friends one night and told all these young guys to put the lights of their car on all at once right on the edge of the lake, and as they all turned the lights on at once, there were all these dozens and dozens of nasty venomous snakes, and they all had their weapons and tried to fire and kill it.

They couldn't. So finally, they couldn't sell the house. How are you going to hide? The snakes are in the house.

One day in the morning, his wife got up and went into the kitchen to weigh herself. She had a scale there, and there was a snake just crawling all over the scale. So someone said, the only way you'll get this house fixed, you burn it to the ground.

You're going to start all over because it's infected. That's the bad thing about this thing that they're warning us. It seems that once you get involved with this and you give into this, it's very hard to come back.

If you're a drug addict, if you're whatever, living any kind of life, the grace of God can save you and change you. Do I get an amen? But once you get into this and you start denying the Lord and you start justifying your behavior, then you get into an area, no man's land. It's very hard to renew that person's conscience because they once knew the truth, but like these teachers, they left the way.

These teachers once were on the right path. They left the way. I want to make sure that you and I are not going to be victims of charlatans.

I want us to stay close to Jesus. Look, I want to stay close to Jesus. How many want to stay close to him with me? Just lift up your hand.

Keep your hand up. How many want to keep close to the word of God? Lift your other hand up. I want this book in my heart every day.

I want it. I want to learn more about it. I know a little about it, but I'm still a student.

You might put your hands down. Father God, what choice do I have when I'm preaching through the parts of scripture that we're reading? You have to preach what's found there. You have to apply it.

It's not always the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. There's not only promises, there's warnings. We receive your warning today for all of us.

Help us to live careful lives, not in order to be saved, but because we are saved. Help us to not think light of sin, none of us, starting with me. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. God, give us discernment and understanding in your words, so we will know the counterfeit from the true. Help us not to be naive, immature, unintelligent in our faith.

Don't let us be judgmental and harsh and argumentative, but at the same time, we hear your word. Contend earnestly for the faith. Hold on to that which is true.

Judge everything. Thank you for your Holy Spirit that helps us to know the difference between light and darkness, truth and falsity. Save us from con artists, from the money seekers.

Thank you that this week we are able to see the children blessed at Royal Family Kids Camp for nothing, for nothing. Give us more money through supernatural means so that we can bless more people charging nothing, nothing. Help us to discern swindlers so that we can preserve your money for that which is right, Lord.

Here's how I want to end the service. Every eye closed. In a moment, I'm going to ask you to stand.

I want every man, even if it's for 30 seconds, just grab ahold of another man's hand or face him and just pray for each other out loud. Say, God, hold my brother. Keep my brother.

Strengthen my brother. Build him up in the holy faith. Every lady with a lady.

Come on. Even for 30 seconds, just pray. Pray one for another.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26934.mp3>  
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