

Security in Dangers of War

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[0:00] Please stand together with me for this reading from the Word of God, Jude 1-4. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ, mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.

Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

Would you open with me to Jude? Jude, the Lord Jesus was not the only child in his family. He had other sisters and brothers.

And the New Testament gives us the names of four of his brothers. And from it and the rest of the New Testament, we learn that two of his brothers were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write letters that have become a part of our Bibles.

[1:20] And that means that they're meant to be read and broadcast and translated and sent into all the world until the end of the age that people might learn in them and that the church might be built up and that they might be strengthened and made safe and secure.

However, we recently finished the letter of one of his stepbrothers, James. And we learned from James, didn't we, that what faith in the Lord Jesus, what real saving faith in the Lord Jesus looks like.

And we begin today a study of the letter written by another brother, Jude, or Judas in the Greek. Now, it's just one chapter, but don't let anyone be fooled thinking, well, what can someone say in 25 verses? For like his brother James, Jude knows how to pack a punch.

And he says a lot in a few words. This is a man on fire. His language throughout shows that he is deeply moved.

[2:31] You see, a great battle is raging. And all the major news networks have missed the story of the day. No one's speaking of it. It's not a battle of bombs and bullets, but that can only take the lives of men and women, boys and girls, and then can do no more.

This is a battle for truth. It's a battle for the truth of the Christian faith. It's a battle for the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And it's a battle with damning delusions, with false doctrines that are lethal to the souls of men that will destroy the souls and bodies of men forever in hell.

And so we are locked in this age-long battle for the truth of God and for the souls of men. And because of the stakes involved, Jude is not about to be left sitting on the sidelines.

He rather jumps into the fray with all guns blazing. And he's not about to leave us sitting on the sidelines in this battle either, lest we become its casualties.

[3:48] And so this letter is a siren warning. It's a call to arms. To earnestly contend.

To fight for the faith. To not let it go. To persevere in it. Now, the letter has a striking resemblance to the letter of 2 Peter.

And if you read the one, you can't help but see it. I would give you that homework for the week to read 2 Peter and then to read the book of Jude. See it for yourself.

Not only is there a striking resemblance in its theme and in the way that that theme is developed, but even in the very language used, the phrases used, the words used, the pictures used.

And it surely suggests to us that in writing, one of these two, Jude or Peter, was making use of the other. Now, the Holy Spirit could have inspired them both without any knowledge of each other to have written what they wrote.

[4:59] But the Holy Spirit often used means, and he often, he did use means, and he often used someone quoting another writer of Scripture.

So, the question for us comes is, who used who? Did Peter write first and Jude come along later and quote him, or was it the other way around? Well, I believe it was just that, that Peter wrote 2 Peter first, and Jude made use of his letter in composing this letter that we're studying.

And he adds to it. I want to give two examples. 2 Peter chapter 3, it's just a few pages over so you can turn to it. 2 Peter 3.3 says, In the last days, scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

And then in Jude, hold your place there, in Jude 17 and 18, we read, But dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.

They said to you, In the last times, there will be scoffers who follow their own ungodly desires. Almost a word-for-word quote of the apostle Peter. Furthermore, what Peter predicted was fulfilled shortly after, during the days of Jude.

[6:20] Look again at 2 Peter 2 and verse 1. But there were also false prophets among the people in the past, just as there will be false teachers among you.

They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction on them. Now over to Jude chapter, or Jude verse 4.

For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men who changed the grace of our God into a license for immorality and denied Jesus Christ, our only sovereign and Lord.

Peter says, These false teachers will slip in among you with their destructive heresies. Jude says, They have now done so. Peter says, They're coming.

Jude says, They've arrived. They're here. So we see Jude referring back to what Peter wrote that would happen.

[7:34] All that to say that we will be using Peter's second letter to help fill out some of the thoughts as they're writing about the same things and perhaps even to the same people.

Now Jude's going to have a lot to say to us about the enemy. Indeed, that will comprise the greater part of his letter. These false teachers will be painted in detail for us.

