

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

An Expositional Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

Chapter 4- Enduring Sound Doctrine **Jude 3**

24. Enduring Sound Doctrine- Part 3

WOSM Thursday 12/06/07; WPAS Thursday 05/22/08

Welcome again my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse study of the Epistle of **Jude** and today I want to continue in our new section of study which will deal with the importance of Sound Doctrine. So, let's read **Jude 3** together:

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

Now on the last broadcast, I was trying to show you why Jude was so disturbed in that he said that we must earnestly contend for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints by examining what Paul talked about in **2 Timothy 4:3-5**. So, let's read that passage together:

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,
4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.
5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

When the Apostle Paul told us in verse 5 to “do the work of an Evangelist”, he was telling us to do something very important and very interesting. The word, “evangel” is a derivative of the same word that is translated as “Gospel”. So “Evangel” means “Gospel”, or as it is better translated, “The Heart of the Gospel”. So, an Evangelist is someone who proclaims the heart of the Gospel. What Paul was

telling us here in verse 5 is that we must be sure that in the day when the Church cannot endure Sound Doctrine; in the day when the ear of the Church is turned away from the Truth and is turned unto fables; in the day when entertainment has replaced edification; in the day when those who desire to be molded and shaped and formed into the image of Jesus Christ are belittled and maligned by those in the Church; when we live in that day- it is real important that we make sure that we are faithfully, correctly, and fully proclaiming the heart of the Gospel.

What is the heart of the Gospel? Is the Gospel of Jesus Christ simply that Jesus died on the Cross? Is the Gospel simply that God loves us? Is the Gospel simply that God has a Plan for our lives? Or is there much, much more to it than that?

The heart of the Gospel, beloved, is the simple but profound message of Christ's incarnation to this world. But in order to rightly and fully proclaim this simple message, we must be careful that we include *all* the parts of this holy Message. Rightly and correctly and fully proclaiming all the parts of the Evangel or the Gospel is "doing the work of an Evangelist", and that proclamation is always vital and is always important, but it is even *more* vital and important in the last days as we see the lines between those who are lost and those who are saved being blurred because of the vacuum created by the absence of Sound Doctrine.

This is the heart of the matter. This is why Jude wrote this Epistle. This is why Jude said that he wanted to write to us about the common Salvation, but he couldn't. The Holy Spirit would not allow him to write about the common Salvation; he was forbidden to write about the likeness and the commonness that the Church had enjoyed since the Resurrection of Jesus Christ because the attack on the Truth; the assault on Sound Doctrine; the long relentless war against Biblical objective Truth that was raging inside the Church had escalated to such a degree that Jude said that instead of rejoicing over the common Salvation, he had to write to tell us that with all diligence- we must now earnestly contend for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints.

Jude was telling us that what Peter had prophesied about in **2Peter**, just six years earlier was now happening. Jude was saying that the heresies and the false teaching and the attack on Sound

Doctrine that Peter said was coming one day to the Church had now arrived. Jude was saying that if the Church did not with all diligence earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints- that there wouldn't be a common Salvation. What was it that Peter had prophesied that was coming to the Church? Let's look at **2Peter 1:10**:

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

The Apostle Peter is telling us that we need to "give diligence" to make our calling and our election sure. He used the same word that Jude used to describe what the Church must do to keep the Church strong. What does it mean to "give diligence"? The word that was translated into English as "diligence" in **Jude 3** and here in **1Peter** is the Greek word, *spoudee* (spu-day), which means: *the quality of being constant; careful; with haste or earnestness.*

Peter was telling his readers that with great haste and by being careful and with the quality of being constant- they needed to make or to become certain that their calling and their election was real.

Then Peter draws attention to the role that the Scriptures play in making their calling and their election by God certain in verses 19-21:

Then Peter tells his readers about the great danger that is coming to the Church at some point in the future in **2Peter 2:1**:

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

And over the next several verses, Peter describes in great detail what the Lord had shown him was coming to the Church. Great heresies; great apostasy; false teachers; false prophets; damnable heresies; pernicious ways; covetousness; making merchandise of the sheep, etc.

Peter said that a war was coming to the Church at some future date and that this war would not come from legions of barbarians on

the outside fighting to get in- no this war would be fought *inside* the Church with those who used deception to sneak in and to bring false teachings and heresies in order to deceive the people of God.

Let's look at the terminology that Peter uses:

1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you who will secretly introduce destructive heresies ...

2 Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;

3 and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Notice here that Peter uses the *future* tense in these verses- telling his readers that this attack against the Truth is coming at some future date from when Peter wrote this Epistle. But then as we read Jude- we see that Jude uses a completely different tense in his writings. Let's read **Jude 4**:

For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Notice here that Jude uses the *present* tense- these certain men have already crept in, and they are now in the Church. And Jude says that these false teachers and false prophets are not standing outside the Church trying to attack the Church from without- no, these ungodly men crept into the Church- they snuck into the church at some date in the past- like a sleeper cell of terrorists- and they have come into the Church for the express purpose of tearing down the common Salvation.

So, Peter prophesied that these evil men were coming at some future date while Jude says, "*Their here!*" So Jude tell his readers, that because the threat against the Truth is real; because the assault on Sound Doctrine and Solid Biblical teaching is a serious danger- and a genuine threat- Jude says that because this situation is very troublesome- God, the Holy Spirit changed the course of his letter and moved upon Jude to write and tell those who are called and chosen and faithful that unless they begin right now with all diligence to

contend earnestly for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints- they won't have a common Salvation any more to talk about.

Now you may think that I am blowing this up way out of proportion. You may think that I am twisting these verses to make them fit what I want them to say. I assure you I am not doing that. My reply to that comment would be to simply look at history and let's see whether the threat the Jude talked about here was real or not.

In **The Book of the Revelation**, the Apostle John writes seven letters to the angel of seven Churches. These letters were written approximately 26 years *after* Jude wrote his letter. And of the seven Churches that God told John to write to- five were told that because they had already been overrun with heresy and false teaching- they needed to repent. Let's look at what Jesus said about this:

In **The Revelation 2:4&5**, Jesus told John to write to the Church at Ephesus and tell them:

4 'But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.

5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent.

In **The Revelation 2:14-16**, Jesus told this to the Church at Pergamos:

14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit *acts of immorality*.

15 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

16 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

In **The Revelation 2:20-25**, Jesus said this to the Church at Thyatira:

20 'But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who

calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of* immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

21 'I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.

22 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed *of sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

23 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

24 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them — I place no other burden on you.

25 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.

In **The Revelation 3:1-3**, Jesus said this to the Church at Sardis:

1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

2 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.

3 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

And in **The Revelation 3:15-18**, Jesus said this to the Church at Laodicea:

15 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.

16 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

17 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the

shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

Why did Jesus talk this way to His Own Church? Because they had not listened to Jude and they had not diligently and earnestly contended for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints and now they were overrun with False Doctrine and false teachers and the Lord of the Church was telling them to repent.

I tell you, my beloved that we need to watch and we need to be alert in these last days and we need to stay awake and we need to do the work of an Evangelist and we need to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints, lest we find ourselves at odds with the Lord of the Church.

Well, I have to stop right here- but please join me again on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey through the Epistle of Jude. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.