

Don't Carry Past Baggage

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What is it that God wants us to do? We've covered many things concerning what we do personally, individually, publicly and together, so let's look at it from a little different point of view, because one of the things that we discussed at the conference was how do we help the brethren with the problems, especially those who have gone through so many different churches?

One of the most difficult things that there is, is to be in the Church of God and have it disintegrate in front of you, or out from underneath you, or around you, and you don't know what on earth is happening, and why it is happening. Part of it is that this is a test that has gone on over and over again through the history of the Church in order to purify the Church, to test what we believe and so forth.

The book of Jude is an important book because it helps us understand part of some of the things we need to do. We're living in this age and the reason that these things are put in the Bible and preserved for us is because all of these things are necessary for us to receive and understand the instruction from God of what we need to do.

Here's a critical time when Jude wrote this the Church was also coming apart, splitting apart and going into the various beginnings of the pagan phases of what later became to be known as the Roman Catholic Church, etc.

I. Fight for the Faith/Stand for the Truth

Jude 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence... [he was really urgent about the matter] ...to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to **fervently fight for the faith**, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints."

We have to fight for the faith because there are a lot of people—ministers, teachers and so forth—to try and take you from God! To fight for the faith also means not only do we need to hold fast to the Word of God, but it means that those of us who are doing the teaching for the brethren—and whatever teaching you may do for other brethren—that ***we are to be steadfast in holding and preserving the Truth of God!***

If the Truth cannot be preserved within the Church of God, you can well know it's not going to be preserved anywhere in the world. That's part of our responsibility: ***stand fast and preserve the Word of God!***

When we read over in Rev. concerning the Church at Ephesus, it says that 'you have lost your first love.' I wonder if losing their first love could be this: It was at the city of Ephesus where John had died, where the New Testament was canonized. This is the very first place that accurate copies of the New Testament were copied and sent to the different churches all over the world.

Could it be that in referring to losing the *first love* they left off being diligent concerning the Word of God, which also led to some of the problems that we have had down through history, even to our day? I don't know, that's just speculation. But it just makes me wonder, because look at what we have seen today in people, supposedly grounded in the Truth, just all of a sudden giving up on it. Why? ***Here it is! We have to exercise diligence!***

He says, "...I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For **certain men have stealthily crept in...**" (vs 3-4). ***This is what has happened to the Churches of God!***

{Note video: *Jesuit Agenda for the Seventh Day Adventist Church*} When you see those videos you will know precisely what happened to the Worldwide Church of God. It was infiltrated, taken down and that was part of the punishment for sin, because ***they did not stand fast for the Truth!*** It's still going on.

Note book: *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight. Knight belongs to the Church of God Seventh Day. He's trying to wake up his brethren to the infiltration that has happened at their headquarters in Denver to where they are ready to start going to Sunday-keeping because of the infiltrators.

They are proposing the same thing they have always proposed: Let's have Sabbath services and Sunday services—step #1—same way with the Seventh Day Adventists.

I'm convinced that the Catholics are going to hold off direct persecution against us little groups because we don't matter in their eyes, simply because they're too busy building their great world-religion. While we have the time, we need to:

- fight for the faith
- preserve the faith
- teach the faith

This is the blessing of not having a vast huge organization and no hierarchy: ***No one can come in and take over and control!*** The best place to hide is in a hierarchy, so this will help us keep the faith, not only personally, but publicly.

It talks about "...ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God..." (v 4).

Then Jude talks about coming out of Egypt, the angels who sinned, Sodom and Gomorrah and all of those who have gone the *way of Cain*.

Verse 10: "As for these, whatever things they do not understand, they blaspheme; but whatever things they understand by instinct, as irrational brute beasts, **they are corrupting themselves in these things.** Woe to them! For they have walked in the **way of Cain...**" (vs 10-11).

- What is the *way of Cain*?
- What does that have to do with faithfully preserving the Word of God?

I'll tell you very simply what the *way of Cain* is: ***You decide you're going to tell God what He's going to do, and what He must accept!*** If I feel good in my heart and I want to bring something to God—though it's contrary to His commands—'God, You've got to accept it.'

That's why God said to Cain, 'sin lies at the door. If you do well, will you not be accepted?' That's what we find in the world today; everyone tells God what to do. That's ***the way of Cain!***

"...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam's delusion..." (v 11). *That is you can bring in pagan perversions and God must accept them!* It's the *way of Cain* built upon the superstructure of Balaam.

