

Encouragement

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[0 : 00] If you saw them emerging as you guys came in today, they might have looked a little beaten up, but I guess I've got a confession to make. When we planned out this sermon series, I simply named the first sermon Warning and the second sermon Encouragement.

I probably should have named it Warning and More Warning because that's the way it's gone. So bear with me. The idea is that through the warnings of Scripture, this is God's idea, through the warnings of Scripture, you will be encouraged to follow Him day by day.

So maybe I can get away with it by saying that. Let's pray together before we begin. Father, we do need your help this morning. We have a lot to get through and a lot of heavy sledding to do.

I pray that we would do it together by your grace. I just pray that your Holy Spirit would come, that you would move in the hearts of those who love you to resolve to follow you day by day in strident perseverance.

I pray for those here who aren't Christians, who aren't trusting in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, who are very close to the fire of God's judgment. I pray that they would be snatched away from that judgment today and ushered into the kingdom of heaven.

[1 : 17] I pray it in Jesus' name. Amen. All right, let's start verse 17 to 19. We'll get straight into it. Remember, this will be the link to last week where we talked about false teachers, about the way to guard against false teachers.

That is to contend for the gospel, to hold on to the gospel, to know and tell the gospel. And he's going to carry on in that kind of vein in these two verses.

Jude says, They're not going to carry on in this way.

They're not going to carry on in this way. They're not going to carry on in this way. They're not going to carry on in this way. They do not carry on in this way. They carry on in this way. They indulge their ungodly lusts and they, most poignantly, are devoid of the spirit.

They're not Christians. They don't have the Spirit. They look like they are. They pretend that they are. They come to church. They sing the songs. They encourage the children. they come to the Lord's Supper even, but they're not Christians.

[2 : 47] So then he moves to those in the church, perhaps like you and me, who are saved, who are contending for the gospel, who are holding on to faith in Jesus. What does he say?

Verse 20 to 21, but you, you guys, beloved, build yourself up in your most holy faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, pray in the Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

The key clause there that we need to wrap our brain around is this, keep yourselves in the love of God. Verse 21, that's the main clause in that passage, keep yourselves in the love of God.

And this is the first part of perseverance. At the end of the sermon, we're going to go through this quite quickly and then we're going to talk about this doctrine, this practical theological doctrine of perseverance.

And this is the first part of two parts concerning perseverance. You've got to keep yourselves in the love of God. How do you do it? Three things he says here.

- [3 : 53] Building, praying, looking forward. Let's look at the first, building. Verse 20, he says, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. And the idea here is, is like a bodybuilder who lifts weights to build up his body.

We need to do some heavy theological lifting in order to build up our doctrine. There's this myth in the church, perhaps not in churches like ours so much, but it might be here, that the intellectuals, the pastors, the people, the small group leaders, they need to be theologically astute.

Everyone else can kind of get away with knowing the basics. But Jude says, no, no, no. Every one of us has a responsibility to build ourselves up in good doctrine.

Why? Because when the false teachers come with bad doctrine, we need to know the difference. Don't we? It's our responsibility to learn good theology, to learn the right thing, the right truths concerning God and the gospel.

So the way that you can do this is by being here this morning, listening to the sermon instead of sleeping through the sermon. That would be a good start. Reading your Bible regularly, going to a Bible study, small group, fellowship, prayer group, these kind of things.

- [5 : 06] There's heaps going on at this church. This is how you build yourself up, make yourself strong. Secondly, he says, we do it by praying. That's in, where is it?

Verse 20. Pray in the Holy Spirit. That means that we pray in harmony with the Holy Spirit, in step with the will of God. Remember Jesus in the Lord's Prayer says, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And the idea there is that each one of us has our own little kingdom that we're building up day by day, that we have our own vested interests, that we want to build up our, whatever it is, our money, our job, our family.

And what Jesus says is, no, no, no, don't pray out of those convictions. Pray rather for the kingdom, the capital K kingdom, God's kingdom. Have those kingdom interests at heart when you pray.

And that's what he's talking about here. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Doesn't mean as it might elsewhere to be praying in tongues. In this instance, actually it means just to pray in step with God's agenda rather than your agenda.

