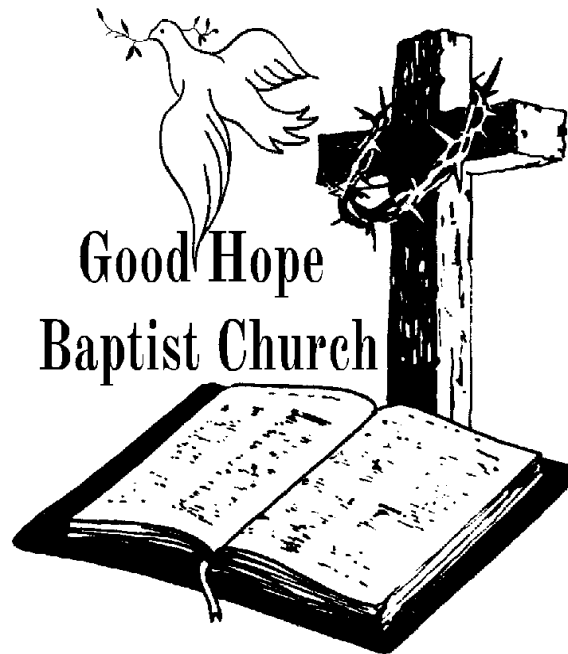


# Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God

Jude 21



Good Hope  
Baptist Church

Living Together In The Love Of God

4038 Graham Sherron Rd  
Wake Forest, NC 27587

Pastor David Buffaloe  
Home 919-562-9456 Cell 919-600-4925  
online at [bibleteacher.org](http://bibleteacher.org)

**FOCAL Read Responsively** Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, **looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**

I was coming back from the hospital the other day. It had been a long day. I started out as part of a traffic jam on Highway 50, and was closing out my day in an endless line of cars stuck on Highway 1. The traffic started moving, when sudden the light I was coming up on went to yellow, then to red. The man in front of me floored it and shot through the light. Momentarily I thought to myself, "Why not? Why not just run through the light - after all, I'm still moving. It's unavoidable - and HE did it." But I resisted the urge, and braked for the light. Suddenly on my right hand side flashing blue lights pierced the darkness. The Highway Patrolman, lit up like a Christmas tree, came out of nowhere on my right. He ran through the stop light, took off, and in the distance I saw the man who had been in front of me pulled over. The light turned green, and I passed the Trooper and the guilty, heading toward home. As I passed I said to the Lord, "**Lord, That could have been me**". The Lord spoke to my heart. He said, "**David, that *would* have been you. You will never get in trouble when you do the *right* thing.**"

In today's world there are a lot of temptations to do the wrong thing. The worldly continually bullies the Church and the Christian to do the wrong thing. Sexual sins are relabeled. It is no more "adultery" or "fornication", but it is "searching for the right man" or "finding love". It is not "sodomy" but it is an "alternate lifestyle", and if you do not agree the world says that you are "racist" and

"homophobic".

But it's not just today.

There have always been struggles between the world and what the Bible teaches. There are even struggles within families over the Lord Jesus Christ and what He taught. For that matter, even our Lord's earthly family misunderstood Him!

Our Lord Jesus Christ was **born of a virgin named Mary** in fulfillment of prophecy:

**Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

Once Jesus was born of Mary, she didn't stay a virgin. Mary went on to have several other children by her husband Joseph. **Jude was a step-brother to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3)**. Like his brothers, Jude didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah until after His resurrection (see **John 7:5**). In fact, at one time Jude and our Lord's other step-brothers said "**Jesus is out of His mind**" (**Mark 3:21**). Once Jesus rose from the grave Jesus' step-brothers James and Jude both believed in Him.

Today we're looking at a very short letter that Jude wrote to the Church. There is no way that I can cover all that is Jude in the small amount of time we have together. There is one very practical truth in verse 21 that - if followed - will keep us on track in this fallen world.

How do I find my way in life, when the wild things of this world call to me? How do I know right from wrong, when there is madness all about? As I go through this life **I will keep myself in the love of God!**

### **1. Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God And You Will Not Live In Defeat**

**Focal** Jude 21 **Keep yourselves in the love of God ...**

**Word Study** The word translated "keep" is the Greek TEREÓ (threw pronounced tay-reh'-o), which means "**to guard yourselves against, keep an eye on, to withhold yourselves from, to hold fast to, to preserve yourselves by**".