"...and have perished in the rebellion of Korah" (v 11). *Go back and read that; that was a special rebellion against Moses!*

No man sits in the seat of Moses today; you can be guaranteed that! They wanted to take over and do the things the way *they wanted* to do. You see how this builds, and he's using this as an example. These things have all affected the Church of God and we've lived through it.

- What must we do?
- How can we help the brethren?

Many come to me and say, 'What can I do?' Even ones that are in your own family or close friends that have been in the Church. I know that out our way there's a man in Hollister who helped us build our house clear back in 1978. It's all we can do

to even reach him. I'm sure you've experienced that, too.

Verse 16: "These are complainers *and* critics, who are walking after their own personal lusts, *while* their mouths are speaking great swelling words, flattering persons for the sake of advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 16-17).

That's why we have all their writings. How could they remember them unless they had them written?

I mean, most of us cannot even go to the store without a grocery list. Unless you have a cell phone and then you can call home and walk up and down the aisle: 'I'm going past the bread aisle, what do you need?' I've heard that! That's why God intended it to be written.

Verse 18: "Because they said to you that in *the* last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts. These are the ones who cause division; *they are* psychic, not having *the Spirit of God*" (vs 18-19).

In other words they're not using the Spirit of God. The Greek is 'psuche' and that's where we get *psychic* and *psychic phenomena* and things like this. It's actually telling us they're not just earthy, as the *King James* says, because what is the power behind that? *Satan!*

II. **Build on Faith**

Verse 20: "But you, beloved, **be building up yourselves** on your most Holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit, *so that* you keep yourselves in *the* love of God..." (vs 20-21).

That's a key to what we must be doing in our lives; that's a key in what we need to be doing in helping the brethren come out of the confusion.

"...*while* you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (v 21).

III. **Show Mercy**

Verse 22: "Now on the one hand... [this shows us how to deal with brethren that have been affected by this]: **...show mercy to those individuals who are doubting.**"

- show them mercy
- give them understanding
- talk to them
- encourage them

- pray for them.

Verse 23: "But on the other hand, save others with fear..." *There comes a time when they get so close to the edge of the line that you have got to remind them*, and it is a duty-bound obligation that we have if they are really ready to slip over the line, to encourage them by telling them,

Look, ***God has called you, don't give up on God for the sake of men!*** If you go too far, you need to be careful you don't commit the unpardonable sin!

That's what it's talking about here!

"...snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh" (v 23).

Compare that with the white garments that we are supposed to be having. If they go out and get involved in other religions, what do they have? *They have on other garments!*

Verse 24: "Now, to Him Who is able to keep them from falling... [that's all of us together] ...and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy, to *the* only wise God our Savior, *be the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 24-25).

IV. Pray for Them

Let's look at the next step that we need to do. This will help us a lot in many of our personal relationships; here's what we do:

1-John 5:13: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us**" (vs 13-14). *We can claim that promise! He will hear us!*

You're the ones that are going to have to do it, but maybe you can help retrieve some of them out the spiritual fire by praying for them. Part of the way to pray for them is this:

God, please intervene in their lives, because the circumstances that they are confronted with will help draw them back to You.

Remember this: ***As long as there is life there is hope!*** Never forget that! So, you pray for them.

Here's a guarantee, v 15: "And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him." *So, we could have a lot of answered prayer!* Sometimes it takes a long time continually praying.

If you are praying the same prayer continually because you're still expecting an answer—guess what? *That is not a vain repetition!* We're to continually beseech God until He answers (Luke 11). We may have to modify our prayer a little bit, because we need to conform it to the will of God. All of this each one of us can do.

Verse 16 is a key, and this will help us in our inner relationship with the brethren, with each other, with husbands/wives, and so forth. Whenever you see a wrong or a fault don't leap in like a lion and devour the prey. Here's a profound principle: ***If you see a brother or sister in fault:***

- Do you not think that God knows it? *Yes, indeed!*
- Who has the most power to change that individual?

Sometimes they're in no mood; you run up to them and say, 'Hey, don't you know you're really sinning?' *Get out of here, go away!*

Verse 16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask..." *You pray to God!*

Lots of times in husband/wife relationships do the same thing, pray and ask God to put it in his or her mind. Pray and ask God to intervene in that person's life. ***He will!***

"...and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*" (v 16).

