

FBC POWELL, 1-7-18 AM NOTES
"Exalting Christ and Exposing the Creeps"
Jude 1:1-4
#1 in Series, "Contending for the Faith"

"First Baptist Powell exists to invest in and equip the next generation to live Christ transformed lives in a rapidly changing culture."

Romans 1:16b (NASB) "...for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..."

Matthew 13:55 (NASB) "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas [Jude]?"

"While external threats—such as religious persecution and the world's animosity—are certainly unpleasant, the wounds they inflict are only physical and the injuries they cause only temporary. The deadliest false teaching, on the other hand, comes **not** from deceptive, non-Christian religions outside the church, but from spiritual pretenders inside the church. And the resulting damage is far greater than those caused by any external assault; the casualties are spiritual and the consequences are eternal."
—John MacArthur

I. Those Who Are Christ's (vv. 1-3)

A. The Description of Those Who Are Christ's (v. 1)

1. Those Who Are Christ's Are Called (v. 1a)

2. Those Who Are Christ's Are Loved (v. 1b)

Romans 5:8 (NASB) "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

2 Thessalonians 2:13b (NIV) "...you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth."

3. Those Who Are Christ's Are Kept (v. 1c)

John 10:27-28 (NASB) "²⁷My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

B. The Delight of Those Who Are Christ's (v. 2)

Titus 3:5 (NASB) "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

Hebrews 4:16 (NASB) "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Romans 5:5b (NASB) "...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

John 13:35 (NASB) "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

C. The Duty of Those Who Are Christ's (v. 3)

"Just because the brilliant Commander-in-Chief promises victory on the beaches doesn't mean the troops can throw their weapons overboard. The promise of victory assumes valor in battle. When God promises that His church will be kept from defeat, His purpose is not that we lay down our sword and go to lunch, but that we pick up the sword of the Spirit and look confidently to God for the strength to fight and win. Whenever the promised security of God is used to justify going AWOL, we may suspect there is a traitor in the ranks."
—John Piper

II. Those Who Are Creeps (v. 4)

Acts 20:29-30 (NASB) "29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them."

A. Their Deception (v. 4a)

B. Their Distortion (v. 4b)

"False teachers were saying that since God's grace covers all sin, Christians should follow the desires of their flesh. They gave full reign to their appetites for sex, food, and money. They abused relationships. But they didn't fear any punishment or other consequences because they understood grace to cover their sin."
—Dudley Hall

D. Their Denial (v. 4c)

Sermon 1: Exalting Christ and Exposing the Creeps

Jude 1:1-4

The new mission statement for FBC is “First Baptist Powell exists to invest in and equip the next generation to live Christ transformed lives in a rapidly changing culture.” I want to focus on the last part of that mission statement – “in a rapidly changing culture.” No generation in the relatively short history of the United States of America has experienced such a “rapidly changing culture” as those who are alive right now. I really don’t think I need to waste time defending that statement.

When it comes to the church, the decline in attendance in churches in the United States is astounding. The culture wars have been won by those who reject or at least ignore the Bible. Sin that used to slink down back alleys now struts down Main Street. The Lord has placed us in this “rapidly changing culture” to proclaim the never changing Gospel, and I for one am excited to be alive during such a time as this. The contrast between those who are the Lord’s and those who are not has never been so pronounced. This “rapidly changing culture” has become the black velvet backdrop on which the diamond of a “Christ transformed life” is clearly displayed to a spiritually hungry people who are seeking spiritual food in all the wrong places.

Into this rapidly changing culture God is sending us with the truths that desperately need to be heard – truths found in the book of Jude. All of the Bible is always relevant, but never have the truths of Jude been more relevant than they are today. This small little book of only twenty verses begins and ends with some of the most encouraging words in Scripture – words that are perfect for us at this time, in this place.

For five Sundays, we are going to learn and be equipped for living in days like these. If you will be here for this series, listen and allow the Holy Spirit to teach you, these five weeks will be life-transforming.

Just because we have been assured of the final victory by our Commander in Chief doesn’t mean that we do not have to fight. The promises for victory (which are many) assume our willingness to go into the battle with courage, resolve, and a willingness to die for His glory. The weapons given us by our commander are not for show. The battle is real, souls hang in the balance, and halfhearted lukewarm responses will bring fiery rebuke and discipline from our commander. In this rapidly changing culture, halfhearted, uncommitted “joiners only” who are comfortable in this culture are going to fall by the wayside. We are in for a battle. The enemy is not those who have been duped and have bought in to the enemies’ lies. They are not the enemy; they are the mission field! They are captives of the enemy and captives need to be set free and that setting free will only be accomplished by the Gospel of which we are told in Romans 1:16b: “...for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...” Satan is ultimately the true enemy; our focus is on setting free those he has taken captive.