But first, he would have us to be clear on who we are. What is true of us who are soldiers in this battle? Soldiers of Christ in this battle.

What is true of us and he would have us know that we are safe and secure from all alarm because he knows that soldiers will only fight best as they're confident in their security in Christ.

You think, if you were going off to war in Afghanistan, will you be a better fighter for knowing that your life is secure than if you're fearing at any moment that you would lose it?

[8:48] We're going to be called to arms in this letter. But even before he calls us to arms, he would assure us that we can be confident in our Lord and Captain Jesus Christ.

Today, we'll consider the author, the recipients, and the greetings that even come before the call to arms. first of all, the author. Who is this letter from?

Well, we have it not as others perhaps would describe him, perhaps one of the phrases is, but as he describes himself. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James.

You can tell a lot about someone by what they say about themselves. We're going to look at these phrases in reverse order. Jude, a brother of James. By then, everyone knew, by the time that Jude wrote, everyone knew about this James.

He was one of the brothers of Jesus, as the New Testament shows. He was probably the most influential leader in the Jerusalem church. He had a leading role in the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 and he's the author of one of the earliest books of the New Testament, the book of James.

[10:10] This is his brother, Jude. And he's content to be known as the brother of James. Anybody here known as the brother of someone?

James is content to play second fiddle to a famous older brother. How are you at playing second fiddle? It's a hard instrument to play, but only because of our pride that wants to play first fiddle.

Here's Jude. I would be the brother of James. There's the identifying mark. Everyone will know now who this Jude is because there were a lot of Judases in the New Testament, weren't there?

This is the brother of James. But more importantly, if James was the brother, if James was the brother of Jesus and Jude was the brother of James, then Jude is the brother of Jesus.

But notice he doesn't say Jude, the brother of Jesus Christ, but rather Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ. Now, this wasn't always the case with Jude.

[11:19] Growing up in the same home with the perfect son of God must have been an awesome experience. He couldn't help but see the difference between his oldest brother and all the rest, and even himself.

never once did he see his brother sin. He rather saw him always loving God with all of his heart and always loving his neighbor as himself. He was patient where all of his other brothers were impatient. He was kind whereas all other boys were mean. He was sinless whereas all other people were sinful. Jude, growing up in the same home as the Lord Jesus.

And yet for all of this he did not believe in Jesus as his Messiah, his Savior. John tells us in chapter 7 verse 5, for even his own brothers did not believe in him.

They sneered at his claims. He had some weird ideas. They thought he was a bit unstable mentally, deranged. We better go get him and bring him home. At one point, do you see the blinding power of sin in all of that?

[12:29] You can grow up in a Christian home. You can grow up where the Bible is taught. You can grow up where you come to church every week. You can grow up in the very home of Jesus Christ. You can have him as your brother and still be lost and go to hell because you're blinded to who he is and your need of him for what he came to do.

That's Jude. That's Jude. Brother of James. Brother. Stepbrother. To the Lord Jesus Christ. But at some point, God gave Jude a new heart and he saw Jesus for who he was.

No longer did he see him as a deranged elder brother with some far out ideas. Now he sees him as Jesus Christ. The long promised Messiah.

Here he is. It's this one that I grew up with and I didn't even know who he was. He is Jesus Christ. Verse 4 says our only sovereign and Lord.

That's language given to God. The only true despot who rules over all. The only master and Lord of the universe.

[13:39] It's him. Jesus. And he repented of his wickedness, his wicked thoughts of Jesus, his wicked unbelief of Jesus, and his words and he trusted him as his divine savior and bowed his heart before him as his Lord to be served as a servant.

So Jude does not write Jude a brother of Jesus Christ but rather a servant of Jesus Christ. He regards it as more important to be Jesus servant than to be Jesus stepbrother.

to be related to him by grace than to be related to him by birth through the common mother. So the author of our letter is a converted Jude and with a different view of his brother Jesus he has a different view of himself.

