

The Letter of Jude

A Call to Action (Born out of Love)

Jude 17-21
Sunday, October 6, 2019

Introduction

As we have worked through the Letter of Jude we have considered the call to contend for the faith and the nature of the threat against the church. Jude spent a considerable amount of time in this short letter describing those who oppose the truth and their ways of life.

While the charge has been given and the opposition has been defined, the question remains: What does it look like to contend for the faith? And what does it look like for us to be a church who takes this *call to contend* seriously?

In vv. 17-23 Jude provides a call to action. In this section he describes what the church must do in order to defend the faith that we have been entrusted with.

Jude's Love for the Church

Three times in this short letter Jude refers to his readers as *beloved*. He makes it clear that he is writing, not only out of love for the truth of the Gospel, but also out of love for those to whom he's writing.

In much the same way we should care enough for those around us within the church that we should desire to see them stand firm and to not be swept away by those who oppose the truth.

Beloved - Remember the Warnings (Jude 17-19)

- **The call to remember** – The first thing Jude says the church must do is to remember. The reality is that we can so quickly become complacent. We should be always mindful of the warnings we have in the Scriptures of those who would oppose the faith and who seek to distort the truth.
- **The source of the warnings** – Throughout the New Testament we have warnings of false teachers and of opponents of the faith who will come. Jude calls them the *predictions of the apostles of Jesus* (1 Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 20:29-30; Matthew 7:15-16; 2 Peter 3:1-2).
- **The substance of the warnings** – While Jude has already spent a considerable amount of his letter describing the opponents of the faith, in verses 18-19 he gives a final summary. In particular he says that they are *devoid of the Spirit*, which is another indication that while they may appear to be part of the church they are actually unbelievers (Romans 8:9).
- **Application:** We shouldn't be surprised that the truth is under attack. The Scriptures tell us to expect this. Jude is calling us to remind ourselves regularly of the threats that exists and to be on guard.

Beloved - Remain in the Love of God (Jude 20-21)

- **The call to remain** – While there are four admonitions in this verse, the main verb is *keep*. Jude says we are to *keep ourselves in the love of God*; the rest of the verse helps us understand ways in which we *keep ourselves*.
- **A seeming contradiction – Understanding the command** – Jude is very clear in two other places in his letter (vv. 1, 24) that God is the one who keeps those who are His – we cannot keep ourselves in right standing before God. This command, however, is a call to live in the sphere of God's love. We should live in such a way that we remain in good and sweet fellowship with Him (loving Him and keeping His commands) (Jn 15:9-10).

Three ways that we remain in the love of God

- **Building - We must devote ourselves to being built up in the faith**
 - **The faith** Jude is referring to is the same faith he speaks of in verse 3. We need to be a people who are growing and maturing in our knowledge and application of the faith that has been entrusted to us.
 - **The Scriptures as our foundation** – The way God has planned for us to know the faith and to be built up in it is through the Scriptures. In order to grow in the faith we must be a people who are devoted to both knowing and obeying His Word. This will also equip us to be able to contend for the faith (2 Timothy 2:15-18, 3:1-17).
- **Praying - We must devote ourselves to faithful prayer**
 - **Praying in the Holy Spirit** – When we come to know God through Christ we are filled with the Holy Spirit. He lives within us and He helps us in our prayers (Rom. 8:26-27). While those who oppose the truth are *devoid of the Spirit* (vs. 19), we have the Spirit as our helper.
 - Prayer is a vital component in our fellowship with God. It is a primary means by which we 'remain in His love' and it also serves as a weapon in our fight for the truth (Ephesians 6:16-18).
- **Waiting – We must devote ourselves to the hope of Christ's return**
 - **Waiting for mercy** – As those who are in Christ we know that our only hope of eternity with God is His mercy. As Jude describes our view of what is to come he describes it this way: our wait for mercy.
 - **An eternal perspective** - Jude is calling us to be people who have a view of life that is bigger than what's right in front of us. He's calling us to have an eye toward eternity. To live with hope. While we now live in a world that opposes the truth, one day all will be made right as we see Jesus and enter into eternity with God.