- [6 : 10] Don't have a shopping list of your own needs. Rather, seek God's will for his kingdom on this earth and pray out of that conviction. That's one way in which you will persevere as a Christian.

Third, we're going to rush through this building, praying, and looking forward. Verse 21, B, look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

So, Jude's saying here that we need to have an eternal perspective. So often I find myself getting so focused on this day, this hour, this task, this job.

But, and in some ways we need to do that to get through each day, to get done what we ought to get done. But, Jude says as a big picture worldview, we need to have an eternal perspective.

Everyone around us who isn't a Christian has a this worldly perspective because this is all they believe in. You get 80 years, maybe a little more. You need to focus on that. It's going to be over.

- [7 : 13] So, get busy working on that life. Jude says, no, no, no, this life is a heartbeat. Eternal life awaits you. Therefore, live out of that perspective.

Look forward to the moment. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. Keep your eyes fixed on heaven. That's one way that you'll persevere. It's much easier to get through the struggles and trials and temptations of life when we understand that heaven awaits.

Any minute heaven awaits. When the roof collapses in this building on all of us, heaven awaits. Or hell. But eternity awaits nonetheless. When you leave and you're hit by a car, or even maybe if you make it to 99, heaven awaits.

Yes, eternity awaits. Live out of that conviction. Then he switches gears a little bit. We're going to see three ways to show mercy to people in the church.

Okay? So, starting at verse 22 and 23, he says, have mercy on some who are wavering. Save others by snatching them out of the fire and have mercy on still others with fear, hating even the tunic defiled by their bodies.

[8 : 22] So, there's three ways there to show mercy. Let's look at them. First of all, verse 22. Verse 22. Have mercy on some who are wavering.

Do you know people who are wavering in faith at the moment? I know people who are wavering in faith. Perhaps they've gone through a period of suffering and trial in their life and they're starting to question the goodness of God.

Perhaps they're disillusioned with the church and they associate the church with God and they feel like they're disillusioned with God himself. I don't know.

You name it. We have sons and daughters, don't we, who have wavered, walked away from the faith. Perhaps they're just holding on by the skin of their teeth. These people are wavering.

They may not persevere in faith. He says, to those people, have mercy on them. How do we have mercy on them? We show love to them. How do we show love to them?

[9 : 20] We call them back. We woo them back to Jesus. The greatest evangelists of history have been great wooers of people's hearts. They plead and they invite and they encourage.

I speak to many of you who say to me, how do I get my kids to come back to church? My son is living with his girlfriend.

He's not going to church. What do I do? And you feel helpless. I would say, what Jude says, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them. Don't be angry at them.

Don't lose patience with them. But put that energy into wooing them, into inviting them, into encouraging them back to the faith. Another way, verse 23.

This is a little more intense, a little more pressing. He says, save others or have mercy on others by snatching them out of the fire. That there is the fire of the judgment of God that is burning against sin and sinners.

[10 : 27] People have a period in history right now where they can turn to Jesus and be saved from that judgment. But many are very close to the fire.

Either they're very close to death and they're not believers or they're very close to giving away their faith altogether or they continually reject Jesus and so they're close to the fire in that way.

He says, for those people, snatch them from the fire. Have a sense of urgency in your evangelism. Have a sense of urgency in the way you speak to other people about the gospel because they're close to the fire.

The judgment of God is coming. Snatch them from the fire. That's two out of three. The third one, have mercy on still others with fear, hating even the tunic defiled by their bodies.

And here I think we've got precedent for this saying. Have you ever heard this saying, hate the sin but love the sinner. I think that's what he's saying here.

[11 : 33] He's saying, show love to those sinners, have mercy on them mixed with fear so that you don't get dragged into their sin but have mercy on them, have love for them but hate the tunic that's been defiled by the flesh.

Love the person, hate the sin. So this would influence the way that we speak to people who are in habitual sin without repentance.

Christians who go on sinning, Christian husbands who are cheating on their wives, Christian women who are gossiping about other church members behind their backs, Christians who are indulging in drunkenness or debauchery or greedy, who are greedy.

these people we need to rebuke in love, showing mercy all the while hating their sin and showing them how much God hates their sin because here's the truth.

some of you won't like it but it's the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He talked about it more than anyone else. Jude picks up the thread here, the judgment, the fire, fiery judgment of God burns against sin.