He once thought of himself as his own master. I choose what I want to do all day long. I do what I want, when I want, how I want, that was Jude. And then he came to see who Jesus was and he repented in dust and ashes and he trusted in him and he said I am your servant.

Jude knew what a servant was. They filled Palestine. They were slaves, bond slaves. That means from the moment they woke up to the time they went to bed they didn't live for themselves but for a master who told them what to do, when and where and how.

[15:17] James says that would be, or Jude says that would be me. I am a slave of Jesus Christ. And he counts that slavery as an honor.

Indeed he counts it as true freedom. To be a slave of Jesus is to be free, to be what I was created to be in the first place. And he probably, in the right sense of the term, writes, Jude, a servant servant of Jesus Christ.

He's one of those servants who is happy to serve his master and though at the end of six years the Hebrew servant and slave was to be set free, if he enjoyed and loved his master he could come and put his ear to the door frame and have the master bore a hole with an awl through his ear, marking him as a slave for life.

And Jude says, I'm a lifer. I am a slave of Jesus Christ and don't want to be anything else. What about you?

Are you a slave of Jesus or a slave to your own sin, to your own self, to this world, to the devil himself? You see, until you stand alongside of Jude as a slave of Jesus Christ, you will not properly receive the message of Jude because he's bringing us the word from his master.

[16:44] These aren't just his words, this is the master's message being sent through his servant Jude. So you must know that Jude is simply a servant of a great master and Lord and sovereign and so receive this letter from him, but stand beside him as a slave, as a servant of Jesus and say, Lord, what would you have me to do?

That's how we receive this letter from Jude. All right. That's its author. What about the recipients? Who is Jude writing to in this letter? Well, he's writing to believers.

We can sense that from the letter. But who were the original believers? It's for us, since we are believers, all scripture is written for us. We're not told where these believers lived.

Very possibly this was a follow-up letter of Peter's letter, and if so, then possibly he's writing to the same people that Peter wrote to, the elect of God scattered throughout Asia Minor.

But we're not told. Though he does not state their specific location, he does something even better. He describes them.

[17:58] He gives three descriptive statements that are true of them. Three things that are true of every real Christian, whether he's in Asia Minor or in Bremen, Indiana.

Isn't that better than just telling us that he's writing these things to some people in Asia Minor? We might think that it doesn't have to do with us. No, he doesn't tell us where they are. He tells us what they are. And if you're a Christian, this is true of you.

This is to be a part of your self-conscious identity. This is to be a part of what you walk around from the moment you get up in the morning and look in the mirror and you say, who are you? This is to be part of the answer right here this morning.

You're to walk around your day saying, I am one who is called. I am one who is loved. I am one who is kept. Those three things are true of me as a Christian, a soldier in the army of my commander Christ.

Jude loves triads, groups of three, and we'll find bunches of them in his letter. Groupings of three. And this is the first one that we have.

[19:08] It's oozing with comfort, dripping with encouragement for soldiers who are going to be engaged in an all-out war for the souls of men and the truth of the gospel. First of all, you must know that you are called to those who have been called.

It's an oft-given description of the Christian in the New Testament. To the called, to those called at Rome, and so on. Now, there are two kinds of calls in the Scripture.

There's the general call, it's the general invitation that goes out to all men, whether you're lost or saved. Come to Jesus Christ. That's the call, the general call that goes out to all men.

But they're deaf and they cannot hear. And so, they will not come. come. So, God gives a special call, an effectual, effective call to all his elect.

They too are deaf and cannot hear. But the effectual call is a call in which the invitation goes out, come to Christ, but along with the invitation goes out the power of God to change the ear and to make it hear, to change the heart that doesn't want to have anything to do with Jesus and to draw that person to come to Christ.

[20:31] They are the called. They've been called out of the world and brought to Jesus Christ to faith in him. It awakens the sinner. It unstops his ear.

It changes his heart. It makes him willing to come to Christ and it effectively draws and brings him to Christ. That's the call that Jude is speaking of here.

