

JUDE 1:3-4
FAITH ONCE DELIVERED!
PART 1

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Jude chapter 1 as we continue our in-depth study of the book of Jude.

Last time we began our study in this book of Jude and we saw that the purpose of this book was to encourage believers to earnestly contend or fight for the faith that has been entrusted to us!

For the most part, Christians are living in a fantasy world today. They don't see the reality that we are in a war. They don't see the importance of contending for the faith. They are playing on a playground while the enemy continues to forge ahead. You see, the enemy does not give up.

Now some may not agree with that but look at what has happened in our nation and our world.

We see the destruction of the family where we don't even know what a family is and for that matter, they don't know what a man or a woman is!

We see the destruction of our morals where anything and everything goes. Or I guess I should put it this way, that man does what is right in their own eyes because they don't have the Lord governing their hearts. And in the end, what is wrong? Nothing really is wrong in their minds unless you come against what they are doing, the sin that they are involved in.

Look at the destruction of not only our government but the governments around the world. The chaos, the immorality that they are promoting.

And look at the destruction of the church today. We have all kinds of immoral, sinful activities that are being done in the church and to come against them, you are hateful and intolerant.

Look at the false teaching that is going on in the church today, we can spend a lifetime looking at all this garbage and it will keep changing, but the basic premise is a different Jesus with a different Gospel that will end up leading people to hell!

So Jude was dealing with issues back then and it is very applicable today, in the days we are living in, as we see these issues growing and growing and it is not time to be on a merry-go-round, but to take up the whole armor of God so that we can stand against the wiles of the devil!

Let me share the warning from one pastor as he wrote,

Churches can descend into apostasy on a wide variety of issues. They might succumb to mysticism, feminism, worldliness, works righteousness, or any of the myriad corrupting threats poised against the church.

But there is a common thread uniting every church that turns from the truth after error. Setting aside the authority of God's Word is the most well-worn path to apostasy.

Consider the spiritual ground that is lost when the church surrenders biblical authority. If Scripture does not speak with absolute, inerrant authority, the offer of justification by grace through faith cannot be extended to desperate sinners.

One can't argue for the sufficiency of Christ as the sacrifice for sins, or His rule as the Head of the church.

One can't cling to the glorious truth of imputation - that at the cross, "[God] made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Without those truths, we have no guarantee that God's wrath has been satisfied. There can be no assurance of faith, no hope of heaven, and no confidence in the promises of God.

On the other hand, doing away with the authority of Scripture - or merely subjugating it to the authority of men - purposely paves the way for false doctrine and false teachers to infiltrate the flock of God. It invites theological confusion, elevating the words of fallible men over the inerrant Word of God. It is designed to exchange the gospel of grace for a man-centered system of works righteousness. And it pollutes the purity of God's truth, clouding biblical doctrine with superstition, tradition, extra-biblical revelation, and demonic deception. . . .

Descent into apostasy doesn't happen overnight; the changes are slow and steady.

Rejecting Scripture's authority and priority is the first step, usually followed by a succession of compromises: Maybe we can be more relevant and inviting to the world if we don't take this verse or that sin too seriously.

Once the church determines its purpose is to engage and attract the culture rather than edify and equip the saints, it sets out on a path that will always lead to worldliness and apostasy.

Not long ago, the pastor of one of the largest churches in America told church leaders they should not let doctrine get in the way of winning people over.

One sympathetic author summed up his exhortation succinctly [concisely]: ***“Don't put theology above ministry.”***

Churches today are so invested in attracting sinners that they attempt to bury their theology under the welcome mat.

That unbiblical model of outreach is the very thing dulling many churches' ability to reach the world with the gospel. Filling the pews with comfortable, unaffected unbelievers is the fastest way to confuse and corrupt the work of the church.

God has not called His people out of the world to chase its trends in vain attempts to seem relevant. The church cannot be salt and light in this wretched world if we are indistinguishable from worldly people (see Matthew 5:13-16).

- <https://bit.ly/3oiYldI>

Exactly, and that is what Jude is warning us about, falling away from the truths of God found in the Word of God!

If we negate the authority of God's Word, then all that is left is what we think is right or what others feel is right! And there is the confusion, no one knows what is right or what is wrong any longer!