This is what we should do. Pray for the brethren; continue to do so even though it looks like it's many years down the road and the problem is almost insoluble.

I had a man talk to me about a person he knows that has had difficulties for the past nine years. But God is intervening in their lives and circumstances to begin to change that person's mind. That's why it's important to pray.

Don't sit there and wring your hands and wonder what God is doing? ***He's purifying His Church! He's getting rid of the tares!*** Pray that God will bring all of those that are His together. They don't have to be with us necessarily. If they can, that's fine. If not, ***pray that they are right with God!*** That's fine, and whatever we can do to help them.

V. Do not let a man come between you and God!

Here's another thing that's very, very important because all of us have come from one of the Churches of God. We have gone through the process we have just talked about in Jude. Now what do we do?

Here's what each one of us needs to do, and also encourage those who are having problems. One of the key things that may be a triggering statement that will help people come back to their senses is this: ***Please, whatever your difficulties are, do not let a man come between you and God!*** Do not let *anyone* come between you and God!

Part of the problem is that when they see ministers do wrong, or brethren do wrong, then they get mad at God. Sometimes they feel very, very justified. Sometimes you don't even know what to think. I remember one time that at my lowest point—spiritually speaking—I didn't know what God wanted me to do, or where to go, or what He expected of me. I was out driving around—that's when I was a loan broker—and there's this hill here in Hollister and I climbed to the top of the hill and got up there and prayed. I said, ***'God, heal my soul!'*** because of all of the things that I had gone through.

I had to learn something very, very important from that. God heard and answered that prayer. Not right away, but He began at that time to answer that prayer and give me understanding as to what I was going through. To remain faithful to God was the paramount important thing. It's difficult when you go through a near faith-destruction experiences, and you suffer at the hands of brethren and ministers: 'We're your friends!'

- What do you do?
- Do you get bitter?
- Do you stay angry?
- How do you handle it?

VI. Don't bring your baggage from your past experiences

This is another thing that we all need to do: ***Don't bring your baggage from your past experiences***, whether in the Church or in the world. We have to do like the Apostle Paul did here, because he had gone through everything, his whole experience and his life. After he relates all the physical things that he did:

Philippians 3:7: "Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as loss* for the sake of Christ."

That goes back to when we were baptized; what was one of the things that we did? *Counted the cost!* Remember that? Do we love God 'more than father, mother, brother, sister, lands, children, wives, and yes, our own life also, *then we cannot be His disciple.*' This is what Paul is talking about. "...**the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted as loss...**"

Verse 8: "But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ." *You see his spiritual mindset, that he kept his mind on Christ!*

Go back and read in 2-Cor.11 all the things that the Apostle Paul went through. If your feelings are hurt, your ego is shattered, if you have problems with anger and bitterness, go back and read what the Apostle Paul went through, and then list out all that you went through, and I think you'll find that yours is a paltry, miserable little list and you're really *feeling sorry for yourself!* Maybe you can help some of the brethren get out of their difficulties by remembering that, too.

Verse 9: "[That I] **may be found in Him**, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by the* faith of Christ..."

If your faith is lacking or wavering, do just like the man in Mark 9 when the Lord said to him concerning casting the demon out of his son: 'Do you believe?' *Yes, I believe, but help my unbelief, Lord!* Let Him give you of His faith! "...which *is by the* faith of Christ..."

"—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; that I may know Him, and **the power of His resurrection**..." (vs 9-10). *That's why we're here!* I cannot help but think what a fantastic day that is going to be!

God says in Isa. 65 that it is 'a whole nation born in one day,' which is a prophecy of the Church! When we come to the end of the line we're weak, we're dilapidated—the Bible calls it *corrupting*—but don't worry about it, that's all ***the process of faithfulness!*** God is still with you. God promises that He *will not* abandon you when we're old and gray.

"...and **the fellowship of His sufferings**..." (v 10). We can't have that exactly in the way that the Apostle Paul did, but just look at it this way: ***Christ is fellowshiping in your sufferings*** and took upon Him your sufferings so that *you* can have faith and trust in Him.

