

Jude

The Mercy & Judgement of God

"Jude's call for vigilance still sounds in our churches today, especially when we encounter self-made leaders who bear no resemblance to Christ." —Tokunboh Adeyemo

"Contending for the Faith"

Introduction

- Jude has established in his introduction that Christian identity is grounded in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- In light of this identity, Jude conveys the purpose of his letter in the form of both an exhortation and a warning.

Key Issue: What is the relationship between what Christians must _____ and how they are to _____?

The Appeal — Jude 3-4

- These verses correspond to the "body-opening" in Greco-Roman correspondence and serve to convey the purpose of Jude's letter. They also help us to make sense of the subsequent content of the letter.

The Exhortation (v. 3) → The Exhortation Developed (v. 20 -23)

The Warning (v. 4) → The Warning Justified (v. 5 -19)

The Exhortation

³ Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

- Although Jude had intended to write to them concerning their salvation, circumstances which he has become aware of have instead forced him to write to them concerning these matters.

"appealing"— παρακαλέω (parakaleō)—To urge strongly, to appeal to, to exhort or encourage.

The use of this term demonstrates the _____ nature of this letter.

"to contend"— ἐπαγωνίζομαι (epagōnizomai)—To exert intense effort on behalf of someone or something (athletic imagery). The imagery can refer to either defensive or offensive action and semantically carries the idea of effort expended on behalf of a noble cause.

Those who share a common salvation share a common _____: (1) We must _____ the faith.

(2) We must _____ the faith.

"the faith once for all delivered to the saints"

⇒ The term "faith" is used here in reference to the message of the _____ as well as its implications.

⇒ The believers in these churches have received this message and are responsible to _____ and _____ it.

The Warning

⁴ For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

- This warning serves as the basis for his previous exhortation to contend for the faith. "Certain people," who should be understood as false teachers, have come in among the churches and must be resisted and their teaching refuted.

Who are these false teachers?

1. They are people who are already in the churches →

2. They were long ago designated for the condemnation which Jude will go on to describe →

"designated"— προγράφω (prographō)— To write in advance or before(hand); referring to that which is found in older documents.

3. They are characterized by ungodliness →

"ungodly"— ἄσεβής (asebēs) — Violating the norms of a proper relation to deity. Irreverent, impious, ungodly.

4. They pervert the grace of God into sensuality/licentiousness →

“sensuality”—**ἀσέλγεια** (aselgeia)—Lack of self-restraint, conduct that violates what is acceptable, self-abandonment.

⇒ These men have possibly encountered the teachings of _____ and either misunderstood them or intentionally distorted them.

⇒ They interpreted God’s _____ as an opportunity to do as they pleased.

5. They deny that Christ is Master and Lord →

“Master”—**δεσπότης** (despotēs)—One who has legal control and authority over persons, such as subjects or slaves, *lord, master*.

The imagery functions on two levels:

(1) _____ and _____ → *They do not see themselves as subject to Jesus’ _____.*

(2) _____ and _____ → *They do not recognize the _____ of Jesus over every aspect of their lives.*

Contending for the Faith

What must Christians contend for?

1. The Gospel of God’s _____

Eph. 2:8-9—For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

2. The _____ of Jesus Christ

1 Pet. 3:13-17—¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.

What/who must Christians contend against?

1. _____

⇒ The Christian life is a _____!

1 Tim. 6:11-12—¹¹ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

⇒ The _____ has already been won!

Rom. 6:5-11—⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

2. Those who advocate for indulging in that which Christ _____.

(1) _____ of the church.

(2) _____ the church.

2 Pet. 2:18-19—¹⁸ For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, ¹⁹ promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

Questions for Reflection

1. In contending for the Gospel within my own life, am I more prone to legalism or licentiousness?
2. In what areas of my life do I struggle to recognize Jesus’ lordship?