

Sunday, May 17, 2026 pm

SNATCHING THEM OUT OF THE FIRE

Jude 22-23

When we think of fire, it is something most are cautious around and many are afraid of fire. Where we live we see the damage fire can do. However there are many, that in a given situation where loved ones are threatened, they might face their fear of fire and go into a burning building to save someone. That is heroic and a manifestation of love.

The book of Jude is small letter warning about false teachers. As he concludes he gives an admonition to build yourself up and then to think about others. Vs. 22-23, *And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.* Tonight I would like to examine this phrase and make application to the efforts of firemen as they go into a burning building to save someone that is trapped therein.

I. The text

- a. The idea of fire is a danger. We know this physically. It is equally true spiritually. Spiritually there are at least 2 types of danger to consider in this passage.
- b. The one who is caught up in sin right now – they are living their lives entrapped by the snares of the devil
 - i. 2 Timothy 2:26 speaks of the servant of the Lord *with humility correcting one in error. Our hope is they will come to repentance and escape **the snare of the devil**, having been captured by him.*
 - ii. 1 Peter 5:8 describes him as a roaring lion seeking to devour you. He wants you as his prize.
 - iii. 1 John 5:19 tells us the whole world lies under his sway.
 - iv. Colossians 2:8, *Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.* (NKJV). Other translations say, “*See to it that no one takes you captive.*” (NASB, ESV, LSB).
 - v. The point is sin, especially when we let it rule our lives becomes like a devouring fire. In fact, this is likely the primary “fire” Jude is talking about.
- c. The fires of hell - everything description of hell describes it as the worst place possible.
 - i. Jesus uses terms such as wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:41-42, 22:13, 25:30, etc.). This implies intense agony.
 - ii. Other descriptions of hell include eternal consciousness, outer darkness, where the maggot does not die (eternal decay), a place where all manner of evil and wickedness are found. And perhaps the most terrifying description- God will not be there.
 - iii. As an unquenchable fire – Mark 9:44. Matthew 3:12 John warned when Jesus came, *His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* Matthew 25:41 describes it as the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Revelation 21:8 also speaks of the lake of fire and brimstone. Revelation 14:9-11 speaks of the one who “worships the beast” will drink of the wrath of God, being *tormented with fire and brimstone from the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. The smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night...*
 - iv. If you have ever dealt with a serious burn you know how painful it is. That is the eternal description of hell.

- d. Men and women (souls) need to be snatched out of the fire.
- II. Why should we try to snatch men out of the fire
- a. First, because it is commanded.
 - i. Consider the fireman. He has been trained and it is his job to save lives and property. When he arrives at a fire, he does not just stand around and watch.
 - ii. The word *save* in our text is an imperative, meaning it is not just a suggestion, but rather a command.
 - iii. We ought to be frequently reminded of the great commission (Mark 16:15-16, Matthew 28:19-20). As we have noted, in fulfillment it applies to all of us.
 - b. Because we are dealing with souls.
 - i. In a fire, when there is a life in danger, it becomes the priority. This is true of firemen, OR whoever is first on the scene, especially if it is family or a loved one.
 - ii. One principle clearly manifested in scripture is that all men have a soul that will return to God when this life is over (Ecclesiastes 12:7).
 - iii. EVERY soul is going to spend eternity somewhere. It will either be in heaven or hell (Matthew 25:46, Romans 14:10-12, John 5:28-29).
 - iv. What is more valuable than one's soul – Matthew 16:26.
 - c. Because fire is deadly and doesn't wait
 - i. Fire moves quickly and devastatingly through its kindling. Fire fighters work to extinguish it as quickly as possible to minimize the damage.
 - ii. The fires of hell AND of sin have deadly consequences. And we should not wish that on anyone.
 - iii. Romans 6:23 tells us that the wages of sin is death. That ought to bother us.
 - iv. NOTE: This applies to our brethren as well. How often are we admonished to deal with the wayward brother – Galatians 6:1-2, our text, James 5:19-20
 - d. Because someone has to act.
 - i. You cannot depend on others to work to save someone you know needs saving.
 - ii. Right or wrong, if a soul needs rescuing and you have the opportunity, don't leave it to someone else.
 - iii. Understand that angels are not going to rescue someone. Nor is Satan, or those in the world. And sometimes our brethren are expecting someone else to do it. Right or wrong, your responsibility is for what you are able to do.
 - e. Because we have been snatched out of the fire.
 - i. How much do we appreciate our salvation? How grateful are we that someone took the time to teach and/or raise us to fear God and follow Jesus?
 - ii. That gratitude ought to motivate us to try and share His word with others who are lost.
 - iii. Doesn't that describe Paul?
 - iv. Many of us get excited about hobbies, favorite pastimes, sports, or other interests. Our excitement is evident. How many us exert that much energy into sharing that which has eternal consequences?

