

Jude 14-21
November 7, 2021

“Two roads diverge in a yellow wood” So begins one of the most famous (and disputed) pieces of English poetry ever written. Robert Frost’s *The Road Not Taken* is included in all the high school and college poetry textbooks. This noteworthy poem ends with a memorable flourish,

*“I shall be telling this with a sigh,
Somewhere ages and ages hence;
Two roads diverged in a wood, and
I took the one less travelled by
And that made all the difference.”*

Today Jude takes us to a place that two roads diverge. The one we choose, and we all must choose, will make all the difference. In Jude 14-21, we are going to see two roads lay out before us. One road appears to be flat and easy offering the mirage of freedom and independence but leads to the City of Destruction. The other road has many twists and turns with potholes and rocky terrain throughout but leads to the Celestial City.

These two roads diverge, and we can only choose one.

Which one will you choose?

14-19: The Road to Nowhere

20-23: The Road Home

You might say—well that is an easy choice. Yes, but remember, Jude is warning us NOT to follow false teachers. But the reason he has to warn us is because false teachers have been a scourge to the church for centuries.

The Road to Nowhere—

is as deceptive as it is alluring.

It is as confusing as it is inviting.

It is as misleading as it is appealing.

But there is another way.

The Road Home—

Is as arduous as it is rewarding.

It is as rigorous as it is fruitful.

It is as difficult as it is worthwhile.

The Road home is harder than you think—but more worthwhile than your wildest dreams. And Jude 14-21 looks to convince us to not just take but stay on the road that will lead us all home.

PROP: Trample the influence of false teaching by keeping yourself in the Love of God.

That will make all the difference.

“It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, [15] to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” [16] These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

[17] But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. [18] They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” [19] It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. [20] But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, [21] keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. [22] And have mercy on those who doubt; [23] save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.” Jude 14–23

PRAY

Trample the influence of false teaching by keeping yourself in the Love of God.

1. *The Road to Nowhere (Jude 14-19)*

From verse 5 to 13, Jude has undertaken a sustained frontal assault against false teachers and their poisonous words. Verse 14 through 19 continues the same theme. He is going to cite a prophecy by Enoch—that interestingly enough—is not found anywhere in the Bible the gist of the prophecy is all over the Bible.

The gist? God will judge the ungodly. No one is going to get away with anything.

Look at verse 14,

“It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,

Notice what he is going to judge. We see four times that he uses some form of the word ungodly.

[15] to execute judgment on all and to convict all the **ungodly** of all their deeds of **ungodliness** that they have committed in such an **ungodly** way, and of all the harsh things that **ungodly** sinners have spoken against him.”

What does this flagrant ungodliness look like?

Assault?
Murder?
Mugging?
Rape?

Those things are horrible. But not what Jude points to—their ungodliness is marked not by action but by speech. Look at verse 16,

[16] These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

Those that are false teachers and lead others astray with their poisonous words are—

Grumblers: Constantly complaining about everything to anyone who would listen. Sure, in the beginning it might be in the form of a prayer request until they can find someone who will listen to their complaints. Grumbling is an ungodly affront to God.

Malcontents: Fault finders. They don't build people up they pick them apart. Everyone has weaknesses but the malcontents point out, amplify, and broadcast the normal weaknesses of believers. Leaders are often their target.

Following their own sinful desires: There is no thought to considering what the Bible has to say on a subject. That is too simplistic and naïve. You don't understand is something that they often say. Or it is complicated.

Loud-mouth boasters: they are bombastic in their behavior and their opinions so that they might draw attention to themselves. Their confidence is in their experience, their perception, their opinion, their research.

Showing Favoritism: This is flattery. A desire to use people and not serve people. They will make people feel important and needed for a while...but later they will discard them like a dirty sock.

The church at large and the local churches in particular have needed to watch out for this sort of teaching since Pentecost. And this will continue to be a challenge for as long as the Lord tarries—how do we know?

Jude tells us—

[17] But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[18] They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.”

We live in the last times and these scoffers will continue to pop up like weeds in the gardens of faithful churches from now until the last day. They are scoffers—meaning they mock the Lord with their scandalous lifestyle like they can get away with it forever. But remember, He is coming with his ten thousands of angels to exact a terrible price on the ungodly.

You know the worst thing these teachers do and the worst effect of false teaching?

[19] It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

The pinnacle of their evil is the fostering of division among the people of God. One way that you can identify a false teacher is if they divide friends, family, or people from a faithful church. So often these scoffers look to validate their positions by recruiting others to and act like they do.

