

Warning the Saints

Jude 3-4

Jude

a study of the epistle

Jude 3

3 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.

“Beloved” (*agapētos*)

- CSB, NET: “Dear friends” 
- The emphasis is that Jude’s readers are loved by God, which ties back to the love of the Father in v. 1.
- This designation is something we take for granted.

LOVE THE
SINNER
HATE THE
SIN



**GOD
LOVES
EVERYONE
WHETHER
YOU LIKE IT
OR NOT**

Psalm 5:4-6

4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You. **5** The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. **6** You destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.

This May Be Jude 2.0

“Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation...”

In other words, Jude wanted to send a letter concerning the common salvation shared by all believers, but he was prevented from doing so by some disturbing developments.

Something Prompted Jude

- To write a very different letter:

“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.”

There is trouble in the camp...

The Task of the Preacher

- It is enjoyable to talk about salvation and other positive subjects.
- **But occasionally a particular situation compels us to speak about a danger that God's people need to appreciate.**
- The presentation of this subject must sometimes be quite negative.

Ezekiel 33:6

“But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman’s hand.”

Hebrews 13:17

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

“contend” (*epagōnizomai*)

- Used in this form only here in the NT.
- The root word is found in other verses (i.e., John 18:36; 1 Cor. 9:25) in both military and athletic contexts.
- It is also used to refer to struggle or intense effort (i.e., 1 Tim. 6:12).

Philippians 1:27

“Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind **striving** together for the faith of the gospel”

From Sirach/Ecclesiasticus

- Jewish wisdom book (200 B.C.) –
“*Strive* even to death for the truth and the Lord
God will fight for you.”

Jude is exhorting his readers to strive intensely
to preserve the faith once handed down to the
saints.

This is a call to persevere.



Nehemiah 4:17

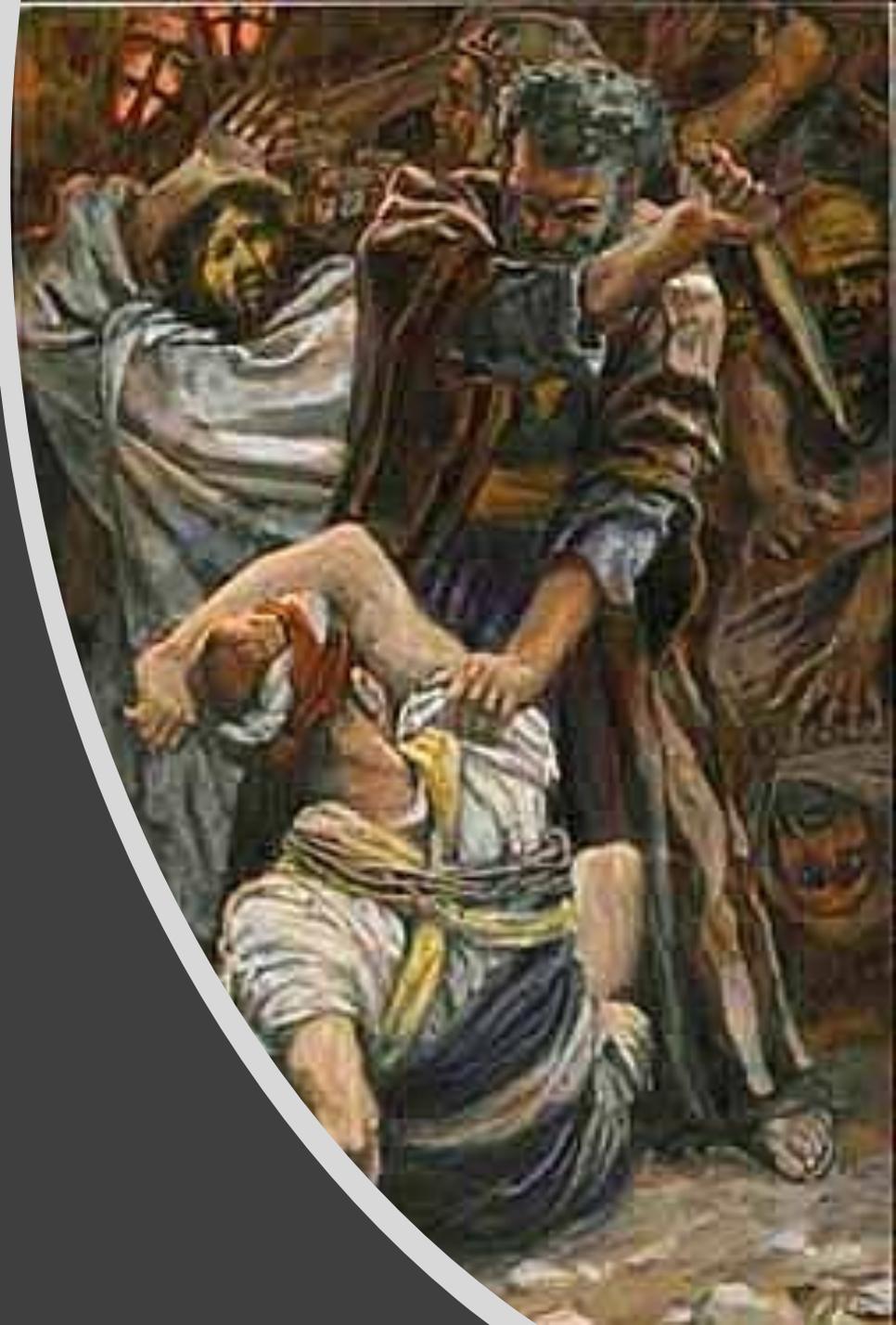
“Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took their load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.”