"...being conformed to His death; if by any

means I may **attain unto the resurrection of the dead**" (vs 10-11). The whole purposed in everything we're doing is to:

- keep our mind focused on *the goal*
- keep our mind focused on *the calling*
- keep our mind focused on the fact that *we are in training for eternal life*

If we do and we keep that, I guarantee:

- you will want to *pray*
- you will want to *study*
- you will want to *do the things that God wants you to do*
- you will not desire to sin
- you will want to overcome sin by the power of God's Spirit

VII. **Forget what is behind**

Here's another great thing we need to do: *Realize every day*—even the athletes understand that—to just take it day-by-day. They will ask a pitcher: a pitcher lost two games in the ninth inning when they were ahead by run and had two outs, and he threw a homerun ball two days in row! Of course, the press is going to be there and ask: 'How do you feel?' *That's a dumb question!* How are you going to handle this? *I put it behind me! I still have more to do! I'll overcome it!*

That's what Paul is talking about here. Not that he's already attained, but he's still striving.

Verse 12: "Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but **this one thing I do**—..." (vs 12-13). *This is how we are able to not drag the baggage from the past into today:*

- regardless of what it was
- regardless of how it came about
- regardless of who may have perpetrated it
- regardless of your own personal sins

"...forgetting the things that are behind..." (v 13). *That's important!*

We come to God and He says that He forgives our sins and iniquities and remembers them no more. **God does not expect us to remind Him of the sins that He has already forgotten!**

We need to have a remembrance of *truth and righteousness* and a forgetfulness of sin! What are you doing in that process with the use of the Holy Spirit by Christ? *You are reprogramming your mind!*

VIII. **Press Toward the Goal**

"...and reaching forth to the things that are ahead, I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (vs 13-14). *That's what we are to do!* When you are dealing with brethren that need help, encourage them in the same way.

- What if they're hung up on a minister that did them in? *Say, 'You're not the only one!'*
- What if they've had brethren betray them? *Remind them that Judas betrayed Christ!*

So you have been betrayed; so you have been mistreated; was not Christ? *Yes, indeed!* We need to take the same attitude: **"...press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

IX. **Have the Mind of Christ**

Verse 15: "So then, let as many as *be* perfect **be of this mind...**" That's how you can overcome, and that is how we can help the brethren overcome.

Some of the people that God is going to call in the future from out of the world—and He's going to do it, because we'll also see that's part of what we need to do; *God will do it*—they've got to take the same attitude and the same mind, and that comes with the Spirit of God. "...let as many as *be* perfect **be of this mind...**"

Here's a promise: "...And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you" (v 15).

When you go along and all of a sudden you find sin your mind, Who is revealing that to you? *God is!* For what purpose? *So you can repent!* So you can bring every thought into the captivity of Christ. This is all a part of the process.

Encourage the one who may have been hurt and say, 'Remember this, here's a promise, if you come back to Christ understand that **all things**—it doesn't say some things, part of the things or most of the things or hopefully—but **all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose!** You can tell them this:

Let the things that you have gone through with the Spirit of God work for good, that it can bring about some change in your life. God will make it happen! *He will do it!*

We are going to face some times down the road that are going to get progressively more difficult and harder to handle if we don't keep this

attitude. It's not just keeping the attitude, we are to set an example. *No, that's not true! We are **to be** an example by what we do, say and think*; then we become the example.

We are to keep our mind on this so that when it comes down—we are getting almost ready for the next to the last step of *the mark of the beast*, which is a national identity card with a GPS chip in it. I know that when I first read the report that they just voted on it in the House of Representatives and passed it by nearly a hundred votes and they didn't even read the bill and they don't even know what is in it. They have just voted for a police state in America! When I read that I was depressed! I was! Then I moped around about a day or day and a half, and I thought *this is stupid!* Is my worrying about it going to change it?

Everyone who worries, be thankful when you have nothing to worry about. Don't worry if you have nothing to worry about. *Rejoice!* Remember this: Have concern but don't worry. *What worrying*—that I have lost sleep over, or have I have not been able to think or do my job, or I've been depressed about—*ever changed a thing? Not one!* So, I had to have a little talk with myself. It's okay to talk to yourself. It's okay to answer yourself, as long as it's according to the Scripture. You need to have those talks with yourself every once in a while.

I had to say to myself: 'Look, you've got to get your mind focused on what is right. That's the only way you're going to be able to handle it.'