He couldn't speak to Christians as the called if it simply meant the general call because that means he'd also be speaking to those who are lost and reprobate and go to hell. No, he's talking to Christians here and he says you are the called to those who are called.

It's what Paul says and we'll be getting to it I'm sure in 1 Thessalonians that I know that you're some of the chosen because when my gospel came to you it came not simply with words but also with power with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction and so when that call goes out in a demonstration of the Spirit's power that brings the person effectively to Christ that's the called it's those that Paul writes of in Romans 8 in verse 30 those he predestined he also called and those he called he also justified and those he justified he also glorified everyone that he called effectively brought to Christ are those who are justified and will be glorified there's no fallout for the one who is called this call is given only to those he predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his son Romans 8 29 and 30 so you're a soldier and you're going out to battle and you're seeing people who claim to be

Christians and now they're casualties to some false doctrine to some false gospel they've walked away from Christ and you're trembling in your boots and you're saying how can I go into this battle well to those who are called oh you've been predestined from the beginning you've been called to Jesus Christ everyone called will be justified and glorified so to arms men to arms women with confidence whatever else is true of you dear Christian dwell on this you've been called called out of darkness oh how we lived in darkness and called into his wonderful light we now see what we didn't see before we see Jesus and glories in him we never saw before but we see his world and we see his glory in the world in ways that we never saw before and we see him in his people and we see him in events of history and we see him in events of our lives we were in the dark but we've been called out of darkness and into his wonderful light we've been called out of our bondage to sin into the glorious freedom of the children of God so we walk in freedom because we've been called out of bondage we've left our sins and chains behind we're free we've been called out of this perishing world to belong to Jesus

[23:50] Christ to have fellowship with Christ these are phrases from the New Testament called into fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord whom to know is eternal life and whose loving kindness is better than life we've been called to be saints we've been called to a living hope we've been called to a living eternal inheritance we've been called to share in the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then on top of it all we know that is Romans 11:29 says that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable he doesn't call you and then have a recall and put you back out no without repentance without revoking the calling of God so if you look in the mirror you must think of yourself soldier as called of God you've been called so realize it count on it think of it and walk worthy of it secondly to those who are not only called but who are loved by

God the father oh drink that in for a while that you are precious to God he delights in you now this too is more than his general love he has a general love for all mankind he feeds them he gives them sunshine and rain from heaven the righteous and the unrighteous alike but he has a special love self as those who are specially loved in an intimate relationship with God that is that of a father and a son that of a bridegroom and the groom you're loved by God and that love is the fountain out of which all of his saving activity flows yes it's because he loved you because he chose to set his love on you that he called you to himself that he justifies you that he will one day bring you to heaven and glory what will

God not do for those that he loves so in all of our battle scars and fights in this battle of the ages we are more than conquerors through him who loved us because we are convinced that nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord you see that's what this battle is about Satan is jealous there's this love thing going on between God Father Son and Holy Spirit and redeemed sinners and the the Father loves them and they love him and Satan is jealous and he wants to break up that relationship and so he sows false doctrine about God he's not as good as you thought he was and he would get his thinking wrongly about God and about the gospel he's out to pull us apart and we are so fickle that we listen to him maybe our love toward

God in Christ wanes and maybe your love this morning is weak for the Savior but oh you must know that this love of God is not like your love it doesn't rise and fall this love of God doesn't start and stop from everlasting to everlasting his love is with those who fear him his love never had a beginning his love for you will never have there was never a time when Jesus didn't love you he loved you when you were nothing but a thought in his creator mind he loved you as he created the world he loved you as he formed you in your mother's womb he he loved you when he came into the!

world and died! on the cross he loved you when he rose again and went into heaven he loves you this morning as much as he ever loved you and there will never be a time dear Christian when he does not love you does that not put some legs under you soldier as you go into this battle for the souls of men drink it in brothers drink it in sisters do you think of yourself this way I the love God has for us John says in 1st John 4 we know it and we rely on it leaning on the everlasting arms of love we lean we rely we trust we rest in his love oh love that will not let me go I rest my weary soul in thee here's a resting place for weary soldiers the love of Jesus the love of our heavenly father soldier you're called soldier you're loved and thirdly you're kept see it in the text kept by