Here's the thing and I think Charles Spurgeon nailed it when he said, "***The church does not determine what the Bible teaches, it is the Bible that determines what the church must teach!***"

Exactly. The Word of God determines what is right and what is wrong. And the Word of God is what needs to be taught!

Over the next few weeks we are going to be looking at this idea of contending for ***the faith*** and I am going to break it down into the following main points.

FAITH ONCE DELIVERED!

FAITH TO CONTEND FOR!

FAITH THREATENED FROM WITHIN!

WE ARE TO CONTEND!

My prayer as we go through our study here in Jude is that you will see why this is so important. The church is to be the pillar and support of the ***TRUTH!***

And today, we see that is not the case many times. It ends up being the mouthpiece for all kinds of immoral activities like homosexuality, transgenderism and the like! And the church is crumbling because it can't stand up, there is nothing supporting it any longer!

One writer makes this point, and it speaks volumes to what we are seeing today. He wrote,

Since the local church is “the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15b), its leaders must be rock-solid pillars of biblical doctrine or the house will crumble.

Since the local church is also a small flock traveling over treacherous terrain that is infested with “savage wolves,” only those shepherds who know the way and see the wolves can lead the flock to its safe destination.

- Alexander Strauch, Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership

Again, listen to what Paul wrote in I Timothy 3:15 and then I will expound on it. He wrote, “**. . . I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**”

How important it is to know how to conduct yourself in the church, what the church is all about, it is the fundamentals!

The church, the place where God's people gather, is to be the pillar and the foundation of the truth and that truth is from the Word of God, not experience or feelings!

A pillar, of course, was used to support or hold up a structure.

But, in those days, a pillar was often set-up free standing in a public marketplace and notices were posted on it, in that context it became a proclaimer.

The first thing that we Christians are to do as “**pillars**” is hold up and proclaim God’s truth to the people of this world (the Great Commission).

But also, Paul says that we, as the church of the living God, are not just the pillars but also the “**ground of the truth.**”

This is interesting to me because the word “**ground**” suggests a bulwark and the dictionary says of this word, that it is, “*a solid wall-like structure raised for defense.*”

In other words, we as Christians are not only to proclaim the Word of God but we are also to defend it against the attacks of the enemy, or as Jude reminds us, “**earnestly defending the faith.**”

Warren Wiersbe sums it up like this, “As a *bulwark*, the church protects the truth and makes sure it does not fall . . . When local churches turn away from the truth (1 Tim. 4:1ff) and compromise in their ministry, then the enemy makes progress. Sometimes church leaders must take a militant stand against sin and apostasy. This does not make them popular, but it does please the Lord.”

Remember what Jesus said in John 17:17, “**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**”

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, “**Sanctify them [purify, consecrate, separate them for Yourself, make them holy] by the Truth; Your Word is Truth.**”

May we truly believe that and apply it to our lives so that as we speak, we have so much of God’s Word in our lives that it just flows forth from us!

Listen to this regarding truth. We are told,

In a debate with Dennis Praeger, a believer, atheist Oxford University professor Jonathan Glover, said, “It doesn’t really matter whether a person has a belief system that is biblical or godly. The important thing is that they believe in something.”

Praeger replied, “Imagine, Professor Glover, that you’re in downtown Los Angeles. It’s two o’clock in the morning. Your car breaks down. You get out. You hear footsteps. You turn around to see ten big young men walking toward you. Would it make a difference if you knew they had just come from a Bible study?”

- Source Unknown

It does matter what we believe and what people believe! We are a part of the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth!

With that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in Jude chapter 1 beginning in verse 3 and let’s see what the Lord has for us in regard to contending for the faith and this – ***FAITH ONCE DELIVERED!***

JUDE 1

VERSES 3-4

Let me give you an overview of what we see in these verses and then we will focus on - ***FAITH ONCE DELIVERED!***

Jude starts out by telling us that he would rather speak about the truths that bind all Christians together in sweet fellowship.

And here is the key to unity, to what binds us together.

What is it that binds us together?

Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:13-18 as he wrote, **“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”**

Jesus Christ has united both Jews and Gentiles together into one body, the body of Christ. Jesus is the One who unites us together and thus, what a glorious subject to be speaking of.

And that is what Jude wanted to write to them about!

I feel the same way but there are times when you need to give out warnings of what is going on in this world so that we know how to earnestly contend for *the faith*. That is where Jude was at, what he wanted to do and yet, we see what the Holy Spirit then directed him to do – ***GIVE THE WARNING!***

Even Warren Wiersbe struggled with this as he wrote, ***“I must confess that I sympathize with Jude. In my own ministry, I would much rather encourage the saints than declare war on the apostates. But when the enemy is in the field, the watchmen dare not go to sleep. The Christian life is a battleground, not a playground.”***

So yes, Jude started to write this letter with the purpose of sharing the common salvation that they enjoyed.

And when Jude speaks of our “**common salvation**” he is not saying that our salvation is cheap, it cost our Lord His life to save us.

Nor is he saying that our salvation is common in the sense that everyone has it or all roads lead to God.

No, like I have said, Jude is telling us that we are all saved in common or that our salvation is based upon Grace alone, through Faith alone in Christ alone.

You see, there is salvation in no other name, there is no salvation apart from Jesus! That means the rich and poor, the famous and common people, the educated and uneducated, all have the same access to God and that is through Jesus Christ!

Peter picked up on that in Acts 4:12 when he said, “**Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**”

And I like the fact that Jude is listening to what the Holy Spirit is showing him. Yes, he wanted to write about our common salvation in Christ, but the Holy Spirit redirected him and thus, we have the book of Jude before us to warn us as well.

Jude is going to speak on this difficult subject of apostasy, false doctrine and how we need to be prepared to fight against it.

But what is an apostate?

An apostate is someone who knows about God, knows about Jesus, receives what the Bible says but only superficially, he is not a believer but a pretender!

The problem is that they look like believers, but they are not and that is the danger. They speak with flashy words, they speak as if they have the truths of God, but they do not!

Apostates never make a genuine commitment to God; they only make a superficial one.

Yes, they know the truth, but they never apply the truth to their life! They are not saved!

Why are these people so dangerous to the church and Christians in general?

Because they came into the church, into people's lives and they are "**unnoticed**" because they "**crept in.**"

I think we need to understand that no one noticed that they were dangerous because they did not wear a name tag that said, "***DANGER: FALSE TEACHER!***"

If they did, it would be easy, but they don't and they make themselves sound more spiritual, more Biblical than anybody else!

In fact, "**crept in**" means "*To slip in secretly as if by a side door.*" (Robertson)

And make no mistake about it, "***Satan knows right well that one devil in the church can do far more than a thousand devils outside her bounds.***" (Spurgeon)

And here's the thing, and I have seen it over and over again. They come in teaching the Bible, but they are not Christians, they are deceptive, they twist the Scriptures to make them say what they want, to fit their agenda, they are ***APOSTATES!***

And Peter even warned us about these deceivers in II Peter 3:16 as he spoke about Paul and sometimes his words were difficult to understand and what these apostates and false teachers do with these difficult teachings. He said that "**... untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.**"

In other words, they make the Scriptures say what they want them to say, to support what they want to believe, instead of what God has said!

And Peter has warned us that these men were coming and are here in II Peter 2:1, "**But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.**"

And keep in mind that those “**destructive heresies**” literally means, “*teachings that will destroy a person in hell.*” That is how serious this is!

What I want to focus on now, as we have looked at these verses, is this idea of contending earnestly for ***THE FAITH*** that was ***ONCE FOR ALL*** delivered to the saints! Or – ***FAITH ONCE DELIVERED!***

When I type “*the faith*” in my computer it corrects me by wanting me just to say “*faith.*” It doesn’t like the fact that it is emphatic or absolute but wants it to just be a general faith, whatever that may be!

Is that a big deal?

You bet it is!

Like I have said, Jude is not speaking of whatever you want to believe but he is speaking of the truths of God found in the Word of God. He is speaking of our common salvation that is being attacked and thus, that is the battle we are facing today just as Jude saw in his day. But I believe the attack has grown immensely in our day because we are not contending for the faith!

