CONTEND FOR THE FAITH | JUDE 1-4 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 11/8/2026

I. The People of Faith (1-2) | II. The Priority of Faith (3) | III. The Perversion of Faith (4)

INTRO: Today we begin **the epistle of Jude,** written around **A.D. 65–80**. – Though short, **its message is strikingly relevant.** We live in a time of political change, cultural confusion, and competing worldviews—including **the growing influence of Islam in America.** – **But Jude directs our attention somewhere deeper:** Will the Church remain faithful to the truth God has entrusted to us? – That is why this letter matters so much today. – **Do we know what we believe? Will we stand when it is challenged?** Jude's call is clear: **CONTEND FOR THE FAITH**

I. THE PEOPLE OF THE FAITH (1-2): Before Jude tells believers what they must defend, he reminds them **who they are**. > *He begins with himself…*

A. The Servant Jude (1a): Jude identifies himself as: ***"A bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James."*** – Jude was the **half-brother of Jesus** according to the flesh. *(Same mother, different father!)*

1. (Matt 13:55) identifies the brothers of Jesus as **James**, **Joses**, **Simon**, and **Judas**—or **Jude**. – Yet Jude does not introduce himself by saying: *"I grew up with Jesus!"*

- He calls himself: ***"A bondservant OF Jesus Christ."*** – The Greek word ***doulos*** speaks of one who belongs completely to another…**What Humility!**
- **The earthly relationship was not what Jude emphasized**. – What mattered most was his **spiritual relationship**: **JESUS WAS HIS LORD!**

2. At one time, Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him. **(John 7:5)** says: *"For even His brothers did not believe in Him."* **But after the Resurrection everything changed!**

- In **(Acts 1:14),** we find the brothers of Jesus **praying with the disciples.**

3. Jude moved from unbelief to worship, from familiarity to faith, from being Jesus' earthly brother **to becoming Jesus' willing servant.**

P/A: It is possible to be familiar with Jesus and still not submit to Jesus. You can know the stories, attend church, grow up around Christianity— And still never surrender to Him personally. > The important question is not: **WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT JESUS?** But: **IS JESUS LORD OF MY LIFE?**

B. The Called Saints (1b): Jude writes: *"To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ."* – Notice the believer's position: ***Called, Sanctified, Preserved.***

1. CALLED: *kletos* = *an Invitation to Obtain Salvation.* – **God has called us out of the world through the Gospel.** – Those who answer by faith are lit. ***Called to be saints*** **(*cf.* Matt 22:14; Rom 1:1,7; 8:28) (1 Pet 2:9)** says: *"You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people…"*

- **The Greek word for CHURCH** is ***ekklesia***; the ***"called-out"*** assembly of God. – Believer are NOT ONLY called **FROM** something… We were called **TO SOMEONE!** … **We belong to JESUS!**

2. SANCTIFIED: To be **sanctified** means to be ***"set apart"*** for God. – The Christian is not saved merely from the penalty of sin. **We are set apart for God's Purposes! (1 Cor 6:11)** says: *"You were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus."* **(*cf.* Psalm 4:3)**

3. PRESERVED: Jude says believers are: ***"Preserved** in Jesus Christ."* – The idea is *guarded watched over*…

- Paul explains that believers are: *"**Sealed** with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance."* **(Eph 1:13-14)** – *(Signet Ring)*
- Later Jude tells believers: *"**Keep yourselves** in the love of God."* – And he finishes his letter with a reminder that God is: ***"Able to keep you from stumbling."***
- Therein is ***"a beautiful balance…"*** > **The God who called you is the God who will KEEP YOU…**

P/A: So, stay close to Him. Trust His Word. Walk in obedience. Rest in His grace. **(*cf.* Phil 2:13-14)**

C. The Multiplied Blessing (2): Jude goes on to say: *"Mercy, peace, and love **be multiplied** to you."* Not simply added… but **MULTIPLIED!** *(i.e., increased)*