[29:06] Jesus Christ now this is the answer to why you're still a Christian we could talk about why you ever became a Christian we have talked about that it's because God set his love on you from

eternity past and in time he called you to himself that's why you are a Christian why are you still a why have you made it ten years fifty years well because you are kept by Jesus Christ that's it we're always in danger in this raging battle for the souls of men we live in the presence of our enemies the world the flesh and the devil and these are enemies too strong for us and we're too foolish and we're too easily deceived and we quit too early we'd never make it no if I'm still standing it's because Jesus has kept me he's kept me his sheep may safely graze because he says I give to my sheep eternal life

I don't give them life for a while I give them eternal life and they will never perish no one can snatch them out of my hand I'm keeping them who is stronger than Jesus there's your security there's your comfort soldier as you're moving into this battle that's out for your soul Jesus keeps you Jesus protects you Jesus guards you he says I've come to do the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all that he has given me but will raise them up at the last day oh drink that in I will lose! he keeps so well that not one under his care will ever be lost now King David was a type of Christ and as a boy as a shepherd he's a type of the good shepherd and you remember when a bear or a lion came kids and took away one of his father's sheep that David ran after him and grabbed that old bear by the face and slew him and rescued the sheep and brought him back to the flock so that not one was missing that's just a picture a type of the one who is coming who is the good shepherd and when his sheep that the father had given him to guard and to protect when his sheep were in danger when you and I dear Christian were exposed to the wrath of God that would have destroyed us in!

forever he stepped in and he said father curse me that they might never never be cursed yes he rescues he keeps he saves he preserves all that the father has given not one will be lost but he will raise them all up blessed sheep to have such a shepherd keeping know as you go out into the fray as you march into the battle that Jesus is keeping you you're right there in his hand and you cannot be lost though the whole battle is about trying to get people eternally lost you are safe in his hands one day in the battle Peter was bested by the enemy wasn't he the Lord Jesus said Simon Simon Satan has asked to sift you as wheat shake you around and destroy you but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail and when you are recovered strengthen your brothers and then he takes them into the garden of

Gethsemane and he says men you must watch and pray that you not fall into temptation the spirit is willing but the body is weak and Peter slept he did not watch and pray and he denied the Lord three times with cursing and oath but Jesus prayed for him didn't he Peter slept but Jesus never praise the Lord in joyful number your protector never slumbers if he sleeps we're goners we're casualties in the war but he that keepeth Israel will never slumber or sleep now the battle is real the bullets are not rubber they're real bullets the doctrines being circulated today can damn your soul it's not that the dangers are just pretend it's for real the battle is real the stakes are high and many are falling away and are following

[34:03] Christ no longer they've been deceived by false gospels! they've been led astray by damning doctrines and Jude is warning us that we are being assaulted by these soul killing doctrines dangers and he's going to tell us in this letter about those who fell from their privileged status and so were condemned and destroyed Israelites who were redeemed out of Egypt and slavery there who nevertheless were destroyed in the desert because of their unbelief we're going to hear of others who were privileged like the angels like those that we read of today in Isaiah oh but some of them left that position and fell and are being reserved for everlasting destruction and we might have been baptized with someone who this day is not walking with

Christ but has forgotten Christ and is living in the world and is heading for destruction and we say and I'm in this battle how do I know I won't fall well here's the answer Jesus keeps you the warnings are real he's going to call us to our responsibility to watch and pray to build yourself up in your most holy faith keep yourselves in God's love hate even the garment stained by corrupted!

