

Jude v 1 & 2

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Preacher: Peter Robinson

[0 : 00] Thank you.

And because we've had a little break over Easter, we were back to Exodus this morning. But as you know, we sort of finished Colossians around about, I don't know when it was, February, March sort of time. So we're back in the New Testament again, and we're going to look at a very little letter, which is the letter of Jude.

So if you're not sure where that is, and if you've never read it, go right to the back, Revelation, and it's the book before Revelation. The little letter, just two pages before the book of Revelation. We're going to read the whole of the letter this evening. And then we're going to just look at the first couple of verses later on, and then work our way with God's help in the coming weeks, next few weeks through this letter.

[1 : 41] So, letter of Jude. It's just one chapter, okay, but there's 25 verses. So let's read God's word together. 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 changed the grace of our God into a license for immorality and denied Jesus Christ our only sovereign and Lord.

Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority, but abandoned their own home, these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great day.

[2 : 58] In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings. But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, The Lord rebuke you.

Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand. And what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals, these are the very things that destroy them. Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain. They have rushed for profit into Balaam's error. They have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm.

Shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain blown along by the wind. Autumn trees without fruit, and uprooted, twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame.

[4 : 15] Wandering stars for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied about these men. See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against them.

These men are grumblers, fault finders. They follow their own evil desires. They boast about themselves, and flatter others for their own advantage. 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 will follow their own ungodly desires. These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts, and do not have the Spirit. But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith, and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

Be merciful to those who doubt. Snatch others from the fire and save them. To others show mercy mixed with fear, hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

[5 : 31] To him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you before his glorious presence without fault, and with great joy, to the only God our Saviour. Be glory, majesty, power, and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore.

Amen. So back, back to Jude, and the beginning, the first few verses of this little letter.

Let's just read them again, verses 1 and 2. Jude, 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.

Quite a long time ago, and I don't know where it was, I saw a sort of a strip cartoon, in a Christian newspaper, or magazine, or something, I don't think it was ET, they wouldn't have this sort of thing in there, but it had a cartoon of the door of an office, of a minister, the pastor of the church, and on his door, was written, something like this, Reverend Doctor John Smith, BD, brackets, Honours, M. Phil, brackets, Distinction, BA, brackets, First, RSVP, PTO, QPR, Esquire, and underneath in tiny letters, and your humble servant.

You can learn a lot about a person, by what they have to say about themselves, and when we come to this letter, Jude, of course, immediately our question is, who is this Jude, who wrote this letter?

[7 : 11] What do we know about him? What sort of person was he? How can we begin to grapple with the letter he's given? Well, as I'm sure you're aware, unlike Paul, and Peter, and John as well, of course, Jude only writes one very brief, small letter.

It's not addressed to a particular church, or group of churches, as in the case of Corinthians, and Romans, and so on, and even Peter's letters are written to those exiles, in various parts of Asia Minor, as it was then, and his name, of course, is not familiar to us, necessarily, because of those early years in the book of Acts, we don't read about him very much, or come across him as being one of the missionary partners of Paul, or any of those things, and perhaps, as you've read through the letter with me just then, you might think, well, he sounds a bit of an arrogant sort of a man, a bit of a harsh sort of a man.

He calls other teachers fault finders, grumblers, dreamers. He talks about people being blemishes, and talks about them being godless, and all.

He seems rather a harsh and very, perhaps, you might say, even unchristian sort of a man. Well, to think of him in that way, as a fault finding, sort of nitpicky type of man, will be a great mistake, because, as I hope you saw, there is other elements of his letter, which speak of his very tender heart, where he speaks there near the end, in verse 22, be merciful with those who doubt, snatch others from the fire, and save them, to others show mercy.

And so, if we want to know who Jude is, and what sort of man he is, who writes this letter, then we need to, first of all, consider, how he introduces himself, just like Paul, and Peter before him, and other of the New Testament writers, as was the way, particularly in that first, second century, instead of signing your name, at the bottom, you signed your name, at the beginning, so people knew, who it was, the letter was coming from, seems actually, to be much more sensible, than putting it at the bottom.

[9 : 19] I'm sure you've all had the experience, of getting a letter in the post, and you read it through, thinking, who on earth is this from? And you sort of have to look on the back, oh, now I understand, what they're on about, because I didn't know, who it could be. So he introduces himself, and he gives himself, this title, Jude, a servant, of Jesus Christ.