It is as Erdman put it, “*There is no other gospel, there will be none. Its content will be more fully understood, its implications will be developed, its predictions will be fulfilled; but it will never be supplemented or succeeded or supplanted.*”

Or, as Paul said in Romans 1:16, “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.**”

Thus, the enemy wants to take us away from the power of God in people’s lives, the Gospel message which is able to transform lives through the power of the Holy Spirit!

And, because of that, Jude is not saying we should be like Casper milk toast, just accepting whatever people say.

No, he is saying to us that we are to stand strong in the Lord's army, the battle is intense and thus, we must earnestly contend for that faith that has been entrusted to us.

That unchanging faith, the truths of God!

Jude tells us that these apostates who have crept into the church turn the grace of God into lewdness or they teach these doctrines of demons without any concern, they will even deny the Lord, that He is the only way!

Let me be clear on this. God's truth does not change and as we have seen in our study through the Word of God, we have the anointing from God, the Holy Spirit or the Spirit tester, the Spirit of truth who will guide us in all truth according to the Word of God!

But again, how are they getting into the churches, the seminaries, our lives?

One author put it like this, ***“How could false brethren get into true assemblies of the saints? The soldiers had gone to sleep at the post! The spiritual leaders in the churches had grown complacent and careless. This explains why Jude had to ‘blow the trumpet’ to wake them up. Our Lord and His Apostles all warned that false teachers would arise, yet the churches did not heed the warnings. Sad to say, some churches are not heeding the warnings today.”***

The warning was given by Jude and yet, like we just saw, many have not heeded the warning. And that happens all the time, not just with Christianity, but with life in general. This happened many years ago, but we see the same practices going on today when warnings are given.

Listen to what took place because they did not heed the warning. We are told, In 1969, in Pass Christian, Mississippi, a group of people were preparing to have a “hurricane party” in the face of a storm named Camille.

Were they ignorant of the dangers? Could they have been overconfident? Did they let their egos and pride influence their decision? We will never know.

What we do know is that the wind was howling outside the posh Richelieu Apartments when Police Chief Jerry Peralta pulled up sometime after dark. Facing the Beach less than 250 feet from the surf, the apartments were directly in the line of danger. A man with a drink in his hand came out to the second-floor balcony and waved.

Peralta yelled up, “You all need to clear out of here as quickly as you can. The storm’s getting worse.”

But as others joined the man on the balcony, they just laughed at Peralta’s order to leave. “This is my land,” one of them yelled back. “If you want me off, you’ll have to arrest me.”

Peralta didn’t arrest anyone, but he wasn’t able to persuade them to leave either. He wrote down the names of the next of kin of the twenty or so people who gathered there to party through the storm. They laughed as he took their names. They had been warned, but they had no intention of leaving.

It was 10:15 p.m. when the front wall of the storm came ashore. Scientists clocked Camille’s wind speed at more than 205 miles-per-hour, the strongest on record. Raindrops hit with the force of bullets, and waves off the Gulf Coast crested between twenty-two and twenty-eight feet high.

News reports later showed that the worst damage came at the little settlement of motels, go-go bars, and gambling houses known as Pass Christian, Mississippi, where some twenty people were killed at a hurricane party in the Richelieu Apartments.

Nothing was left of that three-story structure but the foundation; the only survivor was a five-year-old boy found clinging to a mattress the following day.

- Christian Values Qs Quarterly, Spring/Summer 1994, Page 10

And we see the storm warning today and people go outside with their camera phones to take pictures. In other words, they did not heed the warnings that were given!

Now some may not think that this is a big deal, why am I getting so worked up over this!

There are a couple of reasons.

First of all, the Holy Spirit prompted Jude to write about this. So if it is important to the Holy Spirit, then it is important to me.

Secondly, we see the examples of people and churches and schools that have moved away from ***THE FAITH*** and have embraced all kinds of ecumenical and non-biblical teaching regarding our salvation. So it is important!

And here's the thing. I don't care what anyone says but I do care what God has to say.

Why?

Because there are truths about our God which are essential to our Christian faith! And when I speak about God I am speaking about the Holy Trinity – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit! One God manifested in three distinct persons!