Jude said "**be on guard against anything that will draw you from the love of God**". Keep your eye peeled against these things.

Listen Beloved: God loves you. His proof that He loves you is that He offered to save you when you were unlovable.

The Bible says:

**Titus 3:3-7 3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and**

love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Love - undeserved love - was given to each and every person who would receive it. There is a great song called "Mercy Came Running" that says:

Once there was a holy place  
Evidence of God's embrace  
And I can almost see mercy's face  
Pressed against the veil  
Looking down with longing eyes  
Mercy must have realized  
That once His blood was sacrificed  
Freedom would prevail  
And as the sky grew dark  
And the earth began to shake  
With justice no longer in the way

Mercy came running  
Like a prisoner set free  
Past all my failures to the point of my need  
When the sin that I carried  
Was all I could see  
And when I could not reach mercy  
Mercy came running to me

God expressed His eternal love toward you and I when He laid down His life on the Cross. We were saved the day that we heard of His love and, responding, came into His arms. Love called, we responded, we were saved.

God loves you. If you have been saved, you are *not godless*. You know that God loved you and saved you *from* your sins. What a terrible heresy it is that the world teaches. Sin is so awful that God had to offer His only Begotten Son to make payment for it. Then to say that - now that I am saved - I am free to sin with impunity - what a violation of Love!

Jude writes:

**CONTEXT** Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

There were **certain men** who **crept into the Church unawares**. They are "Certain", these Con Men and Con Women. They say "God does not establish standards for those whom He saves. You can be saved and be in sexual sin. You can be saved and do things that Christ would *never* do".

Keep yourselves in the love of God. If you love God, turn from the evil of this world. You are no longer part of Egypt, with it's pagan ways. You belong to God, dear Church. Love Him!

Look what Jude says:

**CONTEXT** Jude 5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

God saved you - and saved me - so that He could have a loving relationship with Him. Israel refused to keep herself in the love of God. *Churches die when the members depart from loving God.*

God was not gleeful when He punished Israel. It was with sadness that He purged that nation, saying:

**Numbers 14:29** Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,

Over and over again the Scripture tells us **the soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezekiel 18:4), and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)**. God's Church is called to love God and turn from sin. God's Child is called to love God and turn from sin. Every one of the first Generation of Israel died in the wilderness, **except those who kept themselves in the love of God**. Who remained to enter in to the Promised Land? The Bible says:

**Numbers 26:65** ... there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Caleb and Joshua kept themselves in the love of God, so they marched victorious over the Jordan leading the second generation of Israel. The Bible says:

**Hebrews 3:12-13, 17** Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. **13** But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. .... **17** But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

**ILLUSTRATE** Two businessmen in New York city are sitting down for a break in their soon-to-be new store. As yet, the store isn't ready - only a few shelves are set up. One says to the other, **"I bet any minute now some tourist is going to walk by, put his face to the window and ask what we're selling."** No sooner are the words out of his mouth when, sure enough, a curious southerner walks to the window, has a peek, and in a Southern drawl asks, **"What're y'all sellin' here?"** One of the men replies, **"Oh! We're selling goobers here."** Without skipping a beat, the southern gentleman says, **"Well, I see y'all're doing really good. You only got two left!"**

God's people are to *model love* both outside of the Church as well as inside of the Church. We are to exhort one another *away from sin* and edify one another *toward love*.

Oh Beloved, do not be hardened by the deceitfulness of

sin. The warnings that God gives in Scripture, He gives to those who are His, the **Beloved of God, saved by faith in Him.**

God says **guard yourselves from losing your victory as Israel lost her victory. Guard yourselves by staying in the love of God. God says "Stay in love with Me - seek Me - follow Me - and you will be blessed!"**

**CONTEXT** Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

Israel - God's Chosen Nation - turned from the love of God to self love, and suffered for it. But Jude now says "**Remember the angels**". The Angels of God, create and kept in the Throne-room of God, rose up against Him that created them. The Bible says that a full *one third* of the angels of Heaven rebelled against the Lord and instead *followed Lucifer, also known as Satan.* (**2 Peter 2:4**). Israel did not keep herself in the love of God, but followed an unbelieving heart. A third of the angels did not follow God, but followed the created Lucifer instead of the Creator. What happened? They were cast into a pit within hell, chained by darkness, and are being held until the final judgment.