Often times these teachers encourage suspicion of leaders and try and recruit other people to leave a church they have departed to validate their exit. I’m not saying there is never a reason to leave a church, there is. But there is never a reason to leave a faithful church poorly causing division.

Division is fouler than we typically think.

This friends, is the road to Nowhere.

It is not enough just to be aware of the influence of false teaching. We must trample it under our feet and we must also KEEP ourselves in the Love of God.

There is a time for tearing down AND a time for building up.

We move away from the road to nowhere and move to another road that diverges into the distance from the road to nowhere it is

But there is another way. Another road diverging into the distance from the road to Nowhere. It is

2. *The Road Home (20-23)*

Jude is going to give us the not so super-secret formula to make it on the Road Home all the way home. Ready?

Vs. 22,

[21] keep yourselves in the love of God

This is lone imperative or command in verses 20-21. Keep yourselves in the love of God. What an interesting phrase, “Keep yourselves in the love of God.”

NOT

Keep yourselves loving God.
Keep God love you.
Keep being loveable to God.
Keep yourselves in love with God.

BUT

Keep yourselves in the love of God.

What could that mean?

It is awareness. In other words he is saying, Keep yourself aware of the love God. What does that mean?

It is a call to continually experience God’s love. Here is the reality, God’s love is always the same, never fading, not dependent on our obedience but entirely dependent on his grace. He loves us not because we deserve his love but because he freely gives his love.

We can know that God loves us, and yet not experience that love very often.

How? Easy.

We can forget something as majestic and grand as the Love of God. And if we....over time...very slowly...not all at once mind you....aren’t aware of God’s love. It is not as if we don’t know God loves us but we don’t think about his love much.

And when we don’t think about his love much don’t keep ourselves aware of the love of God.

How can we be more aware of this love?

Building
Praying
Waiting

Vs 20,

[20] But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, [21] keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Building
Praying
Waiting

Building yourselves up, in your most holy faith

What does that mean?

Growing strong in the content, substance of our most holy faith. What is that? All that God has done in his Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. We don't just merely believe in a Creator God—we believe in a personal God aware of each person.

This God loved the world that he sent and offered up his Son as a payment for sins. This God is Abounding in Steadfast love even for the worst of sinners. He can make the foulest of us sin soaked people pure and clean. Building up means remembering that as a Christian your faith is not blind or arbitrary. Not based on feelings, but facts.

Jesus is alive.

He was dead but he is not alive forevermore. He was crushed for our iniquity upon the cross but he rose so that we might have to die. Our most holy faith starts with a living savior.

building yourselves up in your most holy faith

Satan will be defeated.

And all evil along with him. Our most holy faith does not ask us to make a deal with evil, our faith tells us that one day all evil will be destroyed. The evil one who seems to get and have his way so often will be annihilated.

building yourselves up in your most holy faith

You are forgiven your every sin.

You and I are great sinners but our God is a greater than any of our sin. His grace runs deeper than any of our sin. The Lord has catalogued your every sin and charged them to Christ and for you and me? Forgiveness. He passes over us has visited our punishment on Jesus.

building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Trials are not punishment.

The trouble we have in this world are because we live in a fallen world awaiting restoration. The Lord has no wrath left for us. Yes, he will discipline his children as they need, but discipline though it never feels good always leads to good things. Trials, he uses to make us more godly.

building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Death is not the end.

Death has been robbed of its sting. You and I will all surely die, but Jesus has made that way safe. Instead of eternal torment on the other side of the door of death, Jesus is standing there ready to see us.

building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Notice that the exact language is NOT building yourself up in your most holy faith. You cannot adequately build yourself up by yourself. It takes a community. You need other people around you to help you build yourself up in your most holy faith.

You need:

- Some More mature who have seen the Lord prove faithful over decades.
- Some Less mature who are on fire and want to give their lives for the Lord.
- Some who are friends that can support you by pointing you to Jesus.
- Some who will challenge you when you wander.
- Some who will encourage you when you are downcast.
- Some who will pick you up when you fall.

We all need to stand in this room—and sing songs about our most holy faith together. And as our voice rise together singing refrains like we did today—

*I hear the Savior say,
"Thy strength indeed is small;
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in Me thine all in all."
Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.*

Building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Romans 8:1,

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

How do we keep ourselves in love of God?

Building yourselves up in your most holy faith.

