

Contending for the Faith

Jude 3-4

Last week we saw how God has chosen us, preserved us, and called us. Salvation is a work that flows from the heart of God toward undeserving sinners. The church is composed of people who have experienced the grace of God. Jude, whose very name means "**Praise**," wrote this letter initially to praise God for His wonderful work of salvation in us, but he changed his purpose in writing because of certain people who sneaked into the church to corrupt it (Jude 4).

I. The desire of our hearts should be to praise God . . . "to write unto you of . . . salvation."

What does the word "praise" mean? It means "to commend or applaud." We know what it means "*to sing praises*" of an athlete, or to "*praise*" artists, but what leads to praise of God?

A. We praise God when we believe He saves . . . "chosen, preserved, and called" (v.2).

When we are overwhelmed with our helplessness, our despair, and the impossibility of us ever loving God or cleansing ourselves of our sin, then we begin to learn to praise God for the work He has done, is doing, and will do within our lives.

B. We praise God by talking to others of His work . . . "to write unto you" (v.3).

Some people are hesitant to talk of what God is doing, but Jude did not hesitate at all. Others see no necessity in talking to others about God's great grace, but Jude did! When is the last time you talked to another person of the "*common salvation*" (v.3)?

II. The duty of our lives should be to defend the faith . . . "earnestly contend for the faith."

"The faith" in verse 3 refers not to the subjective faith of an individual, but the body of truth that was once delivered to the saints through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21).

A. The faith is the Word of God . . . preached by the apostles and written for our edification and encouragement (Luke 1:1-4). It is called "the faith."1. The faith was **once for all** delivered.

The word "once" (hapax) only means "once for all" or "one time for all time."

The Word of God is sufficient. There is no need for any further revelation.

Further, any book or doctrine which is added to the Word of God is in error.

2. The faith was once for all **delivered**.

The word "delivered" means "*to give over into one's power for safekeeping*."

It has the idea that every Christian has been entrusted with the truth from God.

B. The faith is worthy of our defense . . . for we are called to earnestly contend for it.

Contend (Greek- epagonizomai) is the word from which we get our English word agony. It refers to an athlete contending for victory in athletic contests and refers to vigorous, intense, determined struggle to defeat the opposition. Thus, we should defend the doctrines of Christianity. There is no other hope for sinners, no other way of salvation.

III. The danger in our churches should cause us to act . . . "certain men crept in unawares."

The danger in the mind of Jude is NOT from the world, but from inside the church!

A. There are those who would oppose the sufficiency of the Word of God (v.4).

B. There are those who would oppose the doctrines of God's free, sovereign grace (v.4).

C. There are those who would oppose the teaching of holiness and purity (v.4).