He's telling us to fight as though our lives are very eternal souls depended upon it war is frightful and these warnings are of real dangers and the warnings of judgment are meant to keep us from falling to keep us from listening to false doctrines to keep us trusting in Christ so even now before he warns us Jude greets us as those who are kept by Jesus Christ and notice how the letter ends verse 24 to him who is able to keep you from falling the one who is able to keep you from falling and is able to present you faultless before his presence with great joy and without fault the only God our Savior isn't that wonderful he starts with being kept by Jesus Christ he ends with the one who is

able to keep you from falling the whole warning call to arms starts and ends with this security! Jude bookends his warning and his call to arms with this precious promise that Jesus is keeping us surely Jude is pointing us to where our confidence for standing must rest oh Lord Jesus keep me from falling help me or I will surely fall hold me up quicken faith and repentance in me oh trembling is good if it draws us away from any self reliance to cast our whole trust on Jesus and Jude is going to make us tremble and he is chasing us into the arms of the one who can keep us from falling who will keep us he keeps all that the father has given so that's the first triad the first triplets called loved kept that's your identity soldier dwell on it it's what

Christ is for us look and live and then he gives another triad in the greeting and there's really none quite like it in the New Testament it's uniquely Jude's it's his desire and prayer for us and for his audience mercy peace and love be yours in abundance his prayer is that these three things will be theirs not in meager portions but in abundance not in scraps but in fullness not just added to you but the word is multiplied to you in ever increasing measure now this is further encouragement for the battle these are more than words of greetings on the page of a letter they are attributes of God that he manifests and pours out upon his people mercy peace and love so first of all mercy be yours in abundance mercy that's simply pity for someone who's in need pity for the wretched condition that they are in compassion for their guilt and their sin their poverty their need mercy is not something that we just need on the day of our conversion and that we will need in the day of judgment it's something that we need every day mercy is for sinners and because we go on sinning we always stand in need of mercy so we can always take the words to our mouth and to our heart of that man in the temple who prayed who would not so much as lift up his eyes and look but beat upon his breast and said

[39 : 37] God be merciful to me the sinner Christian there's never a day that that prayer would be wrong for you to it would be appropriate to pray it right now and tomorrow and the next day until that day that you see the judge have mercy on me the sinner for Jesus sake and when you pray it you must know that God has mercy for us not just a little but in abundance he is plenteous in mercy the psalmist writes he is rich in mercy his mercy is the overflowing fountain of every blessing that we have you know we don't deserve any of his blessings that that means that any blessing you have you can take it like you would something you buy at the grocery store and you look at the ingredients and the first ingredient you'll find on there is mercy whatever it is that

God has given you whatever blessing you have okay you take down your wife! mercy it's mercy that God gave mercy is stamped on all our blessings we swim daily in his mercy it's new every morning it keeps coming to us there's no end to it minister Alexander White had some legal work to be done and so he stopped by the office of his 80 year old lawyer friend and after the business of the day was conducted the old lawyer pushed aside all the papers and looked directly in a clear path over to Dr.

White and he asked him this penetrating question have you any word for an old sinner and it took Dr.

White by surprise this this was a godly old man he counted him a dear saint on the very verge of glory and he was confused by the question and not knowing how to respond have you any word for an old sinner and then it came to mind something that he had shared in his pastoral visits that very day and he delights in mercy he delights in mercy Dr.

White received a letter from his old friend the next day telling him how he had been passing through a season of profound inward darkness depression but that the four words left with him by his friend had sent a flood of light into his soul and that light never left him until a few days later he entered into eternal light the very presence of Christ it's my joy to tell you this morning that whether you're an old sinner or a new sinner a rich sinner a poor sinner a strong sinner a weak sinner that he delights in mercy you need a lot of mercy and oh he's rich in mercy He's got enough more mercy than you've got sin and he delights to give it you must know that you must think of that as you go into battle he's got multiplied mercy for me sweet comfort in the raging warfare for my soul then seek him for it mercy be yours in abundance secondly peace be yours in abundance well there's a peace with

[43 : 32] God that you can't get more of because it rests on the finished work of Christ being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ I once was an enemy of God you can't get that peace multiplied because it rests on the finished work of Christ the moment you're made at peace with God you can't have any more peace with God but there is a peace of