This is what God wants us to do. This is part of it. So, when people come from other churches... If some come with us who have been with the Wisconsin experience, it's going to be a difficult thing for them. But this is exactly, precisely what they need to do. Remember that those who saw them die, shot by someone who is supposed to be a church member, and they are resurrected and they are on the Sea of Glass and they're looking for you, but you got so upset and miserable and rotten and gave up on God and left in a huff and you lost out on it. They need this very thing.

Verse 16: "Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, be imitators together of me, and bear in mind those who walk in this way, as you have us *for an example*" (vs 16-17). *Then it talks about those who go contrary to it and everything!*

Verse 20: "But for us, the commonwealth of God exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ; Who will transform... [this is what God is going to do to us in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye] ...our vile

bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself" (vs 20-21).

If we have that goal constantly before us, every day; and if when you have problems and difficulties where you get down and discouraged, don't stay down and discouraged very long. Ask God to help you and lift you up. You may not necessarily be filled with joy, but you have:

- peace of mind
- the assurance
- God's Spirit
- God working with you

(go to the next track)

Here is collectively what we need to do. We've talked about what we do individually. The truth is this: How you are in your life during the week—day by day—in study and prayer and growing close to God—is then how you will be on the Sabbath Day. If you are doing the things that I mentioned already, then when we come together on the Sabbath Day, then the Sabbath becomes a powerful, spiritual experience and tool for us. That's what God wants it to be.

Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love..."

Remember, we have the Holy Spirit that is called *the Comforter!* That comforts us in all trouble, all distress, all problems, all difficulties. We may get frustrated; we may have to fight our carnal nature—which we do, but there is that comfort of love.

"...if any fellowship of *the* Spirit..." (v 1). When we come together on the Sabbath, there is God's Spirit, because this is the Sabbath Day and it's the day that He has appointed. If we use the Sabbath Day in the right way and worship God, His presence is there because He promised it. He said, 'Wherever two or three are gathered together, there I am in the midst of you.'

With Christ in us you will see how we can have good relations with one another, by this very process.

"...if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy, **that you be of the same mind**, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing" (vs 1-2)—*attaining to the Kingdom of God and the resurrection of the dead!*

Verse 3: "Let nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself."

Love the brethren, love each other; don't bring in carnal attitudes of judging, condemning and putting down. If you see a problem, pray about it. God can change that individual. If you expect God to work with you, to change you, cannot God change someone you pray for? *Absolutely!*

So that when we come together we have love, we don't have a group over here with this little doctrine, a group over there with tongues—like the Corinthian Church or the Worldwide Church of God. You go to a big church and all the troubles and gossip going on, and this group over here talking and another group talking over there. 'What's up?' *Well, I called Pasadena and I talked to so and so!*

Vomit it out! When we come together, God wants us to have the love of His Spirit and each other. That's what He's talking about here.

Verse 4: "Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. **Let** this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (vs 4-5). Notice that you have to *let it*, which means you:

- desire it
- want it
- pray for it
- study for it

and this is a continuous process!

After it shows what Christ did and what He went through, v 12: "So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

We are going to make it! Brethren, we are going to be in the resurrection! As long as we're faithful and love God, ***we will be there!*** You have a guarantee of it, because Christ said you would! *Heaven and earth and His words will not pass away!* You have a guarantee that your own physical body is the down payment on the resurrection. It's got to be buried first, or changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

"...not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God Who works in you both **to will** and **to do** according to *His* good pleasure" (vs 12-13).

There's another thing we need to pray for: *that we will desire the will of God!* Not our will, but God's will!

- He'll show us!
- He'll lead us!
- He loves us!

- He's called us!

We will attain it!

If we can apply these Scriptures and help the brethren in need, and also reach out to new people. Let's reach out to the brethren who are in need. Let's help them, ***and through it:***

- you're going to grow in grace and knowledge
- you're going to grow in experience
- you're going to grow in the love of God

This is what God has set before us!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Jude 3-4, 10-11, 16-25
- 2) 1 John 5:13-16
- 3) Philippians 3:7-17, 20-21
- 4) Philippians 2:1-5, 12-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 11
- 2 Corinthians 11
- Mark 9
- Isaiah 65

Also referenced:

- Video: *Jesuit Agenda for the Seventh Day Adventist Church*
- Book: *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-4-14
Reformatted/Corrected: 10/2019