[12 : 50] It burns against sin. And for a brief window, humanity has the opportunity to be saved from that sin. But the time is coming and it's very close where Jesus will return to judge sin and if people are still in their sins, then God, as He hates this sin right now, will go on hating that sinner for eternity.

He will hate them He will judge them for eternity. God isn't completely absent from hell. Hell is absence from God's love and benevolence.

It is not the absence of His judgment. He is there in judgment over people who refuse to repent. That's the truth. So, so what do we do?

We don't despair. We don't panic. We don't rebel against that truth. We have mercy on those who don't know Jesus. We snatch them from the fire. We hate their sin as God does but we love that sinner.

I hope that's clear. We need to move on. Let's go to the end of the book. Verse 24 and 25. He says, He says, Now, to Him, to God, who is able to keep you from falling and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of His glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time and now and forever.

[14 : 28] Amen. What a great finish. What a great finish. It's a benediction. It's a doxology. It's something I read at the end of church services regularly.

It's a great finish to this book. He's just gushing forth in worship here, isn't He? I want to ask you guys.

Do you ever gush forth in worship towards God? Does it ever just overwhelm you where you just have to break out in worship to God? I know that we're not a gushing congregation here.

I'm not an idiot. I know that as a culture we're not very gushy unless your football team wins the grand final then you can gush. Right? But Jude here, the brother of Jesus, has just spent an entire book talking about the most dreadful dark situation in his church where false teachers are coming in and leading people astray where Satan seems to be getting the upper hand sending in false teachers to devour Christians and yet he finishes the book like this.

Supreme confidence in the sovereignty of God over all things. To him be the glory, majesty, and power and authority for all time now and forever. I want to challenge you whether it's in the singing of the song today or in a time of prayer this afternoon, just gush if you can.

[16 : 02] If you have an absolute inability to gush, maybe you haven't really grasped the gospel. He gushes here and it's a beautiful thing.

It's a beautiful thing. The reason he gushes, the reason is that God, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ is able and does keep us from falling.

He enables us to stand without blemish, that's without sin, without wrinkle, in the presence of his glory with rejoicing.

That's a picture of heaven. So on that note, I want to turn to that very issue of perseverance. This is an issue of practical theology and the question is, if you're a Christian here today, is it possible for you to walk away from faith?

Is it possible for you to fall from grace? Some Christians believe that, that you can fall from grace, that you can throw away your faith. It certainly looks that way from what we've been reading.

[17:10] The warnings to not throw away your faith are all over the place here. There is another set of Christians who will say, no, no, no, once you're a Christian you will always be a Christian.

You can never fall from grace. God will see you safely onto the shores of heaven. I want to look at that issue now and I want to do it because it's all over the New Testament and it's even in this very short passage that we've got here.

Have you seen it? Verse 21, keep yourselves in the love of God. There are false teachers out there that are leading people astray. You need to keep yourself in the love of God lest you fall away.

That's one side. The other side's there as well. Verse 24, now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to make you stand without blemish. That God is able and does keep us from falling from faith.

So that gives me two statements that I believe work together in unity without contradiction and we're going to see that in just a moment.

[18:10] Here are the statements. Please listen in carefully. I know, I know that as soon as someone starts reading statements, you tend to tune out. I do. And as soon as someone starts reading a lot of scripture, you tend to tune out.

I'm going to do both. I want you to stay with me. This is so, so important. This is the most important thing I've learned this year without question. statement one, you must continue in faith and obedience to your death, lest you fall away from salvation.

That is absolutely biblically true. Let me say it again. You must continue in faith and obedience to your death, lest you fall away from salvation.

Second statement also absolutely true. no one who is truly saved will ever fall away from salvation. No one who is truly saved will ever fall away from salvation.

Let's see how it works out. I'm going to be reading some scripture, you don't have to turn to it. I plan to put all of this in inside look, the next inside look or maybe the one after. Someone asked me to do that at 8am so we'll do that.

[19:26] But please stay engaged with me. First of all, you must persevere in faith. You must hold on to your faith or you'll be damned. 1 Corinthians 15 1-2 Paul says, Now I would remind you brothers and sisters, that's what I'm doing right now, I'm reminding you brothers and sisters of the good news that I proclaim to you, which you in turn received, in which you also stand, through which also you are being saved, if, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaim to you unless you have come to believe in vain.

