**Jude 17-23**

I. The context of Jude

 False teachers have crept into the community (see v. 4, 17-19)

II. The command: “keep yourselves in the love of God” (v. 21)

A. God is ultimately the one who “keeps” us safe (see v. 1 and v. 24), but we have an active role in this too

B. Three ways we keep ourselves in God’s love

 1. Building yourselves up in your most holy faith (v. 20)

= Continuing to grow in our faith and understanding of the apostle’s teaching

 2. Praying in the Holy Spirit (v. 20)

 = Prayer is great protection from the enemy

 3. Waiting for the mercy of Jesus Christ to be revealed (v. 21)

 = Living with the expectation of eternity in mind

III. Dealing with those who are wandering (v. 22-23)

A. There seems to be a progression in these verses from a person who is starting to doubt their faith to a person who is more fully walking away from the faith and into danger

 B. Notice the theme of mercy in these verse: we are not to be judgmental but merciful

C. Notice the intentionality of these verses: we are to go after them and try to bring them back to the faith, while also being careful to avoid their sinful decisions ourselves

D. Analogy: If your daughter started seeing a suspicious guy and was led progressively into an immoral life, you would have lots of mercy on her but you would also do everything you could to keep her safe. Likewise, we ought to have that posture towards each other.

**Discussion Questions**

1. In the 1st century, false teachers had crept into the church and introduced ideas and lifestyles contrary to the Apostle’s teachings (read together v. 4 and v. 17-19). Based on those verses, consider what specific ideas or attitudes were being brought into the church. What are some of the unbiblical ideas or attitudes you see being brought into the church today?

2. Consider the command to “keep yourselves in the love of God” (v. 21) with the promises that God will “keep” those who are his (v. 1 and v. 24). What is the balance between trusting God to keep us and working hard to keep ourselves (if balance is even the right word)?

3. Consider the three ways we actively keep ourselves in God’s love in v. 21-22 (Point II.B. above). Is there one of those that stands out as something you’d like to pursue more intentionally in the coming weeks?

4. Verses 22-23 talk about coming alongside struggling or doubting believers and graciously bringing them back into the fold. In our individualistic culture we often leave people to themselves, thinking their spirituality is between them and God, but Scripture calls us to be watching out for one another. Do you have any experiences of seeing loving confrontation and accountability done well? Any experiences of seeing it done poorly? What can we learn about those experiences?

5. Are there any struggling or wandering believers you’d like to pray for at this time?