D. Edmond Hiebert said:

“To ‘contend earnestly for’ (*epagonizesthai*) is an expressive compound infinitive which appears only here in the New Testament. The simple form of the verb (*agonizomai*), which appears as ‘agonize’ in its English form, was commonly used in connection with the Greek stadium to denote a strenuous struggle to overcome an opponent, as in a wrestling match. It was also used more generally of any conflict, contest, debate, or lawsuit. Involved is the thought of the expenditure of all one’s energy in order to prevail.”

Ephesians 6:12

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”





What Are They Fighting For?

“the faith which was once for all *handed down* to the saints.”

- **1 Corinthians 15:3** –

“For I *delivered* to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.”



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The Tradition was “handed down”

From the Apostles “to the saints.”

Two Questions:

Who are the Apostles?

Who are the saints?

What is “the faith?”

In this context, faith is not the idea of trusting God.

This is *the* faith – the teaching that was to be safeguarded and the unadulterated message of the gospel.

And notice that this “faith” was “handed down” “once for all.”

William Barclay says:

**“The facts of the
Christian faith are not
something which we
have discovered for
ourselves.”**

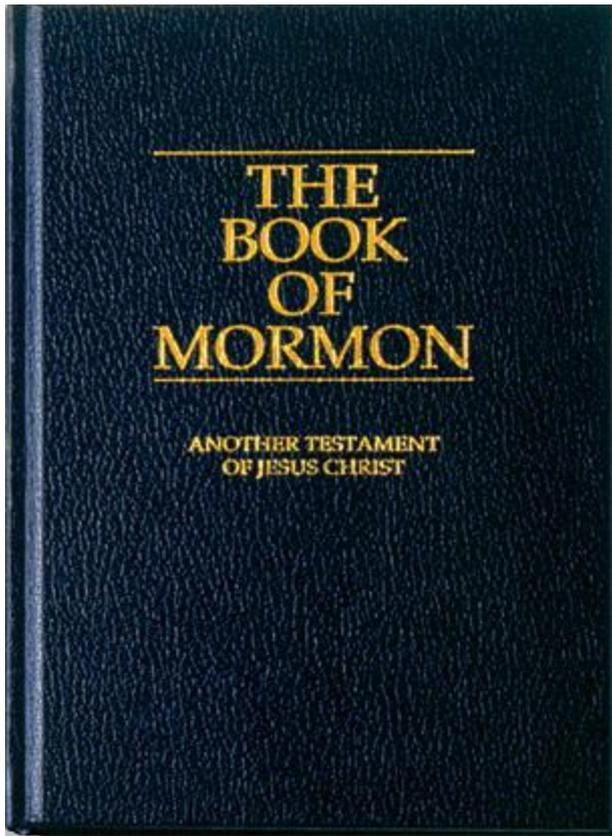
“the faith”

- Galatians 1:23 – “but only, they kept hearing, ‘He who once persecuted us is now preaching **the faith** which he once tried to destroy.’”
- 1 Timothy 4:1 – “But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from **the faith**, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons”