It's again, something quite familiar to us, Paul, often opens his letters, with that phrase, that introduction, so does Peter as well, and James, likewise, in his letter.

The phrase, a servant, wasn't, wasn't as we might think of, Downton Abbey, you know, an upstairs, downstairs, where it was somebody, who sort of, waited on the nobility. Really, the phrase, doesn't mean somebody, who had a sort of free will, to be able to leave, the service, of their employer, at all.

It was rather used, as someone who was a slave, usually a bond slave, who had, who was owned, by somebody else. And more often than not, it meant somebody, who had, who had sold themselves, voluntarily, into slavery.

They had perhaps, become bankrupt, or had no employment, or nothing like that, nothing to pay a debt. And so they actually, sold themselves, into slavery, to make ends meet, to be able to survive. [10:34] And so, we find that, Jude is declaring himself, a servant, by choice, of Jesus Christ. He hasn't been forced, to be a servant, made to be a servant.

It's a willingness. And again, there's a challenge, to us straight away. Am I a willing servant, of Jesus? Do I serve him, because I love him? Do I serve him, because I want to?

Or is it because, I have a sense of duty, or feel I must? But he says, that he's a servant, of Jesus Christ, by decision, but a brother, of James, by birth.

So who is this, brother of James? Why does he introduce himself, in this way, as a brother of James? Well we need to do, a little bit of digging, a little bit of, who do you think you are, type of understanding.

Jude doesn't describe himself, in any other way, but as James' brother. Well there was only, really one James, in the New Testament, who everybody knew.

[11:33] One James, who was well known, in the church. Paul writes about him, in Galatians chapter 1, verse 19, as being the leader, of the church, one of the pillars, of the church, in Jerusalem.

And he appears, in Acts 12, and chapters 15, as well as the chairman, of the Jerusalem council. When they, when all the believers, met together, to make a decision, about what to do, with the Gentiles, who are coming, into the church.

But even in one sense there, James, Jude is not name dropping, he's not sort of saying, you know, I'm the brother, of the bishop, or I'm the brother, of the really important person, in the church, in Jerusalem.

Rather, he's just identifying himself, simply. But to his readers, since both Jude, and James, were very common names, and we know, of course, two of Jesus' disciples, had Jude, or Judas as their name.

Bit like, of course, I'm sure, when we do the same thing, don't we? When we go and meet somebody, and it's somebody, who knows our spouse, oh, you're so and so's husband, you know, or you're so and so's wife.

[12:33] Yeah, that's right. Or maybe introduce ourselves, in that way. So Jude, is doing the same. Now, what do we know about James, and Judas, and Jude? Well, we know that they were half-brothers, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were Mary's children, but were born to Joseph. Unlike, of course, our Lord Jesus, who was not fathered by Joseph, but by that immaculate conception, as we call it, that birth, that miracle, of incarnation.

In Matthew, in chapter 13, we read about this, because when Jesus goes to his own hometown, he begins to preach, and people turn and say, isn't this the carpenter's son?

Isn't his mother's name Mary? And aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, or Jude? Aren't all his sisters with us as well? Remarkably, James and Jude, as well as all the other brothers and family, at one time, thought Jesus was, well, literally, lay off his rocker.

They thought that he was somebody, who was, making publicity for himself, but they didn't believe in him as the Messiah. In John chapter 7, they, they tease him a little bit as well, because, they went up to the Jewish feast of tabernacles, and his brothers said to him, you ought to leave here, and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do.

[13:54] No one who wants to become a public figure, acts in secret, since you are doing these things. Show yourself to the world, even his own brothers, did not believe in him. So here, amazingly, is Jude, a half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But again, he doesn't introduce himself in that way, does he? He doesn't say, Jude, a brother of Jesus Christ, our Lord. No, a servant of Jesus Christ, a brother of James.

Beginning to get a picture of this man, as a man of humility, a man who is not wishing to put himself forward, a man who is not arrogant, but rather gentle and gracious.

Now, how both Jude and James came to faith in their half-brother, Jesus, how they came to acknowledge him as the Messiah, and ultimately their Savior, we're not told. In one sense, it doesn't

actually matter how they came to faith in him.

What matters most of all, is that Jude clearly has faith in him now. Notice how he speaks about the Lord Jesus. There in verse 4, he says, Jesus Christ, our only sovereign and Lord.

