

**Hopewell ARP Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, October 14, 2020**  
**Devotional from Jude vv20–21**

<sup>20</sup> *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,*  
<sup>21</sup> *keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

Those who are in the love God (whose hope is in “the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life”), and will certainly remain in that love (cf. Rom 8), are those who “keep yourselves in the love of God” (v21).

Scripture teaches us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12–13). The Christian life is not stationary, but a walk. To become a Christian is not an arrival at the end but an embarking at the beginning.

v20 describes this as “building yourselves up on your most holy faith.” Our most holy faith is a foundation upon which we are to build. Standing pat is not an option. And, we ought also to be selective about the materials with which we build (gold, silver, precious stones—not wood, hay, stubble; cf. 1Co 3:12).

What is one of these proper materials? “praying in the Holy Spirit.” Those who “rejoice in hope and are patient in tribulation” do so by “continuing steadfastly in prayer” (cf. Rom 12:12).

Some take this text as license to pray however one feels led, as if that is to pray in the Holy Spirit, but this is precisely to pray without the Holy Spirit, as if He has given us no help at all. Such an idea of this phrase much dishonors the third Person of the Godhead, as if He has given us no help.

Rather, to pray in the Holy Spirit is to refuse to pray apart from Scripture (cf. Eph 6:14–18), which will give us the priorities, aims, arguments, manner, and even many of the very thoughts and words of our prayers. Surely, we are to offer our spirits in such prayers, so that they are offered sincerely and fervently from the heart.

But, “praying in the Holy Spirit” is parallel here to our “most holy faith.” In our most holy faith, we believe not those things that we would, but those things that the Holy Spirit has said in the Scripture. So our praying in the Holy Spirit is to pray prayers that are formed by His Scripture.

Of course, the Holy Spirit is a Person, not a library. And, we enjoy the fact that though our Helper is done revealing, He is not yet done helping. He empowers our spirits to pray according to His Word (cf. Rom 8:15), and both helps our weakness and adds His own intercession (cf. Rom 8:26).

When we realize how much the Holy Spirit helps us (by His Word and fellowship) in our praying, and when we remember that the Holy Spirit is He who is helping us against the flesh and building us up into the Lord Jesus, we are not at all surprised to find that a large part of our “building yourselves up on your most holy faith” is to always be “praying in the Holy Spirit.”

Let us pray not according to our impulses but according to the Holy Spirit’s written Word. Let us pray not in our power, but depending upon the Holy Spirit’s power in our weakness. Let us pray in confidence that the Holy Spirit is also praying for us!

Let us pray in the Holy Spirit!

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via [tinysa.com/hopewellarp](https://tinysa.com/hopewellarp))**

---

Jude versus 20 through 21, but you loved building yourselves up on your most holy faith. Praying in the Holy Spirit keep yourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto eternal life.

So those who are in the love of God, he says in verse 21 keep yourselves in the love of God those who are in the love of God. Are those who are doing what looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. We could have an entire lesson or series of lessons about how being in the love of God is looking for mercy in Christ.

And those who are in the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life will certainly remain in that love as the Apostle Paul has famously written in the last third or so of Romans 8, the way you come to love. God is by being called according to his purpose because he has loved you from before the world began.

And that a love that began outside of time and eternity cannot be stopped by anything inside of time. So nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. And yet this confidence that nothing can separate us in the love of God from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

Doesn't get us out of or take away the force of this instruction verse 21, keep yourselves in. The love of God. Scripture teaches us that it is God who works in us but to will and to work for his good pleasure. But immediately before it says that what does it say?

It says work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. So both are true at once that we can have this confidence this certainty this assurance this hope that it is God who has loved us and will keep loving us and nothing can separate us from that love and the instruction to keep ourselves in the love of God.

And so you see the command with which verse 20 begins building yourselves up on your most holy faith. So just as Peter teaches us to add to our faith and add and add and add and thereby make our calling and election sure. So also the certainty that it is Christ who builds us up into himself by his spirit doesn't take away from us our duties in building ourselves upon our most holy faith.

And so we have just finished coming through Ephesians chapter 4 and Jesus's resurrection ascension sitting down in glory gifts among men, which includes all of us to all of one another. Every joint supplying something every member doing a part and therefore apostles prophets evangelists and pastor teachers to give and to minister the word of the Lord Jesus because we are each called to serve one another as part of Christ's building us up into himself.

