

***“Earnestly Contend!”***  
***Jude 3-4***

**Introduction:**

1. Please Head Back With Me To The Book Of Jude!
  - One Of The Smallest Books In The New Testament:
    - But With One Of The Strongest Messages!
  - And That Message Is What We Come To This Morning:
    - In Jude Verses 3 & 4!
  - Let’s Look At Those Verses Together:
    - Jude 3 & 4 - “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. / For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ!”
2. The Truth Is A Most Precious Thing!
  - According To Jesus:
    - The Truth Is What Sets Us Free!
      - John 8:32 - “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free!”
  - The Truth Is So Valuable:
    - That It Is Something Worth Hanging On To:
      - Once You Find It & It Belongs To You!
    - Proverbs 23:23 - “Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding!”
      - It Is Not A Commodity, But A Rare & Priceless Heirloom!
  - But Truth Is In Such Little Supply:
    - In Our World Today!
      - In Schools:
        - The Truth Is Often Hidden Amidst A Pile Of Other Opinions And Theories!
      - In Politics:
        - Politicians Make Promises They Have No Intention Of Ever Keeping!
      - And Even In Churches:
        - That Are To Be The “Pillar And Ground Of The Truth!” (1 Timothy 3:15)
        - The Truth May Be Watered Down In Order To Be More Relevant!
3. And This Is Why The Message Of Jude:
  - Is So Vital For Us Today!
    - And His Main Message & His Main Theme Is This:
      - Found In Verse 3 - “That Ye Should Earnestly Contend For The Faith!”
  - “The Faith” Here Is The Truth!
    - The Truth About Jesus Christ!
      - And The Truth Of His Gospel & His Grace!
    - It Is The Whole Truth About Our Christian Faith:
      - That We Find In The Word Of God!
        - And It Is Worth Holding On To With All Of Our Might!
  - To “Earnestly Contend” Means:
    - To Strive & To Fight For Something Of Value!
      - **IE:** Used To Play A Game Called “King Of The Hill” With Some Friends - Someone Would Stand On A Mound Of Dirt & Stake His Claim - “I’m The King Of The Hill!” And Then The Battle Would Begin! Try To Get The “King” Off His Hill!
        - That Was Just A Game! That Little Mound Of Dirt Was Of Little Value!
    - But The Christian Faith:
      - Is Of Great Worth & Value!
      - It Was Purchased By The Precious Blood Of Christ!
        - And It Is The Difference Between Life & Death – Eternal Life & Eternal Death – For All Who Have Believed & Received The Truth!
      - And The Battle For The Truth:
        - Is Not A Game! It Is Real Warfare!
        - Ephesians 6:11-12 - “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. / For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places!”

- To “Earnestly Contend” Means:
  - That We Need To Fight This Spiritual Battle:
    - With Earnest & Strenuous Zeal!
    - Expending Your Energy In Order To Prevail!
  - The Same Idea Is Found In Other Passages As Well!
- In 1 Timothy 6:12, Paul Tells Us To - “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses!”
  - In 2 Timothy 4:7, Paul Practiced What He Preached - “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!”

4. Our Christian Faith & Our Christian Lives:

- Are Often Described In Terms Of Warfare & Battle!
  - It Is A Struggle & We Are To Fight!
- And In This Day:
  - This Message Is To Be Heard By Us More Than Ever!
  - We Need To: “Earnestly Contend For The Faith!”
- And There Are 3 Questions I Would Like For Us To Consider:
  - About This Today!

First:

**1. *How Are We To Earnestly Contend For The Faith?***

- How Are We To Do So?
  - ***With A Great Passion For The Truth!***
    - The Same Kind Of Passion Jude Had:
      - For His Faith & For The Truth Of The “Common Salvation!”
    - Jude 3 - “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith!”
      - We See In This Verse:
  - The Demand For A Passion For The Truth!
    - We See This Demand When Jude Explains That:
      - “It Was Needful For Me To Write Unto You!”
    - Remember What We Learned Last Week About Jude?
      - From The First Part Of Verse 3:
        - It Appears That Jude, At First, Was Planning To Write A Different Kind Of Letter Entirely!
          - About The Content Of The Christian Faith!
      - But Then Jude Was Strongly Moved:
        - By The Holy Spirit Himself!
        - To Write This Letter!
    - “It Was Needful” – He Says!
      - Jude Was Constrained To Write About “Contending” For The Faith!
        - And He Could Do Nothing Else!
      - Because Of The Serious Issues That The Church Was & Still Is Facing!
        - But We Also See:
  - The Desire For A Passion For The Truth!
    - Also In This Verse!
    - Because The Reason He Is Writing Is To:
      - “Exhort” Us To Have The Same Passion For The Truth That He Has!
    - And We Need To Receive This Message:
      - In The Same Way He Wrote This Message!
        - It Is A Serious And An Urgent Matter!
    - And We Need To:
      - Listen Carefully & Learn From What He Is Writing!
    - Do We Have This Kind Of Passion For The Truth?
      - How Do We Receive The Word Of God?
        - Casually? Or With Passion & Fervency & Zeal?
      - We Need To Receive God’s Word The Way The Thessalonian Believers Did In 1 Thessalonians

2:13 - "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe!"