**CONTEXT** Jude 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after

**strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.**

Before God ever destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha He allowed Lot to go to that land and witness among them. Peter echoes Jude, saying:

**2 Peter 2:4, 6-9 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; ... And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:**

God loves all, and has proved it by His Cross. But He *does not love sin* - and those who love Him *must not wallow in sin.*

Israel was kept from the Promised Land for failing to love God. The angels were cast from Heaven to Hell for failing to love God. Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed for loving themselves and their sexual sins while rejecting God's love. If you love God, **turn from sin!**

## 2. Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God Or Your Religion Is Of No Value

**ILLUSTRATE** Thomas Edison thought the phonograph he invented had little commercial value. When **Alexander Graham Bell** invented the telephone, Western Union said, "It has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us." **Harry Warner** of Warner Brothers thought talking movies would not be successful, "Who wants to hear actors talk?" he asked. **Daryl Zanuck** of 20th Century Fox said in 1946 that TV wouldn't be able to hold any market after the first few months and that people would soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night. **IBM** was not interested in the copy machine when it was first invented in 1938 by Chester Carlson. They said it would never replace carbon paper.

All of these things - the Phonograph, the Telephone, the Talking Movie, the Television, and the Copying Machine - not only caught on, but greatly blessed our lives. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the people who sat in Church or listened to preaching on the Radio or Television would *catch on* to what our Christian faith is all about.

It's all about LOVE!

**James, another of Jesus' earthly step-brothers**, wrote:

**James 2:8** If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye

do well:

The **Royal Law** - the Law of the Family of God - is that we love our neighbor as ourselves. The Apostle Paul wrote:

**Galatians 5:14** For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

and again,

**Romans 13:8-10** Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. **9** For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. **10** Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Love is the fulfilling of the Law. If we as believers had no access to a Bible, we could still nonetheless live perfectly within the will of God by remembering one thing: "**God wants us to love**". After all, we who believe were born of Love.

**1 John 3:16** Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

If I lay down my life for my brothers and sisters, then I will not be about hurting them. I will focus on them for

God's good.

Listen Beloved: When I do not walk in love, I *hurt myself*. Jude illustrates this by talking of Cain, of Balaam, and of Korah. We read:

**Jude 1:11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.**

**a** Cain was a religious man who offered a *loveless* sacrifice to God. The name "Cain" (קַיִן pronounced kah'-yin) means "**Possession**". When Eve had Cain, her first child, she in delight said "**the Lord gave me another Man!**" Oh, Cain was the center of Eve's world, and she loved him dearly. The second child she had was called "Abel" (הַבֵּל pronounced heh'-bel), which means "**Breath**". I don't know why - maybe Abel cried a lot as children often do. These children grew up, and came before God to offer a sacrifice to Him. The Bible says that:

**Genesis 4:4-5 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and his offering He had not respect ...**

Cain brought an offering from his fields to God, and Abel an offering from his flocks. God received the offering from the flock, but not the field. This angered Cain. He couldn't strike out at God, so he struck out at

Abel.

The first murder occurred in humanity because Cain would not keep himself in the love of God. He let anger guide his hand - and spilled the Blood of his brother.

**Genesis 4:8-9 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. 9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?**

After killing his brother Cain was approached by God. **Where is your brother? I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?** Here are words that betray the one who has departed from the Love of God.

You are your Brother's Keeper. If you're born again, you are your Brother's Keeper - and God stands at the door watching you. How will you act?

**b** Balaam was a religious man - a prophet - who loved money more than he loved God. Loving money he was enticed to sell his gift (see **Numbers 22:5 ff**) by Moab, a people who hated God's Israel.

Balaam stood at the top of the hill, having taken money to curse the nation of Israel, God's Holy people. God opens Balaam's eyes. He speaks to Balaam (**Numbers**

22:9 ff):

**"Who are these men with you, Balaam?"**

**"It is Balak, the King of Moab, Lord. He wants me to curse Israel".**

**"Balaam, you will not do this. You shall not curse these people, for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:9-12, Pastor's Paraphrase)**

Balaam decided to obey God, and went with the Moabites. But he promised that **"only the Word that God put in his mouth - only this Word would he speak"**. Balaam would not curse Israel, for God let him see that it was *through Israel Messiah would come*. God let this greedy prophet see the Coming of Jesus!