[15:06] Over in verse 21, he speaks about, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

And then verse 25, Jesus Christ, our Lord. So, we see that he is someone of real faith. And again, there's a lesson to us there, isn't it? Often, we can be strung up a little bit, or hung up a bit, about how we became a Christian, how we came to faith in Jesus.

For some of us, we may have been brought up in a Christian home, and it was a very gradual perception, and understanding, that Jesus was our Savior. And we may feel a little bit, well, that's not really a good enough testimony, about faith in Jesus.

So, some of us, it may have been in a great mission, like a Billy Graham crusade, or it may have been through the preaching one day, or through something else wonderful that God did. Most important thing, dear friends, is this, not how we became a Christian.

Most important thing is, am I a Christian? Today, is that faith in Jesus real, like Jude's? Doesn't matter how you came, whether you came through the wonderful blessing of Christian parenting, whether you came in another way, is Jesus your Lord and Sovereign now, is what matters most of all.

[16:23] And so we see here, Judas is someone, who has a great faith, in Jesus. And, a great sense, of servanthood.

See, that's the most important thing, really. It's not, our intellectual ability, it's not, our, qualifications, as I can put it, because we were born into nobility, or born into a, into a, this family, or that family, but is it that, we long to serve, the Lord.

Because, as we know, it's in serving the Lord, we find freedom. It's in serving the Lord, that we truly are liberated. It's in serving the Lord, and being submissive to Him, as we thought this morning, of being humbly, obedient to Him, that we find the fullness of life, and joy, and peace.

So, how do we serve? Who do we serve? Do we serve the Lord Jesus, in the way that we live? Do we serve Him, or do we serve our own desires, our own pleasures, our own will?

Jude, Jude was a man who, determined, he would first of all, serve Jesus. And then we, also learn a lot about a person, by, what they believe, a Christian is.

[17:41] About their understanding, of what a Christian is. And Jude, goes on, doesn't he, in verse 1, to talk about, those who are Christians, and how he describes them, how he explains, what has happened to them.

Now, some of us may, have a different translation, to the NIV, and the word order, might be slightly different, but, we're going to follow, the NIV word order here. I think it's helpful, particularly when he speaks, about being loved of God.

And, that seems to be, a theme, that runs through, the letter. Verse 21, keep yourselves, in God's love. It's there, and there again.

Now, the first thing, that Jude reminds us of, is, that believers, have been called, to those, who have been called. It's a, it's a theme, that keeps cropping up, throughout the New Testament.

Paul, speaks about it, in Romans 8, 28, in that very famous, and lovely verse, for we know, that in all things, God works for the good, of those, he loves, the called, according to his purpose.

[18:46] And later, in Romans, and chapter 8, verse 30, he says a similar thing, those he predestined, he also called, those he called, he also justified. It's, it's a common enough phrase, in the New Testament, and really it means, it's a shorthand.

It's a shorthand, for somebody who's a Christian. Somebody who's called, is somebody who's a Christian, or the called, are the Christians. It speaks really about, what theologians call, God's effectual call.

Which means, very simply this, that God, has made us Christians, by sending his Holy Spirit, into our lives, and bringing us to himself.

His effectual call, means that when God speaks, to a person, they cannot but help, but respond. It's powerful. The word of God is powerful.

We see that all the way, through the Bible, don't we? Right at the beginning of creation, God said, let there be light, and there was light. The very word of God, carries the very power of God, with it. We see it of course, in the wonderful, resurrection of Lazarus, as Jesus stands outside, the tomb of

the man, who'd been dead for four days, and simply speaks, Lazarus, come out.

[19 : 57] And Lazarus, came out. Powerful speech, powerful words, powerful God. And so, when we have been called, it means that God, spoke to our hearts, when we were dead, in our sins, and he called us to life, and called us, out of the tomb, out of that death, and into life everlasting.

Jesus made it very clear, didn't he? That in fact, it must be, that God calls us, and brings us, to Jesus. In John chapter 6, and verse 44, he says this, no one can come to me, unless the father, who sent me, draws him.

So there's that wonderful sense, we cannot, as it were, climb up to God, or draw near to God, but actually, it's God, who calls us to himself, and wonderfully, and marvelously, marvelously does that. So a Christian, someone who's been brought, to God, brought mightily into life, by God's sovereign power, and good pleasure. For Jude, our salvation, is God's work.