You received the gospel, you were saved, you're standing in it, you're going to be saved, you're going to heaven if you hold firmly to that message, to the gospel message.

Let's look at another passage, Colossians 1, 21-23. Paul says again, speaking to people in the church who were once sinners just like you and me, and you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, you hated God, you didn't want a thing to do with Jesus, doing evil deeds, he is now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him.

We saw that in Jude. And he says, provided that, provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith without shifting from the hope of the promise, the hope promised by the gospel that you heard.

you will be saved if you continue in faith. What he's not, I just want to say now, what he's not saying is, he's not talking about backsliding.

[21 : 31] All of us at some point in our life has probably backslid a little bit. We've had times in our life where we've doubted the gospel, we've doubted the goodness of God, we're not talking about moments of backsliding, we're talking about continual, habitual, unrepentant sin and walking away from the gospel.

If you do that, you will not be saved. You've got to stay in the faith, you've got to maintain your faith in Jesus. The other part of this, you must continue in obedience and holiness of life.

Listen to this, Hebrews 12, 14, pursue peace with everyone and the holiness, the godly living, the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

You don't live a holy life, you don't live your life beating your body into submission to follow Jesus, then you will not see the Lord.

No one will. Galatians 5, 19 to 21, please stick with me. Paul says, now the works of the flesh are obvious.

[22 : 47] The sinful living is obvious. Fornication, that's sex outside of marriage as God intended it.

One man, one woman, monogamous relationship for life. Sex outside of that context, fornication. Impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

I am warning you. Friends, I'm warning you this morning. Paul says, I'm warning you.

As I warned you before, those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. God. Who is he speaking to there?

Not the guys at the TAB, not the guys in the prison. He's speaking to the church. If that kind of behavior marks your life, you will not inherit the kingdom of God.

[24 : 00] 1 Corinthians 6, 9-10. Similarly, do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.

Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers, none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.

He doesn't just dwell on the male prostitutes, the homosexuals, he talks about the greedy ones. Check yourself. The drunkards, the robbers, the revilers, these people, they're not going to inherit, inherit the kingdom of God.

I wonder if you're pushing back against this a little bit at the moment. I'll tell you a story. I was speaking to a guy a little while ago.

He's a Christian, involved in ministry, and he is committing adultery against his wife. He was. and I told him, you've got to stop this, and he said, I can't stop it.

[25 : 13] I can't stop it. And I said to him, looking him in the eye, I said, if you do not stop committing adultery, you will go to hell. hell. If you don't stop having sex with this woman, you will go to hell.

And he looked at me aghast and offended. He said, I'm a Christian. Jesus died for my sins.

Don't you believe that people who are once saved are always saved? It's not what this says. You continue in that kind of sin that you know is wrong, that you're commanded not to commit, without repentance, you will go to hell.

That's the black and white truth. of the New Testament, post Jesus, post atonement. I do believe that if you're saved, you'll make it to heaven.

I do believe that. I do believe in eternal security, if it's defined biblically. How is it defined in the Bible? The term is perseverance. perseverance.

[26 : 40] What comes to your mind when I say perseverance? It certainly is not starting something and then just sitting there and waiting for it to finish, is it? Perseverance is beating our bodies into submission.

Perseverance is every day waking up saying, I will fight for my life today. I don't want to pray.

I don't want to read my Bible. I'm guilty of this. Confession time. I'm guilty of not wanting to read my Bible. God have mercy on me. But perseverance is fighting to take hold of every opportunity to grow in godliness, to mark out every sin and pray that God would deliver you from it.

The Bible is full of imagery about us being soldiers, farmers, athletes, and we've stripped it out because it's a little bit too combative for our sensibilities.

Get back into that kind of imagery. You're a soldier and you're sitting in ranks this morning where to encourage each other to persevere every day. If you don't, you'll go to hell.

[27 : 54] That's the truth. That's the truth. So it's about perseverance, friends. It's about spending every day fighting for your faith.

Not because it's precarious, not because every day it's in danger, but because that's the way that God gets us to the shores of heaven. This is how I believe this works.