No Supplements, No Alterations

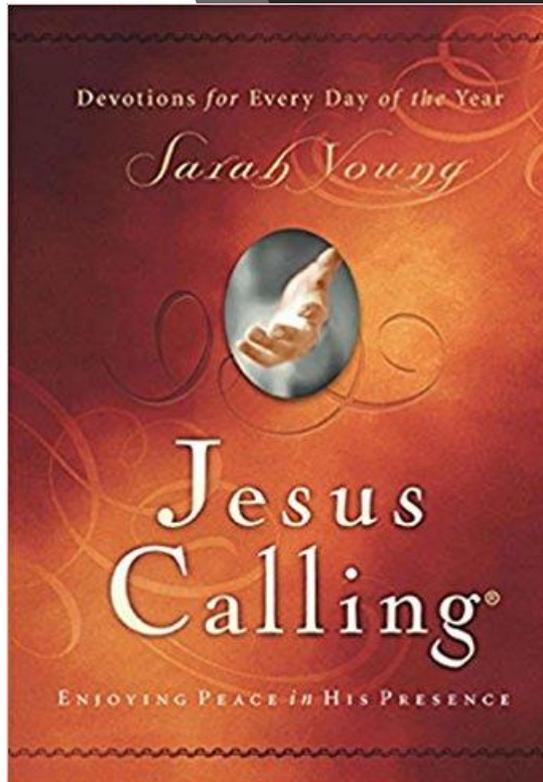
- Hebrews 1:1-2 –

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.”



We Are Aware Of These...

“After many years of writing her own words in her prayer journal, missionary Sarah Young decided to be more attentive to the Savior’s voice and begin listening for what He was saying. So with pen in hand, she embarked on a journey that forever changed her—and many others around the world. In these powerful pages are the words and Scriptures Jesus lovingly laid on her heart. Words of reassurance, comfort, and hope. Words that have made her increasingly aware of His presence and allowed her to enjoy His peace.”



From her Introduction:

“I began to wonder if I...could receive messages during my times of communing with God. I had been writing in prayer journals for years, but that was one-way communication: I did all the talking. I knew that God communicated with me through the Bible, but I yearned for more. Increasingly, I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day.”

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Jude 4

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.

A close-up, profile view of a woman with dark hair and blue eyes, looking intently at the phone receiver she is holding to her ear. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on her face and the phone, and deep shadows in the background. The overall mood is one of suspense or concern.

*We've traced the call.
It's coming from inside the house.*

“certain persons have crept in unnoticed”

- The implication is that these intruders had hidden their true character and motives.
- It also indicates that they were outsiders.
- The verb “crept in” (*pareisedusan*) indicates a secret, stealthy, and subtle insinuation of something evil into a society or a situation.



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Common in the Early Church

- Paul is dealing with Judaizers who had infiltrated the church in Galatia.
- Peter identifies opponents who introduced destructive factions in the church.
- Paul warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:29 –
“I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock”

Jude Tells Us 4 Things:

1. They “were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation”
2. They are “ungodly”
3. They “turn the grace of our God into licentiousness”
4. They “deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”

1. They “were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation”

- Proverbs 16:4 – “The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.”
- **Two things:**
 1. They have already been judged by God.
 2. God will ultimately dispose of them.

2 Peter 2:1-3

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. **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.

2. They are “ungodly”

To be “ungodly” is to commit the fundamental sin of living without reckoning to God.

Romans 1:18

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

3. They “turn the grace of our God into licentiousness”

- Licentiousness is sexual sin or gross debauchery.
- In vv. 6-7, Jude will reference Sodom and Gomorrah, and in v. 8 he will address defiling the flesh.
- This describes the libertine, the Epicurean, and the early Gnostic.

What Are They Doing?

- These people used the liberty from the Law of Moses that Christians enjoy as an opportunity for sensual indulgence and debauchery (i.e., antinomianism).
- **Later, the Gnostics would emphasize a duality between the evil body and the good spirit.**

4. They “deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”

- Jesus is “our only Master and Lord.”
- “Lord” (*despotēs*) is used often to describe the Father, and so, it seems that Jude is not only ascribing lordship to Christ but divinity, as well.
- The intruders lives constituted a denial of Christ’s lordship.

1 John 2:22-23

“Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

Matthew 7:21-23

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. **22** Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ **23** And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”

The Fact Is:

Doctrinal deviation
often accompanies
and often justifies
ethical and moral sin.



Next Week: In the Wilderness