There are truths about man which are essential to our Christian faith!

There are truths about the Church which are essential to our Christian faith!

And there are truths about this world that are essential to our Christian faith!

If we distort them or lose sight of them, we are heading in a direction away from God and it is not just wrong ideas, our eternal destiny is at stake!

Think about it like this, and we do see this played out in churches and in individual Christian lives. When churches or people are involved in unscriptural doctrine, it affects how they live their lives! There is not a desire for holiness but happiness!

There is a body of doctrine, foundational truths that we must preserve, and they are not to be altered or updated for the days we are living in. And when I say updated, I am saying that they are not to be changed!

Look again and Jude 1:3 where it says that “**. . . the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**”

I think that is very clear. These truths of God that were given to the apostles has been passed down to us. This was not something that the church thought up or thought was a good idea to write down.

These were the things that were given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it was revealed by God to them, and they wrote it down!

One author put it well as he wrote, “***‘Once’ means that “the faith” was delivered one time and doesn’t need to be delivered again. Of course, we distribute this truth again and again. But it was delivered by God to the world through the apostles and prophets once (Ephesians 2:20). God may speak today, but never in the authoritative way that He spoke through the first apostles and prophets as recorded in the New Testament.***”

And now we have the Word of God, both the Old Testament and the New Testament and Paul reminds us in II Timothy 3:16-17, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”**

Please understand this because if you miss this, then you will easily be swayed by people who try to alter the Word of God.

The key here is that *ALL* of Scripture is given to us by God through men. I have spoken with people who feel that the red letters of the New Testament is all they read because those are the words that Jesus spoke.

First of all, when the New Testament writers were writing down what Jesus said, they did not use red ink!

Secondly, Jesus inspired all these words we have in the Bible from Genesis through Revelation.

And the key here in II Timothy is that as we read, as the Holy Spirit shows us, as we apply these truths of God found in the Word of God to our lives it is *PROFITABLE* to us!

It shows us what is right! *DOCTRINE!*

It shows us what is wrong! *REPROOF!*

It shows us how to get right when we have gone astray! *CORRECTION!*

It shows us how to stay right! *INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO LIVE!*

In the end, as we read and apply these things to our lives it will help to make us complete, ready for our Master to use us! So it is important to hold onto these things!

God's Word is complete, we are not to add to it or take away from it. We see this in the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 4:2, "**You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.**"

And in the New Testament, Revelation 22:18-19, "**For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.**"

In other words, God means what He says, and He says what He means and don't cross Him because He holds His Word above His name! (Psalm 138:2)

To sum this up we have this perspective for us in Proverbs 30:5-6, "**Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.**"

Sorry, I am going to trust what the Lord has said and not what man tries to tell me that goes against the Word of God. In fact, if you do you are a liar in representing God and He will rebuke you, you are accountable to Him!

And Jesus gives us a warning for the last days in Matthew 24:24-25 as He said, "**For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.**"

We have seen the cults add to the Word of God with their own ideas. We see the Koran written by Muhammad, Joseph Smith and his Book of Mormon, Sun Moon and his Divine Principle. And we can go on and on and list them, but we don't need to because we have the Word of God that exposes these false teachers with their false teaching!

But these false teachings have crept in and now are flooding into the church! In a survey from 2022, at least a third of senior pastors in the United States believe one can earn a place in Heaven by simply being a good person! Are you kidding me? What Bible are they reading and maybe its not the Bible they are reading, but they are avoiding the Bible and holding onto what they want to believe!

Not only that but just 37% of Christian pastors have a biblical worldview! In other words, how they live out their faith is from a worldly or secular viewpoint!

Another 39% of Evangelical pastors surveyed said there is no absolute moral truth and that ***“each individual must determine their own truth.”*** In other words, the Bible is not the truth, and we can't trust it!

Is that a big deal?

You bet it is because they are the ones that are teaching their congregations these lies and it is not only the adults, but the children as well. And thus, we have reached a time when we have more Bibles and Biblical resources than you can imagine but we are Biblically illiterate!

Let me show you what I mean about how these pastors have influenced what their people believe instead of what the Word of God tells us.

This is a sad state of affairs but listen closely to what is going on and this is from 2022.