Do you want to know the reason why I'm up here preaching? It is not because I really enjoy it, though I do. It's not because I like the sound of my own voice. Honestly, it's not.

It's not because this is just the part of the service where the guy gets up the front and talks for 20 minutes, 40 minutes, an hour. It's not. It's not.

The reason we preach is because this is what happens right now. Right now. The Holy Spirit of God is in this room working, moving in the hearts of everyone who believes, encouraging them, waking them up, strengthening them to persevere.

[29 : 02] If you're a Christian, as I speak, as you hear the Bible read, the Holy Spirit works to strengthen you so that you will never throw away your faith, so that you'll persevere.

That's what's happening now. Be alert to it. That's perseverance. perseverance. That's the means God uses, one of the means he uses to persevere us.

A couple of passages on this, then we'll look at a couple of objections and then I'm done. Okay. Jesus says some beautiful words in John chapter 10, one of my favorite chapters in the Bible, Jesus, our great shepherd, the good shepherd of the sheep.

he talks about the fact that Christians will never be lost. John 10, 27 to 30, he says, my sheep, these are Christians, my sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me, I give them eternal life, I give them eternal life and they will never perish, no one will snatch them out of my hand, what my father has given me is greater than all else and no one can snatch it out of my hand, the father and I are one.

Jesus has every Christian sheep in his hand and he's never going to let you go.

[30 : 43] If there was someone more greater than Jesus who could pluck that sheep out of his hand, then it would be possible, but as he says in verse 29, the father has given him what is greater than all else, no one's more powerful than Jesus, no one can contradict Jesus, no one can defeat Jesus, no one can snatch Christians out of Jesus' hand.

God. How about Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13 to 14? Paul says this to the Christians, in him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, when you became a believer, listen to this, you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

This is the pledge of your inheritance towards redemption as God's own people to the praise of his glory. When you become a Christian, you're stamped. I wish it was a physical stamp, because then we could see the people that we need to snatch from the fire, and the people who are the false teachers, and we could figure this thing out, but it's not a physical stamp, it's a spiritual stamp, but it's just as real that you've been stamped with a pledge of your inheritance.

What's your inheritance? It's heaven, eternal life with Jesus. When you become a believer, you receive that inheritance, you receive the pledge for that inheritance, and when Jesus returns or you die, you finally receive that beautiful, glorious, valuable inheritance, life with him.

Once you're stamped, no one can rub it off. So, how about some objections? Be good to interpret or anticipate some of your objections, see if we can deal with them.

[32 : 33] One that I think you might have is this, from your experience, you might say, Jono, I know people who have been saved, I know people who came to church, who became Christians, and then they walked away.

That disproves what you're saying about perseverance. It's a fair objection, isn't it? Do you know people like this?

you might have sons, daughters, family, friends. I had a good friend who became a Christian out of the most dreadful, sinful life, as he would attest at the time.

Became a Christian, got baptized, came up out of the water like this, triumphant, witnessed to his friends about what Jesus had done in his life. He was joyful.

and not a year later, he had thrown it all away. Completely disowned Jesus as Lord, all but cursed the name of God.

[33 : 39] So what about him? I would say that merely going to the front at the Billy Graham crusade, merely putting up your hand at the youth rally, merely confessing that you've become a Christian is not enough.

It's not enough. I would say that by walking away from the faith, these people are proving that their faith was never genuine to begin with.

They were never saved. Never saved. Jesus talks about it. I've got two passages for this too. This is exactly what Jesus is talking about.

Remember the parable of the sower? He says, listen, a sower went out to sow, and as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

Listen, other seeds fell on rocky ground where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.

[34 : 52] But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. They spring up quickly, but there's no depth. They spring up quickly, but there's no root in the gospel.

there's no saving faith. And so they wither away. That's what my friend did. A bit of suffering came along and he packed it in.

There are others, God bless them, who grow up, confess Jesus as Lord, go into a period of waywardness, like I did in my teen years, and then God welcomes them home with open arms, and they come back to Jesus.

A couple of weeks ago, the prodigal son, perfect example. There are others who spend their whole life hating Jesus and on their death bed come to know him and he welcomes them with open arms.