Who was this man named Jude which is short for Judas? He identifies himself as the brother of James. This James is the James who was the leader of the church at Jerusalem. He was also the half-brother of Jesus Christ – the natural born son of Mary and Joseph. In 1 Corinthians 9:5 Paul speaks of the “brothers [plural] of the Lord.” They are named in Matthew 13:55: “Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas [Jude]?” We recognize right away that Jude was a very humble man. Instead of seeking celebrity status because of his physical ties to Jesus, he describes himself in Jude 1:1a as, “Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ...” As a bondservant (“slave” in CSB) of Jesus, Jude’s whole life had been put at the disposal of Jesus.

To set up this short, but powerful book, I want to talk about what I believe is one of, if not the most dangerous things that the church faces. The book of Jude focuses on this danger the church constantly faces. Here is a quote from John MacArthur that says what I wanted to say, but a whole lot better.

While external threats – such as religious persecution and the world’s animosity – are certainly unpleasant, the wounds they inflict are only physical and the injuries they cause only temporary. The deadliest false teaching, on the other hand, comes *not* from deceptive, non-Christian religions outside the church, but from spiritual pretenders inside the church. And the resulting damage is far greater than those caused by any external assault; the casualties are spiritual, and the consequences are eternal.

[John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary 2 Peter and Jude*].

With that background, let’s examine the first four verses of Jude.

I. Those Who Are Christ’s (v. 1-3)

Verses 1-3 are often passed over, but they are among the richest and most encouraging verses in the Bible.

A. The Description of Those Who Are Christ’s (v. 1)

In verse one, Jude gives a three part description of those who are genuine believers. All three of these descriptions are passive – that means that the subject is receiving these three things. In other words, these are three things that God initiates, and we receive. It is God who calls, God who loves, and God who keeps.

1. Those Who Are Christ’s Are Called (v. 1a)

The Greek word translated “called” is used of an official summons. 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God’s* own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has *called* you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” We would never have come to Christ on our own. We were spiritually dead. Ephesians 2:1: “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.” John 6:44a: “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...” That Greek word translated “draws” was used of fishermen who would cast out a net and then draw in the net with fish in it.

There are two kinds of calling from God presented in the Bible. I do not claim to fully understand this, but I believe it with all my soul! First there is an outward or some say a general call. This is the call that goes to all of mankind. It is a genuine call. An example of that outward or general call is Matthew 11:28: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” As Christians, we are God’s instruments in taking that Gospel call to the whole world. Mark 16:15: “And He [Jesus] said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’”

Second, there is an inner or effectual call. I can remember when the Gospel, that I had heard many times and never paid much attention to, gripped me and consumed me and drew me to Jesus. It was like a summons from the Lord of all calling me to Himself. Yes, I had to repent of sin and trust in Him alone, but my eyes were opened and there was a compelling desire to come to Jesus.

We see in Acts how a woman named Lydia received that call. Acts 16:14: “A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and *the Lord opened her heart to respond* to the things spoken by Paul.” That is the inner call, the effectual call. We have nothing to boast about in salvation except the amazing grace of God by which He calls us to Himself.

2. Those Who Are Christ’s Are Loved (v. 1b)

The motivating factor for God to save us is very simply the love of God. This is way beyond our comprehension. Romans 5:8: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” The word translated “beloved” is what is called in the Greek language a perfect passive participle. “Passive” means that the subject (those who are called) is being acted upon, and the perfect tense speaks of something that happened in the past with results continuing into the present. In this context, it is saying that God loved us in eternity past (as is affirmed in Ephesians 1:2-5) and it continues into the present. It was out of God’s uninfluenced love that He called us unto Himself. 2 Thessalonians 2:13b (NIV): “...you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”

3. Those Who Are Christ’s Are Kept (v. 1c)

That word “kept” means to keep under guard. It is probably better translated, “kept by,” but both kept for and kept by Jesus are taught elsewhere. It was this caring for us by Jesus that is spoken of in John 10:27-28: “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.” If Satan could snatch us away, don’t you think he would snatch us away? Jesus proclaims that no one, certainly not Satan can snatch us away.

Those who are truly in Christ are eternally secure because they are called, loved, and kept. Hallelujah! We don’t hold out; He holds on! We’ve seen the description of those who are Christ’s.

B. The Delight of Those Who Are Christ’s (v. 2)

Listen to this encouraging news as you live in a rapidly changing culture where everything that is not nailed down is coming apart and where the devil is pulling out the nails with speed that is unprecedented in our lifetime. The One who has called you, loved you from eternity past, and who has promised to keep you, has made available for you all the mercy, peace, and love you will ever need! That word translated “multiplied” means to be increased to the fullest measure. It is translated “yours in abundance” in the NIV. “Mercy” is God withholding from us what we deserve. Titus 3:5: “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.” Even when we who are His, sin, we find ample mercy waiting at His throne of grace. Hebrews 4:16: “Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

We not only delight in His mercy, we delight also in His peace. Actually, it is His mercy that enables our peace. There is no peace within until we have experienced His mercy from above. It is knowing that Christ’s righteousness has been imputed to us that gives us peace in spite of our past. Our Lord doesn’t stop with mercy and peace, He continues on with love. Romans 5:5b: “...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” That love flowing out of us is the evidence that we are called, loved, kept, and that God’s

mercy and peace are real in our lives. John 13:35: “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

We have seen the description of those in Christ, the delight of those in Christ, and let's look at the duty of those in Christ.