Being a Christian, is what God has done, just as he goes on, to speak about these things. Those who've been called, who are loved, by God the Father.

[21 : 16] What was the motive, for God calling us? Why did God, choose, as it were, to bring us, into this wonderful salvation, in Christ? What possible reason, could he have, to do such a marvelous thing, for sinful men, and women?

Well the only reason, we can come to, the only explanation, for God calling us, and saving us, from death and sin, is, his unconditional love. His unconditional love.

And of course, the best way, we can understand that, and the best word, that describes, God's unconditional love, is the word grace. Here's Ephesians, and chapter one. He chose us in him, before the creation, of the world, to be holy, and blameless, in his sight.

In love, he predestined us, to be adopted, as his sons. In accordance, with his pleasure, and will, to the praise, of his glorious grace. That's what grace is.

It's undeserved, it's unmerited. It's God loving us, even though there's nothing, lovely in us. We don't deserve, the salvation. We can't repay, this salvation.

[22 : 21] We have been loved, by God, to such an extent, and to such a cost, that he gave his own son, on our behalf. Therefore, if God has called us, by his power, and if he's called us, because of his amazing love, towards us, then as Christians, we have this assurance, and confidence, that we shall be kept, by Jesus Christ.

Do you notice that? Those who've been called, those who are loved, by God the Father, and those who are kept, by Jesus Christ. This is one of the, wonderful things, that Jude wants to bring out, all the way through his letter.

In fact, we have this almost bookend, don't we? Being kept by Jesus, in verse one, and then if you look, at the end, verse 24, to him who's able, to keep you. It's again, this sense of preservation, that we have, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This wonderful truth, that the God, who rescued us, and saved us, and by his power, brought us, into salvation, is a God, who'll never let us go. If he's the one, who began, the work in us, he's the one, who will finish, the work in us.

So in, in Hebrews, in chapter 12, we have that wonderful, truth, where Jesus is called, the author, and perfecter. The one who begins, and the one who completes.

[23 : 38] The alpha, the omega, the initiator, and the finisher, of our salvation. We have that confidence, in Philippians chapter one. As Paul says, being certain of this, that he who began, a good work in you, will carry it on, to completion.

One of the hard things, about being a Christian, at times is, we feel so very weak. We feel as if, we just can't go on. Opposition, persecution, the sinfulness, of our own hearts, the difficulties of life, the pressures, and we think, I don't know, if I'm going to make it, to heaven.

I don't know, if I'm going to make it, to retirement, or make it, to the end of this life. But you see, it's not dependent on us, on you and me. It's dependent upon, what Jesus has done for us, and what God has done for us, in Christ.

We are kept, by Jesus. There's that lovely picture, that Jesus gives, when he talks about himself, as the good shepherd, in John chapter 10. In that passage, he's been talking about, knowing the sheep by name, calling them to himself, bringing them into one flock.

And then he goes on, and he says this, my sheep listen to my voice, I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

[24 : 54] No one can snatch them, out of my hand. My father who's given them to me, is greater than all. No one can snatch them, out of my father's hand. So, your salvation and mine, your relationship with God, is in the two hand grip, of God the father, and God the son.

Tell me this, are you stronger, than God the father, and God the son? That you should be able, to pull yourself, out of his grip? Or remove yourself, from his care? Certainly not.

Yes, we will have ups and downs. We will sin, and we will fail. We will make mistakes, and we will get it wrong. But, we are kept, by Jesus. Kept in Jesus, it means, very much the same thing.

So we can learn a lot, can't we? About this man Jude, about his view, of God's salvation. That it's God, who's done it. And he's done it, out of love. And he's done it, through Jesus.

And he's safe in him. God, is going to finish, what he started in you, dear friends. And nothing in heaven, or hell, or earth, can stop him.

[26 : 01] So all the glory, and all the praise, belongs to God. We've got no reason, for being proud. We've got no reason, to think well, of ourselves, in comparison, to those who are not Christians.

We've got no reason, either, for being anxious, or fearful, about the future. Because we are kept, and saved, and preserved, by the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's the anchor. He's the refuge, for all our trials, and all our struggles. There is no power, in all the universe, that can take us, out of his loving grip.

Again, Romans 8. In all these things, we are more than conquerors, he says. For I know that, neither life, nor death, neither height, nor, neither height, nor depth, life, nor death, powers, or principalities, neither what is, or was to come.