**Numbers 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.**

Balaam said **"One day I will see Jesus, the Star of Jacob, the Scepter of Israel"**. What a glorious thing to see. Can you imagine, being in the Old Testament days and being allowed to look forward into glory and see the Coming Jesus!

Balaam could not curse Israel - but for greed he told the Moabites to *entice Israel away from the love of God, and to commit sexual immorality and idolatry*

**(Numbers 25:1-2). He compromised, just as many Churches compromise the Love of God today.**

Of whom Peter says they

**2 Peter 2:15-19 ... have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. 17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.**

**C** Korah was a religious man who was swallowed up of pride, and eventually was swallowed by the world. He sought to take over God's Israel, and gathered a mob of **"two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown"** (Numbers 16:2).

Korah did not keep himself in the love of God, but rose up against God and His Prophet Moses. Because Korah chose to lower himself in the pit of rebellion rather than stand on God's mountain of love, the Lord

had the earth swallow him alive. Christian, stand in the love of God, or fall in the pit of the world!

**Numbers 16:31-34 {when Moses had} had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: 32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. 33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. 34 And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.**

This was not a day of rejoicing, but a day of great sadness. The great Bible teacher **G. Campbell Morgan** wrote:

**"In each case, the action is contrary to love. Cain, hatred, murder; impossible to love. Balaam, greed, seduction; impossible to love. Korah, envy, rebellion, impossible to love. These illustrations .... serve to illuminate the meaning of the great charge, "Keep yourselves in the love of God". Being in His love, do not become careless, but remember *you are responsible. The atmosphere in which you dwell creates responsibility. The great and gracious fact of the unsought, unconditional love of God into which you have been specially brought as you have been called, creates grave responsibility*".**

**ILLUSTRATE** If you are born again, you must love.

God demands it. That you are in Church is wonderful. That you are here today is wonderful. But being here does not make you a Child of God. There are hymnals in the pews in front of you today. They are here always - they never leave this Church - yet they will not be in Heaven one day. The hymnals in front of you do not commit any over activity of sin - yet they are not born again. These hymnals have been here, faithfully where they are, day in and day out - but they are not Children of God.

Children of God are born of love. We love. We love. How do we love? Jude says:

**Focal & CONTEXT** **Jude 1:20-23 But ye, Beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.**

What does God call me to do?

1. Remember that I am God's BELOVED: "**But ye, BELOVED**". If you are "born again", you belong to God.
2. As God's Beloved, I will "**build up myself on my most holy faith**". What we value, we invest time and energy in. I will read His Word - I will do His Word.

3. As God's Beloved, I will do the things that are pleasing to my Love. **"Keep yourselves in the love of God"**.

4. As God's Beloved, I will be merciful as He was merciful to me. **"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"**.

5. As God's Beloved, I will **reach out in compassion to others, making a difference**. I will not compromise the Gospel in word or action.

6. As God's Beloved, **others I will save with fear, pulling them out of the fire**. I will not become part of the problem, but I will be part of the solution.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



**FOCAL Read Responsively** Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 7:5; Mark 3:21

**1. Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God  
And You Will Not Live In Defeat**

Jude 21; Titus 3:3-7; Jude 4; Jude 5; Numbers 14:29; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23; Numbers 26:65; Hebrews 3:12-13, 17; Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 7; 2 Peter 2:4, 6-9

**Word Study** The word translated "keep" is the Greek TEREO (threw pronounced tay-reh'-o), which means \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Keep Yourselves In The Love Of God  
Or Your Religion Is Of No Value**

James 2:8; Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 3:16; Jude 11

**a** Cain was a religious man \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. The name "Cain" (קַיִן pronounced kah'-yin) means "Possession". Genesis 4:4-5; Genesis 4:8-9

You are your Brother's Keeper. If you're born again, you are your Brother's Keeper - and God stands at the door watching you. How will you act?

**b** Balaam was a religious man - \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. Loving money he was enticed to sell his gift (see Numbers 22:5 ff) by Moab, a people who hated God's Israel. Numbers 22:9; Numbers 22:9-12; Numbers 24:17; Numbers 25:1-2; 2 Peter 2:15-19

**c** Korah was a religious man \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. He sought to take over God's Israel, and gathered a mob of "two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown" Numbers 16:2; Numbers 16:31-34; Jude 1:20-23

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_