- We Also See:
- The Depth Of This Passion For The Truth!
  - The Word Jude Uses In This Verse:
    - Shows Just How Strong Our Passion For The Truth Needs To Be!
  - To "Earnestly Contend" Means:
    - To Put Forth All Of Your Effort In This Battle!
      - A Strenuous & Agonizing Zeal!
    - **IE:** We May Put This Kind Of Effort Into Other Things! Like Projects Around The House / Or Like Sporting Events - Either Playing Or Being A Spectator / But What About The Truth Of The Gospel!
- We Need To Earnestly Contend For The Faith:
  - With A Great Passion For The Truth!
    - And A Greater Passion For The Lord Jesus Christ!
      - For He Came To Set Us Free With His Truth!
  - This Is How We Must Earnestly Contend For The Faith!

\* A Second Question Is This:

2. ***What Are We To Earnestly Contend For?***

- What Is So Critical & So Important?
  - ***The Great Purity Of The Truth!***
    - Jude Tells Us That We Are To:
      - "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints!"
    - We All Probably Remember Parts Of The Story Of David & Goliath! The Sling / The 5 Smooth Stones! But When David Went To Where Goliath & The Philistines Were, He Went Not As A Warrior, But As A Messenger To Take Some Bread & Cheese To His Brothers! A Care Package! But When He Heard Goliath Blaspheming God, He Asked: "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" And When He Was Reprimanded By His Own Brother, He Asked "Is There Not A Cause?"
      - There Is A Reason & There Is A Cause:
        - For Us To "Earnestly Contend For The Faith!"
      - And The Cause Is The Truth!
        - The Gospel Truth!
        - "That Christ Jesus Came Into The World To Save Sinners!" (1 Timothy 1:15)
    - What Is Our Cause?
- The Veracity Of The Truth!
  - Jude Describes Our Faith As:
    - "Once Delivered!"
  - This Does Not Mean That It Was Only Given One Time:
    - Because We Know The Gospel Is Given:
      - Over & Over Again Throughout Scripture!
  - But It Means That It Was Given:
    - "Once For All!"
      - That Is - It Will Never Change!
    - In Fact, It **Can** Never Change:
      - Otherwise It Would Not Be The Truth!
  - How Many Things Are Changing:
    - In Our World & In Our Own Society & Culture?
      - So Many Things Are Changing!
      - And At Such A Rapid Pace!
    - Sin Is Becoming More & More Acceptable:
      - Even In Churches Today!
  - But The Fundamental Truths Of Our Christian Faith:
    - Must Never Change! And Can Never Change!
      - For It Is Truth!
  - This Is Our Cause!
    - The Veracity Of Our Faith! But Also:

- The Value Of The Truth!
  - The Faith Described By Jude Was:
    - “Once Delivered!”
      - It Is Not Something He Made Up / Not Something Paul Made Up / Or Any Of The Other Writers Of The New Testament!
    - No - It Was Something God Made Up:
      - And Then “Delivered” And Given To Us, As Something Valuable & Precious!
        - To Be Guarded & Preserved As It Was Given!
  - We Are To Be Stewards Of The Faith We Have Been Given!
    - It Is Not Something We Have The Right To Change As We Desire Or As Our Circumstances Change!
  - This Is Our Cause!
    - The Great Value Of Our Faith! And Also:
- The Vitality Of The Truth!
  - Jude Continues In Verse 3:
    - “Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints!”
  - Who Is A Saint?
    - A True Saint Is Someone Who Has Believed In The Lord Jesus Christ & Has Been Saved!
      - And The Only Way This Can Happen Is Through The Gospel!
  - The Truth About Jesus Christ Is Powerful:
    - To Change Lives!
      - And That Is Why We Ought To Zealously Guard The Gospel!
  - Because Without It:
    - No Lives Can Be Changed!
      - And Noone Can Be Saved!
  - We Need To Earnestly Contend:
    - For The Faith Which Was Once Delivered Unto The Saints!
      - And For The Great Purity Of The Truth!