1. **MERCY: Mercy** is God withholding the judgment we deserve! **> Our SIN deserves judgment! (Lam 3:22-23)** *"Through **the LORD'S mercies** we are not consumed… **They are new every morning**."*

2. **PEACE:** Because we have peace **WITH GOD** through Christ, we can experience the **peace OF GOD** in life. – **(2 Thess 3:16)** *"Now may the Lord of **peace** Himself give you **peace** always in every way."*

3. **LOVE:** The believer lives under the undeserved, unchanging love of God. – **(Rom 8:39)** says *"***NOTHING** *"shall be able to separate us from the **love of God**…."* Such bestowed **Love is multiplied *when we extent it to others*, (1 Thess 3:12)** *"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all…"* – **P/A:** *Is the love of God increasing and overflowing through your life?*

SEGUE: People of Faith KNOW who they are and Whose they are: *Called, Sanctified, Preserved*—they **KNOW** they are **surrounded by** *Mercy, Peace, and Love*. > **But what God has given us must also Be Guarded!** *So, Jude moves **from our Identity** to **our Responsibility**…*

II. THE PRIORITY OF THE FAITH (3): Jude says, *"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write …"*

A. Jude Changed His Direction: His original desire was to write about *"**our common salvation**."* *i.e.,* the benefits that all true believers share in Christ—the **same Savior**, the **same grace**, the **same cross**, and the **same hope**. > We are part of **a Redeemed People** who have all been saved the same way—**by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ (*cf.* Eph 2:8)**

1. **His Compelling Change**: *I found it **necessary** to write to you…* The circumstances had become so serious that he was compelled to change the purpose of **his exhortation**… **It was NECESSARY!**

2. **His Course Correction: The Holy Spirit redirected Jude's message;** which is a Great Lesson for every teacher, leader, and Christian: **WE MUST REMAIN SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

   - Sometimes God interrupts our plans because **His people need a timely word** more than a comfortable one. – **(Prov 16:9)** *"A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."*

POINT: Jude wanted to write about salvation**—but the urgent need was to Defend the Truth.** – *So…*

B. Jude Called Them to Contend: *"To **contend** earnestly…"* – The Greek word is ***epagōnizomai*** = to *struggle earnestly*, *fight for*, *exert oneself* **for something of great importance.** – ***(****lit.* ***AGONIZING*****)**

1. Jude IS NOT calling Christians to be Argumentative… **He is calling Christians to be COURAGEOUS What an appropriate WORD for us today!**

2. Jude IS calling Christians to ***epagōnizomai*** **FOR THE FAITH!**

- He does **NOT** say contend for every opinion, tradition, preference, or secondary issue. He says *"**Contend for** The Faith."* > Which means **the Body of Truth** revealed and entrusted to God's people—the **Gospel**, the **Person and Work** of Christ, and the **Essential Truths** of Scripture.
- **(Phil 1:27)** tells believers to be: *"Striving together for **the faith of the gospel**"* and **(2 Tim 1:13)** says: *"Hold fast the pattern of sound words..."* *(i.e., we have a responsibility!)*
- **These are Truths Worth Standing For**: **Salvation** by grace through faith, **the Deity** of Christ, the **Inspiration of Scripture**, the **Death** and **Resurrection** of Jesus, **His return**, and **the Gospel itself!**
- As believers, we can disagree lovingly over secondary matters—**but we cannot surrender foundational truth!**

C. Jude Clarified Which Faith: *"The faith which was **once for all delivered to the saints**."* – That tells us **The FAITH** is **Fixed, Complete, and not ours to Rewrite.**

1. **It is Apostolic Truth: The body of truth** entrusted to the Church – **(Acts 2:42)** calls it: ***"the Apostles' Doctrine."*** > We did not invent the message. **WE RECEIVED IT!**

2. **It is an Unchanging Gospel:** The Gospel is **not continually being reinvented**. – There is not a **New Gospel** for every generation! – **In fact, (Gal 1:8)** warns, *"If we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel**... let him be accursed."*

