

Outline of Jude

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Contend Earnestly for the Faith

Jude, Part II

Jude 3-4

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I. Antinomianism in History: Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643)

II. The Theme of Jude

³*Beloved, while I was very diligent [desirous] to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.* ⁴*For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord [Sovereign] God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

A. Command: Contend Earnestly for the Faith (3)

While Jude had wanted to write to encourage his readers to revel in God's forgiveness in Christ and to grow in the grace of God, he "*found it necessary*" to change plans. News of threats facing the congregation compelled him to alter what he wrote. So he wrote "*exhorting them*" to *defend and preserve the faith* - the historical and propositional truths in which we trust, summarized in the Apostles' Creed. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

¹*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,* ²*by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.* ³*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,* ⁴*and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,* ⁵*and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve...¹¹...so we preach and so you believed. (1 Cor 15:1–5, 11b)*

B. Occasion: For certain men have crept in unnoticed (4)

So what compelled Jude to exhort his readers *to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints*? It was the threat of false teachers. These teachers have not been openly welcomed in the church but have *crept into* the congregation. But though these men have gone *unnoticed* by Jude's readers, they have not gone *unnoticed* by God or godly men of the past. *Long ago they were marked out* – written about beforehand – as Jude will demonstrate in the body of his letter (5-19).

So what is the *condemnation* or *judgment* which Jude renders against these men? It is that they are _____ *men* – irreverent, impious, wicked men who have no fear of God. How so? First, they *turn the grace of God into lewdness* – sensuality, licentiousness, sexual immorality. They teach that because God is a forgiving God, therefore, we need not worry about continuing to practice _____. Second, they "*deny the only Sovereign God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*" By *turning the grace of God into lewdness*, these false teachers are simultaneously *denying the Living God* who has provided forgiveness in Jesus.

⁶*And Yahweh passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, "Yahweh, Yahweh God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty [unrepentant], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."* (Exodus 34:6–7)

III. Contending Earnestly for the Faith

A. Beware false teaching (cf. Acts 20:28-32; Tit 1:9; 2 Pet 2:18-22)

The Scriptures are replete with warnings against false teaching and false teachers:

- Acts 20:29–30 - ²⁹*For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.*
- Galatians 1:8 - ⁸*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*
- Colossians 2:8 - ⁸*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.*

False teachers imitate the _____ and try to deceive God’s people – to lead us astray from the truth. Some false teachers commit *doctrinal errors*, others commit *ethical errors*; teaching that the grace of God makes holiness of life irrelevant. Jesus warned:

²¹*“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (Matthew 7:21–23)*

This danger of *antinomianism* has been a persistent challenge throughout church history. When we teach that God’s forgiveness in Christ sanctions or minimizes _____ or makes holiness superfluous, then we are denying the faith (cp. Rom 6:1ff; 1 Jn 3:4-10).

B. Contend earnestly for the faith (2 John 9-10)

It is imperative, therefore, that we *contend earnestly for the faith*. We must be willing to confront both doctrinal and ethical problems. And we must do so *earnestly* – not *pugnaciously* (cf. Jas 1:20). As Paul exhorted Timothy, “*a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth...*” (2 Tim 2:24-26). As we do so, we must *contend for the faith* not our personal predilections; we must learn that not every doctrinal or ethical error is of the same _____.

Matthew Henry writes: “*Those who have received the truth must contend for it. But how? As the apostles did; by suffering patiently and courageously for it, not by making others suffer if they will not presently embrace every notion that we are pleased (proved or unproved) to call faith, or fundamental.*” (M. Henry, 2460)

C. Exhort and convict those who contradict (Tit 1:5-9 cp. Gal 1:6-7; Heb 5:14)

Jude’s exhortation helps explain why our examination of elder candidates includes questions both about life and doctrine. Paul reminds Titus that elders are to be blameless and above reproach in their character and that they are to hold “*fast the faithful word as [they have] been taught, that [they] may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict*” (Tit 1:5-9). Elders are to be men of character and conviction and they are to be willing to correct errors in the church, to protect the flock from false teaching. In this they are to serve as examples to the flock, equipping all God’s people to discern good and evil and to shun false teaching.

IV. Conclusion