



Contend for the Faith

A GLIMPSE INTO THE BOOK OF JUDE

Jude 1-25 Matthew 7:13-29

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Pastor Dave Bolte

Jude is the author of the second to last book in the Bible; he is the brother of James which makes him a half-brother of Jesus. He is a leader in the church, and his 25 verse “book” is a very powerful warning against false teachers.

Jude is concerned for the people of God, including us today, that we don't get deceived and misled by false teachers *inside* the Holy Christian Church.

As he begins writing, he immediately reminds us of who we are in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,
To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:
Mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you. Jude 1-2

You are called by God the Father, you are set apart from the world, you are loved by Him, and you are kept safe in Jesus Christ. God chose you before the Creation of the world to be His very own; and then during your lifetime brought you to faith in Christ¹.

The verb tenses of these words indicate that you are called, loved, and kept safe, and that you **remain** called, loved, and kept safe. Because you belong to God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, mercy, peace, and love are multiplied to you in abundance; they are constant gifts in your life. These first two verses of Jude are great verses to memorize! Spend some time meditating on these wonderful Gospel verses!

¹ This is the Doctrine of Election (or Predestination) in a nutshell. It highlights that salvation is God's work: by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone. God chose you by grace in Christ before the creation of the world, He brought you to faith and maintains that faith during your lifetime, and after your death, He will raise your body from the dead so that you can live forever in His Kingdom in both body and soul. The Doctrine of Election is pure gospel; and it's all God's work in your life. Jude begins his book with a wonderful statement of the blessings of this doctrine!

As Jude reminds us that we belong to God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, he also warns us of *extreme danger* from false teachers.

For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. Jude 4

The danger of false teachings is that people lose their faith in Christ and their eternal salvation. False doctrines are not neutral; they are not just differences of opinions between people or denominations. They are not just different ways to interpret Scripture. It is not splitting hairs. **Eternal truth is at stake; the Word of God is on the line; the Gospel is threatened.** Jesus calls false teachings yeast which grows and spreads; Paul calls them gangrene, they grow, spread, and they kill. *False teachings look holy and sound sacred; they are even inside the Holy Christian Church!* They use the Bible; they use the same terminology, but they *warp, twist, or deny* their meanings. The truth is *distorted* into a lie. *A lie that damns people to hell².*

Let me give you an example. This is one of the biggest false teachings in the Church today; and a huge danger to Christians. It's the **Gay Pride Movement**. Gay Pride has overtaken many churches. Churches boast of their transgender clergy, their elected gay leaders, their same sex weddings, and their drag queen Sunday schools. They have created an elaborate theology -- using Scripture -- to support and justify their homosexual and transgender rebellion and immorality³. They have hymnals, songbooks, liturgies, prayers, and bible studies to promote it. They require that people not only tolerate it, but they must "affirm" it and support it. They label anyone confessing the truth of God's Word a *hater, a narrow minded bigot, or a racist*. You will be *cancelled* if you speak the truth in love and take a stand on the Word of God.

² Note that in 2 Peter 2:1-3, Peter uses a form of the word 'condemnation' 4x in three verses (I underlined those 4 times) --> "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their shameful ways, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their *condemnation* from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep." 2 Peter 2:1-3 A 5th word, "judgment" is also used, I italicized that word. **CLEARLY, WE ARE TO TAKE FALSE DOCTRINES EXTREMELY SERIOUSLY.**

³ Here is an example. Gay Pride proponents explain the Sodom and Gomorrah story not in terms of homosexual depravity, but in terms of unfriendliness. The cities were not destroyed because of their immorality, but because they were inhospitable to strangers. This, of course, is false. For the truth, see Jude 7. Belief in, support of, or "affirming" (as they like to say) for the gay pride movement is faith destroying. **Note Romans 1:32.** Scripture is clear: "I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:21)"

This is too much pressure for many people, and so they compromise their faith in order to get along. They love the world and its ways; they want the approval men; they have traded Christ and His Word for the lies and deceptions of the devil. **Faith is lost and eternal salvation is forfeited.**

The danger is great; 26 of the 27 New Testament books warn us of false teachings. *The Book of Jude may be the most powerful warning of all⁴!*

As Jude warns us of the danger, he also tells us how to respond.

Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to **contend for the faith** that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. Jude 3

But you, dear friends, **building yourselves up in your most holy faith** and praying in the Holy Spirit, **keep yourselves in God's love** as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Jude 20-21

You are to **contend for the faith!** The word contend means to wrestle for the faith; it's a continuous struggle to hold to the truth of God's Holy Word. We are to **contend for the faith, not** *compromise the faith*. Jude goes on to tell us that we are to **build ourselves up in our most holy faith and keep ourselves in the love of God.**

The way that you do that is, first and foremost, that you are continually learning the truths of God's Holy Word. You contend for the faith and build yourself up in that faith by being biblically literate and doctrinally sound. Jesus described it as building your house on the sand. You have to be able to identify false teachers and where their lies and deceptions deviate from Holy Scripture. The only way that happens is by knowing the truth of God's Holy Word yourself. Reading, studying, and learning Scripture is a lifelong pursuit for God's holy people. **God's Word is a light unto our feet and a light to our path** that exposes the lies and deceptions of false teachers. If you intend to **contend for the faith** and **build yourself up** in your most holy faith, then you need to be hearing, studying, and learning God's Holy Word.

As you hear, study, and learn God's Holy Word, it will naturally lead to regular prayer, where you pray by the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus, to God your

⁴ The Book of Jude calls us to be very careful about what we believe, teach and confess. It calls us to know the truth; to defend the Gospel, and to reach out to those who are straying. ... The End is near, the signs of the end are everywhere, including a plethora of false teachers leading people astray inside the Church!

Father in heaven. He loves you, cares about you, and invites you into His presence. We speak to our Father in heaven as dear children normally speak to their fathers.

As you hear, study, and learn God's Holy Word, you will grow in your hope of the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. Your hope is an anchor for you as you live each day; it holds you fast to Christ and His Word. Hope gives you a stability in this ever changing world. It keeps you focused on Christ and His promises.

As you hear, study, and learn God's Holy Word, you will naturally love other people as Christ has loved you. You will obey the 10 commandments when it comes to others; and patience and kindness will be clearly seen in your life. We love our neighbors because Christ first loved us.

As you hear, study, and learn God's Holy Word, , you will be bold in confessing the truth of the gospel to the people in your life. **Boldness** means that you don't care about being *cancelled*; **boldness** means that you can live with the labels that the people of darkness throw at you; **boldness** means that you understand there may be consequences to confessing Christ in this dark and sinful world. As disciples of Jesus, we are to expect persecution, exclusion, and ridicule. The world not only rejects Christ; but it hates Christ, His Word and His People. **But it doesn't matter:** God's Holy Word gives you a **boldness** to confess Christ in the midst of so many lies and deceptions and dangers.

If you have not read the book of Jude lately, then I would certainly encourage you to read it through several times this week⁵.

Jude is one of the strongest warnings in Scripture about false teachers and their lies and deceptions. And at the same time, it strengthens your faith as one who is *called, loved, and kept safe* in Christ.

Take the warnings to heart: and contend for the faith as you build yourself up in your most holy faith!

Amen!

⁵ Its only 25 verses! If you would like a study guide of the book of Jude that I created for my Oasis class, send me an email at dbolte@trinitylcs.org and I will send it to you; OR go to Trinity's website TrinityLCS.org; and find the "info center" tab across the top, find the study notes for 1,2,3 John, and look for the file "8 Jude Study Guide". I wasn't sure what to expect from the study of Jude, since it is only 25 verses long; but it surpassed everything I could have hoped for. It is a fascinating book with a powerful message --> well worth your time to study!

Holy Spirit,

you teach us the truth about Christ and His Kingdom in the Holy Scriptures.

Help us to read, learn, and understand Your Word so that we may faithfully confess the truth of Christ to the world.

We ask that you defend and protect us from false teachers and their lies and deceptions.

Give us a boldness to expose the lies, and to call people to repentance and into the way of everlasting life.

Lord we pray for those in our congregation who are being tempted with false teachings, that you will bring them back to the truth of your Holy Word.

Holy Spirit, work within us so that we may contend for the faith and be built up in our most holy faith.

We pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen!

Jude 1-25

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: 2 Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance. 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. 4 For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. 5 Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. 7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. 8 In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them. 11 Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. 12 These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. 13 They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. 14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." 16 These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage. 17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. 18 They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." 19 These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. 20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. 22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. 24 To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Matthew 7:13-29

Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. 15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. 21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' 24 "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. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." 28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.