3. **It is Once for All:** The Gospel is not **once upon a time…** it is **"ONCE FOR ALL."** > Culture may change. Technology may change. Methods may change…**. BUT THE MESSAGE DOES NOT CHANGE.**

P/A: NOBODY has authority to **UPDATE God's truth** to make it acceptable to modern culture. – We are stewards—**not editors!** > We do not rewrite Scripture. **SCRIPTURE REWRITES US! (*cf.* Rev 22:18-19)**

SEGUE: So, **THE PRIORITY OF FAITH** is this: **Guard it, Stand for it,** and **Pass it on.** > Because when **the Church** stops protecting the truth, **the Truth Gets Twisted,** *which is exactly where Jude takes **NEXT**…*

III. THE PERVERSION OF THE FAITH (4): Jude says: *"**Certain men** have crept in unnoticed."*

Jude does not name the ***"Certain Men"*** individually but he does list ***"Their Actions" …***

A. They Entered Secretly: ***The danger wasn't only outside the Church.*** **IT HAD ENTERED THE CHURCH!**

1. The expression describes people slipping in with **Evil Intentions**. – Jesus warned: *"Beware of **false prophets**, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."* **(Matt 7:15)**

2. The Biblical Warnings against false teaching are **NOT isolated to JUDE—**they run throughout the **NT.**, **describing false teachers as false prophets, false apostles, deceivers, wolves, antichrists, impostors, ungodly men, divisive men,** and **enemies of the cross! (*cf.* Acts 20:29-30)**

- **False teachers rarely enter** wearing a warning label—they **come quietly, blend in**, and often **look like part of the flock**. – They quote some Scripture… they even use Christian terminology!

P/A: So especially today, Church, we must stay anchored in the Word. **Not everything that enters the Church "sounding spiritual" is Truly Biblical** > **Test every teaching by Scripture, (*cf.* Acts 17:11)**

B. They Perverted Grace: They *"Turn the grace of our God into lewdness."* – **The word "Turn"** carries the idea of *changing or twisting something into something else*. > **They took the True Doctrine of GRACE**—*i.e.,* God's undeserved favor toward sinners—and **Distorted It into an Excuse for Sinful living.**

1. The word **"Lewdness"** is Greek ***aselgeia***, meaning **sensuality, shamelessness, moral excess, or unrestrained behavior**.

2. Their philosophy: *"If God forgives us anyway, why worry about holiness?"* – In **Romans**, Paul addressed and rejected such **distorted philosophies**; *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? **Certainly not!*** **(Rom 6:1-2),**

3. **True Grace produces holiness! (Titus 2:11-12),** teaching us *"That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, **we should live** soberly, righteously, and godly."* – **"True grace does not excuse sin; true grace teaches us to leave it."**

C. They Denied the Lord: Jude says they were, *"denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."*

1. **Jude Exposes that they were in the fellowship, but Never Truly of the fellowship**—their presence was **Outward,** but their hearts were **Not Surrendered to Christ**. *(different motives)*
2. Some denied Jesus through **false Teaching**; others denied Him through a **false Lifestyle**. – **(Titus 1:16)** says, *"They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him."*
   - **Spiritual Perversion is Never Harmless**—when truth is twisted, lives are affected, and eventually the Lordship of Jesus is resisted.

P/A: Jude's concern becomes Our Concern. The world does not need a Church that is ***embarrassed by its message***. – It needs a Church that knows the truth, lives the truth, and lovingly stands for the truth.

- **(2 Tim 3:13–14)** warns: *"Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned…"*

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: Jude's message is URGENT for our day! – As we watch the **growing influence of Islam in America,** the cultural shifts around us, and even the concerns raised by recent election results, **this is not the time for the Church to retreat, panic, or compromise…**

- **It is time to CONTEND FOR THE FAITH**
- **At Calvary Chapel Venice**, we must remain **biblically grounded, spiritually alert, and boldly committed to Jesus Christ.**
- We do not contend with Hatred or Hostility—we contend with **Truth and Love**!