

Sermon
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“Building Yourselves Up In Your Most Holy Faith”

New Year Eve
St. Michael’s Lutheran Church – Richville, MI
12-31-15

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jude 20 *“But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit”*
(Cross Reference – Acts 6:7, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 2:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Jude 1:3)

Illustration “Demolish”

Many time we see it on TV and the news media show about the demolition of an old building. Let us watch a short video on demolition of building. [\(Show video - Epic demolition\)](#)



Epic Demolition - YouTube 1.44 Min.wmv

If you really pay attention to the details of how these building are demolish you will be amaze at the step of how they can demolish a building within a few second to only a few minutes. [\(Show picture of demolish building\)](#)



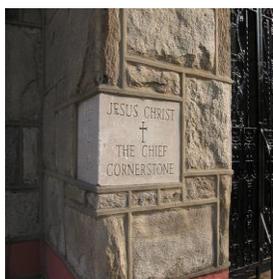
Demolition experts plant explosive s at strategic places within the building. The explosives are then detonate in a rapid session. Everything is timed and coordinated in such a way that the building just collapses in on itself. What’s so amazing is that a building that took so long to construct is gone in a matter of seconds. Think of all the man hours of labor by laying the iron hangers, bricklayers, and carpenters. Usually the building that being demolished are old, abandon, like hospital, department store, or office building that are no longer had any use so it will be demolished. The time that took several years to build are gone in a matter of second.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, there is a spiritual lesson here as we close out the old year and begin with the new year in our lives. [\(Show have faith in God\)](#)



God spent years building our faith. It began with our baptism and the washing away of our sins as our parents held us at the baptismal font. Our faith continue to build as we came to Sunday School and Catechism class. It grew and mature to adult faith. Will you let your faith be torn down thru neglect? Will you permit your faith to be destroyed by the forces of evil? The epistle of Jude reminds us that our faith is a valuable, life giving, structure, crafted over the years and designed to last into eternity. Therefore, we should keep the building strong and solid. In Jude, God’s word said, *“But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit”* (Jude 20)

I. *“Building yourself up”* is similar to that God had describe our Christians faith as a building structures. To the Ephesians Paul write, [\(Show chief cornerstone\)](#)



“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.” (Ephesians 2:20-21) Paul also write to the Corinthians, *“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* (1 Corinthians 3:11) The Apostle Peter write saying, *“For in Scripture it say “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”* (1 Peter 2:6)

(Show built house on rock)



Jesus himself said, *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”* (Matthew 7:24) Our faith is built on Christ, resting squarely on the cornerstone of his holy life and sacrificial death. Our faith is built on God’s Word, the words of Christ, record by the Apostles and prophets. The words of Jude (Jesus brother) encourage us to keep the structure of faith in good condition, a solid, durable, and lasting faith. So as children of God, you must continue to *“building yourselves up in your most holy faith”*. **(Show damage house)**



However, many of us at times instead of building up our faith, we let it be torn down. All the time and effort put into building a strong faith can be naught thru neglect or sins. We all know what happens to a building if you don’t maintain it. If you don’t replace the shingles on your house, the roof will leak. And if the roof leaks for very long, structural damage will result. The wood begin to rots, ceiling tiles fall down, and the carpet gets soaked. If you don’t paint your house, the siding will rot and the house will be damage. Building can collapse simply out of neglect.

II. If we neglect our faith, the same thing can happen. **(Show boarding houses)**



If we neglect to worship, if we neglect to prayer, if we neglect to Bible study, if we neglect the Sacraments for the forgiveness of sins, our faith can collapse. If you drive thru the bad part of a large city, you will see blocks and blocks of houses that are abandon. When you carefully look at the house, it is more than likely have all their window board up due to vandalize. They are hole where the shingles blew off and you can just imagine that inside will have rat, roaches, and infested with others critters that causing the house to slowly falling apart. The house is beyond repair

and unlivable and have to be destroy. The same thing can happen to our faith. A person may miss church once a month, then after a while they skip a couple of times a month. Then, as time passes, they only go to church a few times a year. Their faith is collapsing, but it’s such gradual and slow process that it doesn’t bother them and they really don’t notices. **(Show living a holy life)**



Do we let spiritual pests and vandals destroy our faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Are the people in our life who try to damage our faith by tempting us to sin or by ridiculing the values and morals we live by? Do we let the biggest vandal of all – Satan – to our lives who tempted us to abandon our faith? You wouldn’t invited a street gang to come over and throw rocks thru the windows of your house, would you? Then why do we invited evil into our lives – through the pleasure of the world to damage the structure of our faith? Jude writes, *“But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy*

Spirit” (Jude 20) (Show building tools)



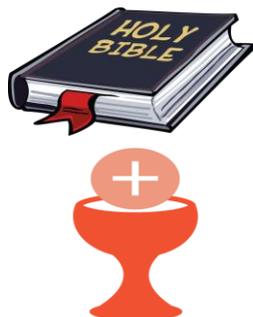
What does it take to build strong faith? The same thing it takes to build a good strong house. First of all it takes time. You see when a carpenter go to work you will see that he get up at 7 in the morning every-day, and he doesn't stop until 5 in the evening. Any good builder know that it take time to construct a house. You can't show up work around 12 noon then go to lunch for 2 hours and come back to work for 1 hours before quitting. This is similar to how some people build their faith. They come and only spend one hour on church on Sunday then don't built their faith for the next 6 days. It takes time, time spent in Bible study, in prayer, in worship during the week to build faith.

III. What else does it take to build strong faith. A carpenters has to have a good material. I remember my father knew how to build a sitting stool for us to use around the house. (Show wooden stool)



He know that you have to have a straight board in order to have a good balance. If the board is crooked or bend then he would not use it. He would take his time and goes through several board to find the perfect board before he measure it, saw it to the appropriate length then nail it together. He told me that a good builder that build a good chair need to have straight boards, nails, and tools to do his work so that it will last for a long time. Each time I visited my father in North Carolina, he still have several of the chair that he build that still in good condition 25 years later.

(Show Words in the Scripture and offer of forgiveness in the sacraments)

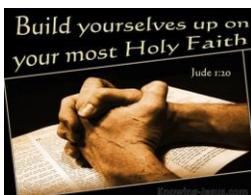


Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, what materials do we use to build our faith? Do you use the physical thing of the world such as signs, horoscope or superstitious to build your faith? Do you neglect the wisdom of the Apostles and prophets and instead seek the foolishness of the false prophet on television? What do you use to build your faith? God gave us the best materials. He gives us the words of the Apostle and prophets in the Bible on which to build. God gave us His Son as the cornerstones to build on by offering forgiveness and mercy as the foundation of our faith. He continue to build our faith by offering us pardon in peace in the sacraments.

(Show God call us to faith)



We are sinful by nature and unable by our own reason or strength to build faith in God. So instead God builds faith by first of all choosing us to be His people. He builds our faith by paying for our sins and by giving His grace by the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. God builds our faith as we receive our gracious presence in our lives. God is the one that complete the task of bringing us back to trust His Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. (Show Jude 20)



Every now and then when I drive on an old country road, I'll see an old broken abandoned house out in the country. It's sad sight, when you consider that house was once a home for a nice family but now sits empty. An even sadder sight when one person once had solid faith which God work so hard to build, slowly crumbles and falls. So, in order to remain in the faith, the word of Jude, pointing to the day when Christ returns, reminds you not to let this happen. Continue to "building yourselves up in your most holy faith" in Jesus. Have a Happy New Year and now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.