Almost three out of four (73 percent) agree with the claim that Jesus is the “first and greatest being created by God.”

How can that be when the Scriptures are clear that Jesus is eternal, He has always existed and was not a created being! In Revelation 1:11, for example, John writes that Jesus said “**... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last ...**” In other words, He is eternal because He is almighty God!

More than half (58 percent) believe that God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

How can that be when Jesus said in John 4:23-24, “**But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**”

And there is John 14:6 where Jesus said, “**... ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’**”

More than half (55 percent) believe the Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.

Again, these are basic Christian beliefs that people are not understanding.

The Holy Spirit is not some kind of force. We see in Acts 5:3, “**But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?’**” If the Holy Spirit was some kind of force, not the third person of the Holy Trinity, how can you lie to a force? You can’t and thus, the Holy Spirit is not some kind of force!

More than half (55 percent) agree that “everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature.” And along those same lines we see that more than half (53 percent) disagree with the claim that even the smallest sin deserves eternal damnation.

To keep this simple, Romans 3:23 says, “**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**” God demands perfection and we fall far short of that, and it is only by the righteousness of Christ imputed into our lives by faith that we can be saved and be righteous before God!

(II Corinthians 5:21)

In other words – ***ALL HAVE SINNED!***

Almost half (44 percent) say that Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.

If they do believe that then they are not saved. Don't get mad at me, that is what Jesus said in John 8:24, “**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins.**”

I think that is clear, Jesus is Almighty God and as we have seen over the last two years in our study of John, Jesus taught that throughout His earthly ministry!

What we are seeing is the results of false teachers with their false doctrine confusing the lives of people and they can have eternal consequences! That is why we are to earnestly contend for this faith that was once and for all entrusted to us!

Let me share some foundational doctrines that can't be compromised on, and we need to stand strong upon. And keep in mind that these are not new ideas or teachings, these are from the Word of God, the Bible and it is what Jude is speaking of here.

To start with, ***the inerrancy of Scripture!***

You have probably heard people say, “***The Bible is full of errors!***”

The funny thing is that if you ask them to show you, most of the time they won't have an answer for you. And if they do bring up a Scripture that seems confusing, when you look at what is being said, it clears things up. So the Bible is not filled with errors!

Gregg Allison is correct when he says, ***“the church from the outset was united in its belief that the Word of God is true and contains no error.”***

It wasn't until the 1830's that we see a new word arise to help to define this doctrine and that word was ***“inerrancy.”***

Wayne Grudem gives this as a definition. He wrote, ***“The inerrancy of Scripture means that the Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.”***

And Kevin Vanhoozer gives another good definition of inerrancy, as he wrote, ***“God's authoritative Word is wholly true and trustworthy in everything it claims about what was, what is, and what will be.”***

The problem comes when someone denies the inerrancy of the Scriptures because then you will pick and choose what is true and what is not true. There lies the big problem because you are going to choose those things that you like and the things you don't like, well, you are going to dismiss them as not being true or of God!

The next point is that ***there was a literal Adam and Eve!***

Why is that important?

Because Genesis chapter 1 gives us the creation story and God creating Adam and Eve. But, if you don't believe that the Scriptures are inerrant then you probably don't believe in the creation story, and that is the problem.

You see, if you don't believe in Adam and Eve then you don't believe in original sin. If you don't believe in original sin, then how can you see a need for a Savior. And if you don't need a Savior then why did God become flesh and dwell among us to pay in full the penalty for our sins?

And that does bring up another foundational truth, *the sinful nature of humanity!*

Even without the sin of Adam being passed down to all generations, and it was, we have plenty of our own sin. And yet, people today, like I have said, believe they are good enough to get into heaven! No way!

And let me be clear on this, Paul wrote in Romans 5:12, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”**

We have that inherited sin nature from Adam and we have our own and thus, we need a Savior, we need Jesus to cover our sins by His shed blood!

We have talked about this one, but it is a matter of eternal life with Jesus or apart from Him and that is *the deity of Jesus Christ!*

Think about that one for a minute. Man has inherited sin from Adam and thus, if man is a sinner, he could not pay for anyone’s sins, not even his own!