Nothing can separate us, from the love of God, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So we know, that Jude was a man, who saw himself, as Christ's servant. He also saw himself, as being one, who is saved, by Christ.

[27 : 07] When we see him also, as a man, we might call it, of supplication. Man of prayer. Verse 2, really, in one sense, yes, it's a greeting, but it's a prayer. It's a prayer of his heart. It's a desire of his life, for the people, he's writing to.

Mercy, peace, and love, be yours, in abundance. So we learn a lot, about somebody, by how they pray. If they don't pray at all, then that's a problem, isn't it?

If we don't talk, with God, if we don't speak, with him, then we probably, don't have any relationship, with him. We don't pray, to make ourselves, a Christian, but because we're Christians, we pray.

We want to talk, to the Lord. We want to share, things with him. We want to praise him, and thank him. We want to bring, before him burdens. We want to pray, for one another. So what does Jude pray for?

What is his desire for? What does he see the need, of God's people being? Well, first of all, mercy. Why mercy? Well, we always need mercy, because we are always sinning.

[28 : 11] Isn't that true? We're always sinning, so we always need mercy. Even those of us, by God's grace, have been saved, and born again, and the Holy Spirit, lives in our hearts, we still get it wrong.

We still get it, we still sin. And so we need, every day, to rely on God's mercy, to cover over, our failings, and our sins. Here in Hebrews, in chapter 4, and verse 16, when the writer there, describes how Jesus, is our perfect high priest, who understands us.

So he says this, let us then approach the throne of grace, with confidence, so that we may find, mercy, and grace, to help us, in our time of need. God always deals with us, in mercy.

Remember that wonderful, parable that Jesus told, about the tax, the publican, and the Pharisee, and how they went to pray. And the man who was the Pharisee, who thought really, he was pretty a great guy, and God should be, well pleased with him, was the one who prayed, thank you God, that I fast twice a week, and I give my money, to the poor, and that I'm not like this sinner, this tax collector, this publican.

What about the publican, the sinner, what did he do? He simply fell on his knees, with his head down, and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And Jesus said, that man went away justified, that man went away accepted, because he saw his sin, and he looked to God, for mercy.

[29 : 38] And in one sense, one of our daily prayers, is Lord be merciful, to me a sinner. And we can trust, that he will be merciful to us, that he will be gracious to us, that he will not remove, his mercy from us, that he won't give up on us, because he is a God, of mercy.

So Paul, sorry, so Jude prays, Lord be merciful, with your people, deal with us in that mercy, which means that you don't, count our sins against us, but you deal with us tenderly.

And then he prays, for peace, mercy, peace. Again, one of the wonderful things, about being a Christian, is that we immediately, have peace with God. Romans chapter 5, and verse 1, therefore being justified, by faith, we have peace, with God.

Before we were enemies, with God, before we were, in a hostile relationship, with God, our sin, made us God's enemies. His anger against us, kept us at arm's length. But, when we were justified, when we were forgiven our sins, when we were made right with God, we had peace with God.

God is no longer, opposed to us. He's no longer against us. He's for us. You see, one of the other things, and certainly this is the thing, I believe that, Jude is talking about, he's not just talking about, our standing with God, he's talking about, the wonderful experience, of the Christian, which is to know, peace in our hearts, in the midst of, trouble and difficulties, times of strain, and discouragement.

[31 : 10] Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, talks about this peace, and where it comes from. He says this, do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts, and your minds, in Christ Jesus.

It's a real, felt experience, for the Christian, that no matter, what is going on, around about us, the things that would cause us, to be anxious, the things that would cause us, to be knocked off our, a pedestal in one sense, knocked off, knocked off our feet, none of those things, can do that, because God's peace, that assurance, that we are loved of him, that assurance, that we are in his care, that assurance, that he is working, all things for our good, is what floods, our hearts and minds, but often, we don't know that peace, because we, if I can put it this way, we take all the problems, to ourselves, don't we, we carry them ourselves, we keep them in our own hearts, we don't bring them to the Lord, as we should, there's a line in the hymn, what peace we often forfeit, when we don't pray, so he's praying, that the believers, would have peace, remember, just like us, Jude is writing to Christians, in a hostile world, in a world, which is opposed, to the believer, and as we go through the letter, we see that, it's a world, in which there's all sorts, of false teachers, and all sorts of deceivers, and all sorts of, well, satanic attacks, that are taking place, but his prayer is peace, and again, surely that's what, we should be praying for, one another, isn't it?