\* Third Question:

3. ***Why Are We To Earnestly Contend For The Faith?***

- Why Are We To Do So?
  - ***Because Of The Great Problem Facing The Truth!***
    - And In Most Of This Letter, Jude Describes The Great Problem!
      - Starting In Verse 4:
    - Jude 4 - “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ!”
      - Even During The Times Of The Early Church, There Were Those Who Were Trying To Destroy The Christian Faith From Within The Church!
        - Not Much Has Changed Today!
        - And So, We Need To Be Alert To This Problem As Well!
          - Which Is Why Jude Identifies These Trouble-Makers! **IE:** 15 Most Wanted! Need To Know Who They Are / What They Are Like!
    - What Do We Need To Know About The Problem Facing Our Faith?
  - Their Deception!
    - “For There Are Certain Men Crept In Unawares!”
    - We Need To Be Alert:
      - To Those Who May Be With Us, But Are “Not Of Us!”
    - There Are People Who Have Infiltrated The Church:
      - Quietly - And As Unbelievers - And Will Try To Destroy The Church & The Christian Faith From Within!
    - Jesus Explained That This Would Be So:
      - Matthew 7:15-16 - “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. / Ye shall know them by their fruits!”
      - Matthew 13:24-26 - “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: / But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. / But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also!”

- **IE:** There Is No Such Thing As “Weed-Free Wheat!”
  - And This Is Why We Need To Be Cautious & Careful & Vigilant For The Gospel & The Truths Of Our Faith!
    - Because There Are Some Who Will Try To Change Things From Within!
- Their Destiny!
  - Though We Need To Be Vigilant & “Earnestly Contend!”
    - We Must Not Be Anxious & Worried!
      - Because The Lord Himself Knows The Devil’s Devices!
        - This Is Why Jude Adds:
  - “Who Were Before Of Old Ordained To This Condemnation!”
    - The Idea Here Is That The Judgment Of These Kind Of Men Has Already Been Prophesied & Written About In The Scriptures!
  - They Are Ungodly Men:
    - And Will Receive The Reward Of All Ungodly Men, If They Do Not Repent From Their Sin!
  - But Even Though We Need To Be Alert:
    - We Do Not Need To Be Afraid!
      - Because The Lord Has Everything Under His Control!
  - But How Can We Identify These Kinds Of People?
- Their Denial!
  - “Ungodly Men, Turning The Grace Of Our God Into Lasciviousness, And Denying The Only Lord God, And Our Lord Jesus Christ!”
    - Here’s How To Identify Them:
  - They Deny The Grace Of God!
    - “Turning The Grace Of Our God Into Lasciviousness!”
      - Or Unrestrained Sin!
        - To Do Your Own Thing Your Own Way Without Any Regard For Authority Or Consequences!
    - They Presume Upon The Grace & Goodness Of God:
      - And Say That Because Of God’s Forgiveness, Anything Goes!
    - Paul Explained Their Principle For Living In:
      - Romans 6:1-2 - “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? / God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”
    - Is This Not What Is Going On In Many Churches Today?
      - Use God’s Grace To Pursue After Your Own Pleasure & Will!
    - But That Is Not What God’s Grace Is For!
      - Titus 2:11-12 - “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, / Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world!”
    - God’s Grace Is Given To Us:
      - To Bring Us Closer To The Lord!
  - They Deny The Authority Of Christ!
    - “And Denying The Only Lord God, And Our Lord Jesus Christ!”
    - They Live As If Jesus Christ:
      - Does Not Exist Or Does Not Care What Goes On In Our Lives Or In His Church!
    - They Deny His:
      - Singularity! “Only!” Other Ways?
      - Sovereignty! “Lord” Two Different Words To Describe Jesus’ Authority!
      - Significance! As “Savior!” Just A Teacher For Better Life / Living!
- Do You See This Going On In The World-Wide Church Today?
  - We Need To Earnestly Contend For The Faith!
    - Because Of The Great Problems We Are Facing Even Within The Church!

**Conclusion:**

1. As Matthew Henry Once Wrote:
  - We Have Been Fore-Warned:
    - Let Us Be Fore-Armed!
  - Jude Here Is Fore-Warning Us Of What We Will Face:
    - Not Just In The World:

- But Even Within The Church!
- And That Is Why We Need To Be Fore-Armed:
  - And Be Ready To “Earnestly Contend For The Faith!”
- 2. How Can We Be Fore-Armed Today?
  - Know The Truth!
    - Through The Word Of God!
    - Like The Bereans Who:
      - Acts 17:11 - “Received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so!”
    - Keep The Truth In Your Mind!
  - Believe The Truth!
    - Through The Gospel!
    - Do You Have Jesus As Your Savior From Sin?
      - Without The Power Of Christ In Your Life, You Have No Power To “Fight The Good Fight Of Faith!” Powerless!
    - Believe The Truth With All Your Heart!
  - Live The Truth!
    - Do Not Deny The Grace Of God:
      - But Live It Out! Grace For Godliness!
    - Do Not Deny The Authority Of Jesus:
      - But Live For Him!
  - Speak The Truth!
    - In Love!
    - For It Is The Truth, The Whole Truth, And Nothing But The Truth Of Jesus & His Gospel That Can Change Hearts & Lives!
- 3. This Is How We Can Begin To:
  - “Earnestly Contend For The Faith!”

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