That is why God became flesh and dwelt among us, to pay in full the penalty for our sins!

Remember what John said in John 1:1-3, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”**

In other words, God the Father and God the Son are Almighty God as well as God the Holy Spirit. One God manifested in three distinct persons.

And it is out of that we see Jesus tell us in John 3:16-17, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”**

In other words, God the Father sent God the Son to pay for our sins!

There are also the following foundational points we need to hold onto! ***The virgin birth of Christ, the sinless life of Christ, the Substitutionary atonement, a literal, bodily resurrection, a literal second coming and an eternal, literal heaven and hell!***

These are foundational doctrines that we can't ignore or compromise on. And this is what we are contending for, this faith that has been entrusted to us!

Again, for many Christians today, they are not looking to contend for the faith but just cruise along until it is time to go home.

But that is a dangerous thing to do as this story illustrates for us. We are told,

Some years ago a fearful railroad wreck took a dreadful toll of life and limb in an eastern state.

A train, loaded with young people returning from school, was stalled on a suburban track because of what is known as a "hot-box."

The limited was soon due, but a flagman was sent back to warn the engineer in order to avert a rear-end collision.

Thinking all was well, the crowd laughed and chatted while the train-hands worked on in fancied security.

Suddenly the whistle of the limited was heard and on came the heavy train and crashed into the local, with horrible effect.

The engineer of the limited saved his own life by jumping, and some days afterwards was hauled into court to account for his part in the calamity.

And now a curious discrepancy in testimony occurred. He was asked, ***"Did you not see the flagman warning you to stop?"***

He replied, *“I saw him, but he waved a yellow flag. I took it for granted all was well, and so went on, though slowing down.”*

The flagman was called, *“What flag did you wave?”*

“A red flag, but he went by me like a shot.”

“Are you sure it was red?”

“Absolutely.”

Both insisted on the correctness of their testimony, and it was demonstrated that neither was color-blind.

Finally the man was asked to produce the flag itself as evidence. After some delay he was able to do so, and then the mystery was explained. It had been red, but it had been exposed to the weather so long that all the red was bleached out, and it was but a dirty yellow!

Oh, the lives eternally wrecked by the yellow gospels of the day - the bloodless theories of unregenerate men that send their hearers to their doom instead of stopping them on their downward road!

- H. A. Ironside, Illustrations of Bible Truth, Page 62-63

That is why it is so important. If we give a different Gospel to people, you have not helped them but hurt them. You made them comfortable about going to hell!

That is why these foundational truths are so important for us to know and to contend for as people try to negate them!

Let me give you this example and please, I am not trying to offend anyone here this morning, but just listen to what this person said and then I will tell you who said it.

This is from a few years back and it was in Pew Forum on Religion, and this is what this pastor had to say, *“Who’s the man of peace in any village – or it might be a woman of peace – who has the most respect, they’re open and they’re influential? They don’t have to be a Christian. In fact, they could be a Muslim, but they’re open and they’re influential and you work with them to attack the five giants. And that’s going to bring the second Reformation.”*

Did you notice that *“They don’t have to be a Christian . . .”* That means that this Gospel this person is bringing forth is a different Gospel, it is a different Jesus, and it is not saving anyone!

Who is this pastor?

It is Rick Warren, and I know that he has stepped down from his pastoral role, but he still has a huge following and I want you to notice how dangerous those words are! And for many, they are not contending for the faith but embracing this false faith!

All I can say is that we need to earnestly contend for the faith that has been entrusted to us by God!

Warren Wiersbe sums this up for us. He wrote,

The church is always one generation short of extinction. If our generation fails to guard the truth and entrust it to our children, then that will be the end! When you think of the saints and martyrs who suffered and died so that we might have God’s truth, it makes you want to take your place in God’s army and be faithful unto death.

What does it mean to *“contend for the faith”*? The Greek word is an athletic term that gives us our English word agonize. It is the picture of a devoted athlete, competing in the Greek games and stretching his nerves and muscles to do his very best to win.

You never fight the Lord's battles from a rocking chair or a soft bed! Both the soldier and the athlete must concentrate on doing their best and giving their all. There must also be teamwork, believers working together to attack and defeat the enemy.