God that fills our hearts it's the experience of peace it's that tranquility and rest of soul in which we know that it is well between my soul and my God we know that knowing that there are no worries about my greatest problem my sin before this holy God because my sin not in part but the whole has been nailed to the cross and I bear it no more I've got peace I've got peace and it's multiplied to me whatever my trial whatever my trouble whatever my storm and peace my my sense of calm goes out the window he comes and speaks peace to our souls this is the peace that we need in this war because ungodly men are trying to rob us of our relationship with

God and they're trying to steal our peace so mercy be yours peace be yours in abundance and lastly love be yours in abundance again it's not that God loves us too little and needs to love us more he is abounding in love the scriptures say but we need to have that love of God shed abroad in our hearts more and more don't we brothers sisters we need to have that love that is like an ocean and has no love to fill our hearts so that we know it we need to have what Paul prayed for the Ephesians power to grasp just how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is and to know this love that surpasses knowledge we need to have that love fill our hearts more and more wonderful thing in the battle the battle for our souls to be aware of this love to be constrained by it to be gripped by it to be held in its power that

God loves me in Jesus Christ with a never ending love mercy peace and love dear brother or sister these are already yours did you know that this is yours in Christ Jesus won these things for you instead of God's wrath and anger being against you he is one for you mercy love and peace so bask in that sunlight know that whatever I need I have it in Jesus whatever your neediness look to God then for mercy he pities the needy he delights in mercy whatever is threatening you in this war and causing you fear look to the God of peace he has more peace to make it multiply to you peace beyond understanding whatever is happening rest in his love know it and rest in it rely on it so whatever our situation there's a

God in all of these situations in whom we have this abundance of grace so Jude is teaching us to live by faith upon him see what you need in him what do you need I'm a basket case I need peace see it in him and draw it from him by faith as Calvin says live by what you find in Christ rather than by what you find in yourself you got fears and worry in there don't live on that find peace in Jesus and live upon what you see in him find mercy love and peace and live upon it so this is part of the security we have in our dangerous times of war we're in this battle that's raging for our eternal souls and who are we we're called we're loved we're kept and what is ours an abundant measure mercy love and peace take that with you into the battle soldiers only fight well when they are confident of their security in

Christ you know there have been many battles and wars in world history a lot of things have hinged upon those wars that have been fought and won and lost I want to tell you about one battle a real battle a real war that took place several thousand years ago you can read of it on your own in Numbers chapter 31 it was a battle between the armies of Israel the armies of the Lord and the Midianites and the Lord was going to take vengeance on the Midianites and so he commanded Moses to go and take out his vengeance upon the Midianites and so he chose a thousand men from each tribe of Israel twelve thousand men marched into battle against the Midianites and they fought and they won a great battle they killed every man they killed the five kings of [49:29] Midian and they took much plunder great victory given but the amazing thing about this battle was not what they took and who they killed but it was something that was found out after the battle was over and they came back to the base camp with Moses and they had roll call and the officers of the thousands came to Moses and said to him your servants have counted the soldiers under our command and not one is missing these weren't the days of smart laser bombs where you sit at a distance and just wipe out people from your safety chair just hand to hand combat spears and swords right up close knives and picks and axes whatever you could grab and not one of the soldiers of Israel was missing I believe it's a picture of what scene we have in the book of

Revelation where we're taken to the end of the battle and there's Christ and the nations raging in war against him and his people and they're fighting fearsome enemies but the lamb will overcome them because he is lord of lords and king of kings and with him who are those with him with him are the called yes the chosen yes the faithful ones all accounted for not one of them missing because they were called they were loved they were kept by God and supplied with abundant mercy love and peace let it be for your strengthening brother and sister let it be for your encouragement as we enter this study of the sins and calling us to the freedom of the sons of light thank you that we're not

left to ourselves in this battle for the souls of men and the truth of
God thank you that Jesus keeps us help us then to present ourselves every day as his servants we
ask in Jesus name amen let me just appeal to any here who are without!
Christ don't go on in! this battle without Christ get into this shepherd's fold get into his keeping there
alone is everlasting life