But there are others who have confessed Christ, who never come back and it's because they never believed to begin with. Another passage on this, 1 John 2:19.

[36 : 03] This is speaking of false teachers, same kind of people Jude's been talking about. They come into the church, they look like Christians, they take the Lord's Supper, they sing the songs, they are Bible study leaders and Sunday school leaders, they do this and that.

But John says about them, they went out from us. They didn't stick around, they went out from us, but they did not belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us.

But by going out, they made it plain that none of them belonged to us. If you walk away from faith, you make it plain that you never belonged to Jesus in the first place.

So an objection might come, if that's true, if you can look like a Christian, talk like a Christian, sing like a Christian, act like a Christian, and not be a Christian, then what security is there for us?

What hope do we have? Maybe I'm not saved. Maybe I've been masquerading. It's a good question. How do we know that we're saved?

[37 : 19] How do we know that we're elect? That term means that you've been chosen by God to be saved. How do you know that you're elect? How do you make your elections sure and certain?

I've got one more long passage to read through, but it's really important. It really ties this up together. Okay? So look at me. 2 Peter 1, verse 5 to 11.

He's going to explain this for us. Hear this in your own ears. For this very reason, you must make every effort, persevere, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness and goodness with knowledge and knowledge with self-control and self-control with endurance and endurance with godliness and godliness with mutual affection and mutual affection with love.

For if these things are yours and they're increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

how do you protect yourself against falling away? Practice these things, that list there that marks you out as being someone who's being made more and more like Jesus day by day.

[38 : 52] For anyone who lacks these things, lacks that kind of evidence of love in your life, is nearsighted and blind and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins, they forget what Jesus has done for them.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager, like a soldier, an athlete, a farmer, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble.

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, if you do these things, you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

That's it. That's perseverance. How do you know that you're a Christian? Slowly, but surely, day by day, as you persevere in good works, as you persevere in reading your Bible, as you seek out the means of grace that God provides, he increases in you these beautiful things, godliness, mutual affection, love, and that's the mark of someone who will be saved on the last day.

That's how we guard against falling away from faith. One final thing. You might be sitting there thinking, isn't this salvation by works? Are you saying that in order to be saved we have to earn our way into heaven?

[40 : 34] Not at all. The grace that's given to you when you become a Christian is absolutely unconditional. Is that a beautiful thing? If you're a sinner like me, you'd know that that's a beautiful thing.

It's not because of your good works, it's not because of your family upbringing, not because of your bank balance, not because you're white or black or whatever. It's not based on anything to do with you.

Unconditional election by God despite your sin. That's how you're saved. Perseverance to heaven, that's not unconditional.

That is absolutely conditional. If you're going to make it to heaven, it's conditional on you growing in these things. Alright, I've said that a lot now.

I hope that's sunk in. We need to repeat these things, don't we? Because we forget. We forget. By conclusion then, all these statements are true.

[41 : 40] Those who do not continue in faith and obedience, holy living, will go to hell under the judgment of God. They will lose their salvation. second statement also true.

Those who are elect, those who are truly saved, will never lose their salvation. They'll never throw away their faith. They'll never continue in willful, disobedient living without repentance because God won't let them.

He'll enable you and me to live every day for him. How will we keep them safe? Like I said, as I speak, as you read, as you live in Christian community, God enables you and encourages you to live for him, to persevere day by day.

I think I've said enough. I want to pray for us because we need God's help for this. So let's bow our heads and pray. Father in heaven, we do need your help so much.

we've had a wake-up call from the scriptures this morning, from the book of Jude and from the breadth of the New Testament, that your judgment is a reality, that your condemnation is coming and it's coming to all those who by the confession of their mouth and the evidence of their lives do not worship you, have not accepted Jesus as Lord, desire to live in disobedience with evil acts and intentions.

[43 : 22] Lord, we know this is true and it makes us tremble and it's hard to hear, but I pray that the title of the sermon would be true for us this morning, that it would be a word of encouragement. Encouragement to live day by day for you, to persevere, to not give up, to not walk away, to not disown.

Encouragement that you are powerful to keep us in the palm of your hand, that you are powerful to make us stand blameless in the presence of your glory with joyfulness and thanksgiving.

We look forward to that day and pray that you would enable us to persevere to it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.