Sometimes you hear well-meaning people say, "Well, it's fine to contend for the faith, but don't be so contentious!"

While it is true that some of God's soldiers have been the cause of quarrels and divisions, it is also true that some of them have paid a great price to defend the faith. As Christian soldiers, we must not fight each other or go around looking for trouble. But when the banner of Christ is in danger of being taken by the enemy, we cannot sit idly by, nor can we ever hope to win the victory by wearing kid gloves.

Charles Spurgeon once said that ***"the new views are not the old truth in a better dress, but deadly errors with which we can have no fellowship."***

False doctrine is a deadly poison that must be identified, labeled, and avoided, Spurgeon also said, ***"I cannot endure false doctrine, however neatly it may be put before me. Would you have me eat poisoned meat because the dish is of the choicest ware?"***

We must always speak the truth in love, and the weapons we use must be spiritual. At the same time, we must dare to take our stand for ***"the faith"*** even if our stand offends some and upsets others.

We are not fighting personal enemies, but the enemies of the Lord. It is the honor and glory of Jesus Christ that is at stake. "Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim 6:12).

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, p. 1024

We are living in a period of time where tolerance of false doctrine is embraced and to contend for the faith is looked down upon!

We see churches compromising with trying to be so modern that they have left Jesus outside the church knocking to get in!

And by doing this, they have undermined the faith that has been entrusted to us!

And what has happened is the church has been influenced by the world instead of the church influencing the world.

Think about this for a minute and it is hard to even believe, but it is what research is showing us.

Did you know that about the same percentage of U.S. born-again Christians are divorced as the overall U.S. population and the rate of unmarried cohabitation is only slightly less among born-again Christians than in society as a whole.

Once you stop contending for the faith and you start to embrace the culture around you, you are going to look just like that culture and your light is growing dim!

One pastor gives us this perspective as he said,

“We contend for the faith in a **positive** sense when we give an unflinching witness, distribute tracts, make possible the training of faithful ambassadors for Jesus, or when we strengthen the hands of faithful pastors who honor the Word of God in their pulpits. These are a few among many ways that we can contend earnestly for the faith in a positive sense.

We contend for the faith in a **negative** way when we withhold support and encouragement from false teachers. (And also speak out against them)

We contend for the faith in a **practical** sense when we live uncompromising Christian lives and give credit to the Lord who changed us.

Obviously, faithful missionaries and evangelists contend earnestly for the faith. But so does the Sunday School teacher or the home group leader, who is faithful to the Scriptures. People like this contend for the faith just as much as a front-line missionary does, and each one of us should contend for the gospel wherever God puts us.”

Make no mistake about it, the Word of God has been attacked from the very beginning, way back in Genesis when Satan said to Eve, “**... ‘Has God indeed said’ ...**” Genesis 3:1.

And the attack continues as we have seen!

“Did God really say that He made the universe in six literal days?”

“Did God really say that Jesus was the only way to heaven?”

“Did God really say that homosexuality was a sin?”

And that list can go on and it does go on!

Remember what Charles Spurgeon said, ***“The church does not determine what the Bible teaches, it is the Bible that determines what the church must teach!”***

May we not forget that! The Bible has told us what we are to believe and thus, that is what must be taught!

Thus, make no mistake about it – ***THERE IS ONE FAITH THAT HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO US AND IT IS THIS ONE FAITH THAT WE MUST CONTEND FOR!***

Remember what Jude wrote here in Jude 1:3-4, **“Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation. [But] I found it necessary and was impelled to write you and urgently appeal to and exhort [you] to contend for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints [the faith which is that sum of Christian belief which was delivered verbally to the holy people of God].”** (The Amplified Bible)

May we do that, may we earnestly contend for the faith that has been entrusted to us because the pretenders are coming, the apostates are coming and let me be blunt, they are here!

But as Paul said, **“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”** Titus 1:16.

And I will close with this from Paul as he closed out his first letter to Timothy. He wrote in I Timothy 6:20-21, **“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.”**

May we guard what has been entrusted to us and not get caught up in the false teaching that is blowing into churches today and into people’s lives. May we earnestly contend for the faith that has been delivered to us!