III. What is involved in snatching men out of the fire?

- a. Make preparations
 - i. Firemen are continually training and maintaining their equipment to be ready for the next fire. And when they return, they are not done until everything is restocked and prepared to go again. When preparations are not made disaster is more likely. I have heard of streets where the fire hydrants were not properly primed and thus useless while an entire neighborhood burned. I have known of a fire company that failed to refill its tanker and

when they arrived at the scene of a factory fire, they could not put it out resulting in devastating loss.

- ii. If we want to be effective in snatching men out of the fire, we too need to be prepared. We must study God's word (1 Peter 3:15), familiarize ourselves with materials that can help us, pray about, etc.

b. Urgency –

- i. We have already talked about this in the last section.
- ii. The Greek word “snatching” is a word that means to grab something eagerly or hastily. There is not much time to act. Every moment counts.
- iii. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11 – knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men.
- iv. 2 Corinthians 6:2 - *For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

c. Use the right tools – Every situation is different. Experience gives us wisdom to increase our chances of success.

- i. A well stocked fire truck is equipped for various situations. Rarely, if ever, will every tool on a truck be used in a single situation. But they are stocked with the right tools and depending on the situation, they know to grab AND where it is!

ii. ***On some have compassion*** –

1. The idea is that there are some whom we can handle with gentleness. I personally believe this ought to be our default mode.
2. Jesus was compassionate and typically calm when He began a conversation. Matthew 9:36, 14:14, 20:34, 15:32, etc. The “fire” did not come out until it needed to.
3. Philippians 4:5, let your gentleness be known to all men.
4. 2 Timothy 2:24-26 – *the servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all...*
5. When we can, empathy is a very helpful tool

iii. ***Others save with fear*** –

1. Fear is a great motivator. Sometimes people need to be shaken up with fear.
2. Jesus did this when He needed to. He openly rebuked the corrupt – Matthew 23, 15:3-9, etc.
3. There are those who know better that ought to be rebuked and urged to repent. Like Paul rebuking Peter in Galatians 2:11ff – he was to be blamed.
4. We must understand that when a soul is in danger, we might not have another opportunity to reach them. When needed act accordingly.
5. Titus 3:10 tells us to reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition.
6. NOTE: The subjects of hell is not pleasant, but it is a powerful lesson to try and win one to Christ.

iv. ***Hating even the garments defiled by the flesh*** –

1. A firefighter does not go to a blaze wearing a t-shirt, shorts and flipflops. He wears protective gear suitable for the situation.
2. What I see in these “garments” is lusts and temptations that you can avoid. I also see that which will make you vulnerable to Satan's attacks.
3. Ephesians 6:10-18 – we are called to put on the armor of God. Spiritual “clothing” that will protect us from the devil.
4. Also, we need to hate sin so much that we don't want to be wearing that which is sinful – EITHER PHYSICALLY OR SPIRITUALLY.

d. ***Taking a risk*** –

- i. The work of a firefighter is a dangerous job. Every call can lead to danger. But it is necessary if fires are to be put out.
- ii. Similarly, we must understand that seeking lost souls comes with risks. You may say the wrong thing (but with experience you become better), they may not be interested or even reject you for daring to try and win them, they may present some argument you cannot answer (right now), or other things might happen.
- iii. But typically, most worthwhile things require a degree of risk. As Christians we call this “faith”. We do what we have to do, for the good of others.

e. ***Don't get burned yourself*** –

- i. The goal is not to get caught up in the sinful behaviors of others.
- ii. Galatians 6:1-2 as you seek to help the brother overtaken in a trespass, you must consider yourself lest you also be tempted.
- iii. 2 Peter 2:19-20 warns that by whom a person is overcome, he is brought into bondage in that. This leads to the warning of one falling away.
- iv. Friends, you do not have to be partaker of sin to help someone who is struggling with it.

Jesus came into this world to snatch men out of the fiery grasp of Satan. He was victorious in binding him. If He has grasped you out of his fire and claimed you as His own, won't you do the same for others? How you respond to that may have a bearing on your soul. Have you been snatched out of the fire? Think about it!