praying for one another, as we begin, as we know one another's circumstances, we know the difficulties we face, as we know the pressures, that one another are under, we need to be praying, for the Lord's peace, to fill our hearts, to know it, not just to know it, with our heads, we all know it, with our heads, we need the Holy Spirit, to make it, to transform it, or transfer it, from our heads, to our hearts, peace, and then his, third and final prayer, is for love, mercy, peace, and love, be yours, in abundance, I think he's talking there, not just about, the knowledge of God's love, for us, he's already mentioned that, and surely that's, taken, but I think he's talking about, that love between, brothers and sisters, in Christ, that love in the church family, that love between those, who are, the God's people, notice as well of course, that it's a love, towards those, ultimately, who are imperfect people, we see that, when we get to the end, don't we, be merciful, with those who doubt, snatch others, from the fire, and save them, to others show mercy, mixed with fear, he's talking about, how we show that love, to one another, and we are dealing with, sinful people, we're dealing with, fallen people, broken people, damaged people, that's us, we should expect, that we will, upset one another, we should expect, that we will do things, which are insensitive, or thoughtless, to one another, and how do we, overcome those things, how does, how do we prevent, those things from, as it were, scattering us, well love, when Peter writes, in his letter, chapter 4, verse 8, he says, love covers over, a multitude of sins,

John's letter of course, is all about, loving one another, isn't it, his first letter, if we love God, we love one another, we speak, love to one another, yes we have to speak, the truth to one another, but we speak it with love, we look to draw back, those who are in danger, we look to help, and support one another, we need to pray for love, in one sense, we need to pray for love, not only within, within our own hearts, but within the hearts, of one another, love, that will cover over, a multitude of sins, love that will help, and support one another, in difficult times, dear friends, what are we praying for, when we pray for the church, I'm taking it for granted, that we do pray for the church, because I know that you do, what are you praying for, for the people who, sit next to you in church, Sunday by Sunday, what are you praying for, your brothers and sisters in Christ, surely it should be these things, mercy,

peace, love, and isn't it lovely, that Jude doesn't say, mercy, peace, and love be yours, full stop, mercy, peace, love be yours in abundance, you know, one of the things, that's so sad, and I speak about myself, in this, is that we think,

God is stingy, we do, we think that we've got to, somehow twist his arm, to give us things, or the only just, about gives us enough, to keep us going, God is not stingy, is he, he's generous, he's lavish, he's a God, who gladly, gives everything, and holds nothing back, he who gave his own son, says Paul, how will he not give us, all things, and yet when we pray, we pray stingily, for others, but we need to pray, generously for others, Lord don't just give them, enough peace, to see them through, the situation, give them tons of peace, overflowing peace, we need to pray, for such love as well, not just enough love, to bear with one another, so we don't kill each other, or lay hands on one another, in an unbiblical sense, but we might really, have a love, which overflows, that's generous, we need to pray, big prayers, dear friends, because they can never, to be, be too big, for God, to handle, or supply, we've got a big God, and he can give abundance, let's pray, with that in mind, for abundance, not just enough, but more, than enough, and so we're beginning, to understand, this man Jude, aren't we, we're beginning, to see where he's coming from, when we come to his letter, we're going to be grappling, with difficult things, hard to understand things, things which seem, harsh, critical, but we need to understand, the man who's speaking them, he's not a man, of arrogance, and pride, who could have boasted, of his privileged position, as being a relative, of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the flesh, no, he's a man of humility, humility, am I humble, thought about this, this morning, do I rejoice, in the gifts, that God has given me, yes that's good, but do I boast of them, do I flaunt them, my riches, my possessions, my education, or actually, do I share them, with others, he's a man, who rejoices, in God's salvation,

[38 : 00] God's sovereign salvation, because he saw, it was nothing to do, with himself, but it was all, of God's grace, are we that, sort of person, who the grace of God, humbles, not exalts, that we give, praise and glory, and thank him every day, for saving us, or do we start to feel, a little bit better, than others, and look down, upon those, who haven't known, that grace, and he was, and we see as well, he's a man of prayer, man of prayer, who prays, extravagantly, because, of his love, for God's people, and his faith, in his people's God, so with that foundation, may the Lord help us, as we go on, to study this letter, in the weeks ahead, well let's sing together, our final hymn, this evening, again please do stand, and be al had, next time, and come in.