Building
Praying
Waiting

Praying in the Holy Spirit

What kind of praying is praying in the Holy Spirit? Do you need candles or soft music in the background? No. Praying in the Holy Spirit is praying being guided by the Holy Spirit. All who are genuinely saved are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Praying in the Holy Spirit is praying guided by the Spirit.

Do you know how the Spirit guides you in prayer? Most often through the Word of God.

Let’s say that you are not doing well and you think that the Lord is remote and doesn’t seem to care about what you are going through. And then you read this—

“The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous
and his ears toward their cry.
[16] The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
[17] When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears
and delivers them out of all their troubles.” Psalm 34:15–17

How do you pray in the Holy Spirit as you read that?

I don’t feel like you your eyes are toward me, but your word says they are. You say here that you hear my cries as well. When things are hard it doesn’t seem like you care. But because your word says you see and hear I believe it. Help me to believe it more.

When I am opposed by someone who is evil or working against me for no good reason, the Lord will defend me. I can cry for help knowing that the Lord sees and hears and will deliver me in his time and in his way.

Praying in the Holy Spirit.

That is just praying.

You can do that with any portion of the Bible.

Remember, prayer is just talking to the Lord. Talk to him. It only makes sense. That is how we keep ourselves in the love of God. Right?

Part of it is by talking to him. That is what prayer is. Imagine you have a best friend that you have had since childhood. You want to continue to be friends, but you decided you have talked to her enough. You are just done talking.

Are you going to remain friends? No. You will drift away.

The same is true with God. You must pour out your heart to him—otherwise you will not be very much aware of the love of God much less keep yourself in his love.

Praying in the Holy Spirit.

Keep yourself experiencing the Love of God.

Building
Praying
Waiting

Building yourselves up in the Most holy faith.
Praying in the Holy Spirit.

Waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ (hope)

“Note the need for the mercy of God, not only initially but daily, not only daily but at the last.”
Michael Green

Mercy means that we will NOT receive what we deserve. In our lives as we seek to KEEP ourselves in the Love of God we will never be perfect. We will never be faultless. We will flail and we will fail. But Jesus himself will give us mercy.

He will not pay to us what we deserve.

We will always need mercy.

And so we wait. We wait with hope and anticipation. This waiting is not a passive sort of exercise like we just stand around in a line with nothing to do but just fill time. No, we wait like a dinner host. Someone who is hosting one or ten or a hundred for dinner waits very differently than someone who is waiting to have their number called at the DMV.

A dinner host—

Cleans the house
Buys the food
Prepares the food
Sets the table
Puts away rabid animals

A dinner host is active. We as we are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus we wait actively. Actively doing what? Keeping ourselves in the love of God by looking forward to the day that we will meet Jesus.

We actively put our hope on his returning—NOT on

Our Spouse
Future Spouse
401K
Who wins the next election
The next vote in the Senate
Inflation disappearing

We look in hope to him. When we don't get what we deserve but we receive instead, mercy.

How do we Trample false teaching by keeping ourselves in the Love of God?

Building
Praying
Waiting

I hear stories like what is happening in Ethiopia and hearing that helps me to wait in more hope. Here is a man who could leave a war-torn country and come to the US. But he won't. He has a church to protect and serve. That fires me up and gives me hope. I could not have otherwise.

Do you see why we don't/can't keep ourselves in the Love of God alone?

Keep yourselves experiencing the LOVE of God

Building
Praying
Waiting

THAT, according to Jude, is the road home.

Do you see?

Trample the influence of false teaching by keeping yourselves in the Love of God.

HOW?

Building
Praying
Waiting

Alone.
Small Groups.
All together.

None of us have the wherewithal to trample the influence of false teaching alone. We need each other. Today more than ever. There is a proliferation of teaching on the internet such that you can find whatever you want whenever you want delivered however you want.

Dangerous.

One of the many reasons that we cannot do this alone.

Some will doubt—but as Jude says—we must have mercy on them. Not heavy handed. Not holier than thou. We can offer help.

Some we need to snatch off the road to nowhere as if out of the fire not excusing sin but hating it.

Trample the influence of false teaching by keeping yourselves in the Love of God.

This is what we need. We need to be most aware of how much our God loves us. If we don't feel that love it is not because our Lord's love has shriveled up, it is because our hearts have. Our Lord loves us with an immeasurable love.

[18] may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:18–19

His love surpasses knowledge, but it need not surpass our experience. Lord keep us in this love.

Application:

Are you aware of God's love? If not take drastic action.

Building

Praying

Waiting

Building—you are here. That is a start.

Praying—start with five minutes.

Waiting—practice setting your hope on him.

PRAY