

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Jude said, “Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever” (Jude 1:24–25). Praise the Lord! I can have victory over sin through the power of your Son, and your grace will sustain me through all the storms and trials of life! Glory to God!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me Paul’s personal letter to Philemon concerning his slave Onesimus. This letter is the last of what are known as the “Prison Epistles.” Philemon was a member of the Colossian church, and his home was the meeting place of the congregation (Phlm 1:2). At some point, his slave Onesimus ran away and ended up in Rome where he met Paul. Paul led Onesimus to Christ and then wrote this letter in an attempt to reconcile Onesimus to Philemon. Paul’s letter is a good example of how to resolve conflict between Christians. First, Paul brought the disputing parties together by addressing them as family (he called Philemon his “brother” and Onesimus his “child”). This reminded them that they were now related to each other spiritually through Christ. Second, Paul was courteous and tactful, and his wording allowed both parties to save face in an awkward and difficult situation. Third, rather than giving a command, Paul appealed to Philemon to do the right thing. This gave Philemon a chance to act out of love rather than coercion. Fourth, Paul treated Philemon as an equal partner in ministry, even though as an apostle, he was Philemon’s spiritual superior. This allowed Philemon to be seen as doing Paul a favor out of friendship rather than submitting to Paul’s authority. In all, this letter shows me how to exercise spiritual authority and leadership in a kind and loving way. You also shared with me Jude’s circular letter to the churches (Jude 1:1). Jude was very concerned about the reports he had received of false teachers, and he wanted to encourage his fellow believers to “contend for the faith” (Jude 1:3). This teaches me that false teachers *will* arise within the Christian community, and I should not be surprised when they do. Their goal is to infiltrate the church, pervert your grace into sensuality, and deny Jesus Christ as Lord and Master. My responsibility is threefold: (1) to build myself up in the faith, pray in the Spirit, and keep myself in your love (Jude 1:20–21); (2) to identify and expose those who have “crept in unnoticed” (Jude 1:4); (3) to save those who have been seduced by false doctrine, acting in a spirit of mercy, but also with fear, knowing the danger of such teachings (Jude 1:22–23). ‘Vigilance!’ must be my battle cry, for I am fighting for the souls of mankind.

Reflection

Jude mentioned three sinful men who still stand as a warning to me today: Cain, Balaam and Korah. Is there any hate in my heart as there was in Cain’s? Is there any greed in my life as there was in Balaam’s? Is there any rebellion in my soul as there was in Korah’s?

Request

Father, I need wisdom and discernment to detect the false teachings of the wicked. Help me to recognize any who have crept in unnoticed and to reject the error of their ways.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for your mercy, peace and love which have all been multiplied to me. How wonderful to be “called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ”! (Jude 1:1).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Rescue the Perishing](#)” – Frances J. Crosby.

Meditation Verse: Jude 1:24–25.