So the about the brother of the Lord Jesus. Jude here says building yourselves up on your most holy faith. And how do we build ourselves up? On our most holy faith. Well using the means of grace, right? Word sacrament prayer being the chief one's among them. So our most holy faith is a foundation upon which we are to build standing pat is not an option.

It's not something that Christians can do for very long the Lord will chase in us and correct us and if we are not growing at all that may be an indication to us that we're not Christians at all. But when we're building on the foundation should we just build with anything that comes into our head?

Of course not The Apostle Paul and First Corinthians 3 compares certain types of trying to build with gold silver and precious stones. Another attempts or methods of building as wood a and

stubble. So not only are we to build but we're to build in the way that he says and that's what brings us to why these verses are something that we would hear right before a pastoral prayer because out of the three main means of grace word sacrament and prayer the one that the that Jude by the Holy Spirit chooses here is prayer but you beloved building yourselves up on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit.

Now, there is a phrase that has taken lots of abuse in the churches because we like to do things our way and by the impulses of our thoughts and our feelings and you don't want to say well it just came into my head and you don't want to say that's just how I felt and you don't want.

You to claim as much authority and impressiveness for your own thoughts and feelings and many people will say praying like that is praying in the Holy Spirit other people will even say mumbling all kinds of gibberish turning your brain off all together and just leaving yourself open to any kind of suggestion and not even not even praying in an own tongue that that is praying in the Holy Spirit.

But we know a lot about the Holy Spirit from the Bible and praying in the Holy Spirit is not to simply pray. However, we feel led as if he has not given us any help at all. Calling that to pray in the Holy Spirit is to dishonor the third person of the Godhead because he has given us help.

He's given us a completed Bible and he's shown us Christ as the heart and center not only of the Bible as a whole but as the key to understanding any part of the Bible and so praying in the Holy Spirit is really to pray according to the Word of God as understood through who Jesus is and what He has done and what He is doing in us and what He will.

Have done and what we will be glorifying. Him for for unending ages. So praying in the Holy Spirit is to refuse to pray apart from Scripture. One of the places that we'll be coming soon if the Lord spares us and grants to us to continue walking together for just a little bit longer is the armor of God and Ephesians chapter six.

Just about all of the armor has to do with the gospel the Word of God believing in Christ for righteousness. Faith. Truth and then all of it is to be used with all prayer in the Holy Spirit. And so praying in the Holy Spirit is first and foremost to never pray apart from Scripture.

To always pray according to Scripture. So Scripture gives us our priorities as we pray. Scripture tells us what we're aiming at as we pray Scripture teaches us how to argue the way we what we can plead before God as we pray Scripture teaches us the manner in which we pray Scripture gives us thoughts and words to use and to build to build from in our praying.

Scripture does teach us that we are to offer our spirits unto God as we pray. And the Holy Spirit, of course helps us in that so that we will pray sincerely and fervently. Praying in the Holy Spirit here is parallel to our most holy faith. Building yourselves up on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit.

And so in our most holy faith, we believe not whatever we feel like believing but the most holy faith is to believe those things that the Holy Spirit has said in the scripture. And so praying in the spirit is not to pray, however we feel like praying. Praying in the Holy Spirit is to pray however the Holy Spirit has taught us in Scripture.

Now, of course that is at least what praying in the Holy Spirit means but it is not only that is not the only thing that praying the Holy Spirit means because the Holy Spirit is a person not a library. And so if we just get all of the content and manner of our praying correct from the Bible

this by itself is not all that it means to pray in the Holy Spirit because we enjoy the fact that though our helper is done revealing his will in his word.

He has not yet done helping us. And so Romans 8 verse 15 teaches us that he empowers our spirits to call upon God as Father and Romans 8:26 teaches us that He helps our weakness while we pray and then He adds. His own intercessions to His to our spirit helped prayers.

So when we realize how much the Holy Spirit helps us in our praying both by His Word based upon which we pray and His fellowship with us in our spirits as we pray when we remember that the Holy Spirit is the one who is helping us against our flesh and who especially builds us up into the Lord Jesus.

And we're not at all surprised to find that a large part of what he says in verse 20 the first half of verse 20 building yourselves up on your most holy faith as accomplished through what he says in the second half of verse 20 praying in the Holy Spirit.

So let us pray not according to our impulses but according to the Holy Spirit's written word and let us pray not in our power but depending upon the Holy Spirit's power in our weakness while also being confident that he is praying for us as well, and if we pray like this then we will pray in the Holy Spirit.