C. The Duty of Those Who Are Christ's (v. 3)

Jude, in verse 3, is saying that he personally would have enjoyed writing about more things like verses 1 and 2, but he was compelled to write what the Spirit of God told him to write. That phrase in verse 3, “contend earnestly” is strong. The word “contend” is the Greek word from which we get “agonize.” Jude says that he is agonizing for the faith and we are to join him. Beware of any preacher or teacher that is positive all the time. There comes a time that we are to contend, and agonize for the faith. John Piper gives us a picture of this using a military illustration to get across the point that we are engaged in warfare whether we like it or not.

Just because the brilliant Commander in Chief promises victory on the beaches doesn't mean the troops can throw their weapons overboard. The promise of victory assumes valor in battle. When God promises that His church will be kept from defeat, His purpose is not that we lay down our sword and go to lunch, but that we pick up the sword of the Spirit and look confidently to God for the strength to fight and win. Whenever the promised security of God is used to justify going AWOL, we may suspect there is a traitor in the ranks.

[John Piper, Sermon *Contend for the Faith, Desiring God Messages*]

What is Jude speaking of when he uses the phrase, “the faith”? When faith is used in the Bible as a noun with a definite article in front of it, the Bible is not speaking of trust and reliance. It is speaking of Christian doctrine. To put it another way, sometimes the word “faith” is speaking of trusting in Christ and sometimes (as in our text) it is speaking of the truths we believe about the one we trust. Jude is speaking about the doctrines of Scripture.

Let's examine that last phrase in verse 3 – “the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.” Jude is talking about the objective scriptures handed down by the apostles, not things thought up by the church. The Holy Spirit gave this truth to the apostles and the apostles, or a close associate of one of the apostles, wrote it down under the Holy Spirit's direction and then it was handed to the church and the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Word has protected the Word so that we have the very word of God – “the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.” I can't over emphasize this. We are talking about what is taught as God's Word – doctrine. We cannot mess this up. The faith is not changeable with the times. Every blood bought child of God must take up the battle and contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. I know that sects and cults claim to have a new revelation. Mohammed adds his Koran, Joseph Smith his Book of Mormon, and oh so many more. Perhaps the most dangerous of all are those who claim to believe the Bible but add their visions and “words of prophesy” to the Word of God. We are to contend with them for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. The canon of Scripture is complete. It was complete at the end of the first century AD. We have what Acts 20:27 (ESV) calls, “the whole Counsel of God.”

Lest we take this lightly, the martyrs thought that this faith once for all delivered to the saints was worth dying for. That is the ultimate contending for the faith. They were real people with families they loved who chose to die rather than compromise this faith once for all delivered to the saints. There were men like John Rogers, Rowland Taylor, John Bradford, Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, and Thomas Cranmer. The blood of the martyrs is a powerful testimony that the

faith once for all delivered to the saints is worth contending earnestly for. It was “once for all” handed down to the saints, not “once upon a time.”

II. Those Who Are Creeps (v. 4)

One of the three primary functions of Elders is to protect the church from false teaching. Remember the quote I gave you toward the beginning of this message? It said in part, “The deadliest false teaching ... comes *not* from deceptive, non-Christian religions outside the church, but from spiritual pretenders inside the church.” The Apostle Paul gave this warning in Acts 20:29-30: “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” This is exactly what Jude was referring to.

A. Their Deception (v. 4a)

The word “crept” means to slip in by the side door. This word was used of an exiled criminal who slipped back into the country. They are not honest; they operate using subterfuge and deception. Jude is not speaking here of a person who loves the Lord and has just bought in to some book he or she has read and is unknowingly teaching error and when they find out are deeply sorry and grieve over it. Jude is speaking of an evil people who are purposely teaching doctrine that is different from the faith once for all handed down to the saints. These are wolves in sheep’s clothing – evil deceivers.

B. Their Distortion (v. 4b)

That basically means that they turn the doctrine of God’s grace into an excuse for sin. The word translated “licentiousness” is translated “sensuality” in the ESV, “promiscuity” in the CSB, and “a license for immorality” in the NIV. One of the best definitions is “under the tyranny of their unredeemed passions.” Many (not all) of the “Health, Wealth, and Prosperity” teachers fit in this distortion. This teaching treats sin lightly and perverts God’s grace as a means to escape God’s dealing with sin.

C. Their Denial (v. 4c)

These *creeps* view themselves as their own masters and deny the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Not all false teachers go as far as the example Jude gives, but this is where it leads if not confronted. I remind you that Jude was not writing just to pastors. He was writing to “those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ.”

You need to be discerning because truth matters! Resolve to know the faith once for all handed down to the saints.