

Title: How to Face Spiritual Denial

Text: Jude 1:3-4

Would you turn in your Bibles, please, to Jude....The book of Jude. The book contains only 25 verses. Yet, it is a powerful and relevant book dealing with false teaching and false teachers...The book warns about those who would take our minds away from the truth of the Word. Those who would cause us to compromise with what the Word of God really says.

Our subject today : How to face Spiritual Denial...

(Read Jude 1:3-4)

### Prayer

In Verse 3 and 4 we have the occasion ;and purpose of this letter.  
This is the heart of the message of Jude...

I want you to notice, first of all, he had an original concern. In Verse 3 he starts out by saying: "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation"...then, I felt something else. You see, his original thought was that he was going to write to them about their common salvation. That we are one in the Lord Jesus. That is the way he started. That was his original concern.

But, in the midst of that he realized what was happening among these christians. And they were getting away from the truth that was in God's word. Especially in a couple of areas, that we are going to later share with you. And so, he develops [REDACTED] this teaching on salvation but he especially warns us of how your practices or those who come in and try to under mind you, how that will get you away from standing and contending for the faith. And I hope you will see something in a moment which is very fasinating and [REDACTED] true of many christians today. Christians who are getting away from contending for the faith. Becuase of some very definite reasons. Reasons which were not only true in Jude's day, but very much in operatìon today.....And I think you will see that in just a moment....

But originally he just started out to write about our common salvation. But he realized the importance of deception and he warns about it.

So, his present change, what was it?...

Well, first of all, the simple responsibility he says is to contend earnestly for the faith......Look at the middle of Vs 3... "I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

That is one of the greatest statement on the Word of God in the whole Bible. And I want you to understand it step by step...

First of all, that responsibility...."CONTEND EARNESTLY"... this is not suggesting, folks, that we get into a struggle over the Word...That is commanding us. That is our responsibility.

Now, the phrase "CONTEND EARNESTLY" comes from athletics. And it means: "an intense struggle" a determined struggle for the Word of God. And I wish I could say to you that that intense struggle is ~~only~~ with all the people who are outside, who are clearly identifiable as not being Christians. But that is not the message of Jude. Jude's message is that because of what is happening in the camp of christians that causes all of us as christians to have to contend earnestly for the faith with an intense struggle... And I believe that a lot of us just don't want to deal with this issue.

Dr. Harold Linseal, editor of Christianity Today, just recently wrote a book called "The Battle For the Bible." Now, some of you don't even know this battle is going on. And you may here me say this and you conclude: "that is not my concern. I could care less."....But, folks this is where it is at...You understand that at any point if I could undermined your confidence in the Word of God, the whole ~~message~~ ministry of this church would go down the tubes....That is where it is.....People don't understand and see that at all....

Listen, the battle is over the Word of God. It's over what it is. Is it true without error? Is it truly God's Word. Totally without error.

If we don't have the guaranteed revelation from God's Word, we have no hope. It is just a matter of human opinion as to what is right and wrong in life. It all comes back to whether or not this book is the Word of God. Vs 3 says, "contend earnestly"...

In Philippians chapter 1, if you will turn there, please, Paul makes an interesting statement about struggle. ~~7/7/1/~~

..... Philippians chapter 1 and notice vs 27.....

When I was studying this I became convicted. I think we have been ignoring this in the teaching of our church. Not emphasising to you as believers that everyone of us, in the body of Christ, are responsibly for the struggle concerning the faith that has been once and for all ~~delivered~~ delivered unto the saint. It is because sometimes we are not willing to face that struggle, that we lose the battle as it were, because we are not standing for the truth. We compromise so easily....

In Philippians Paul was writing to these Christians from a prison cell...Vs 27 Paul writes: "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together"..... And that is our same word "contend earnestly Striving together for what?....."for the faith of the gospel"...

And Jude says "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

You know, a couple of things struck me in vs 27...

One is, that God doesn't want us to get moved easy.... "STAND FIRM"...  
Don't get moved easily away from what is the sum total of the faith in God's Word. Don't let anyone push you around. STAND FIRM...

And the second thing that struck me is that Christians are to have one mind....Literally..."one soul"....That down deep inside, the heart of the Christian should be bound together around the struggle for the truth of God's Word. If we fail there, we lose the whole ball game.

I like what one High school student once said: "You know Pastor you are really set on the fact that the Bible is the Word of God."... I said, "Yay, you might say that."...."I mean you are really closed on the subject. What if your asre wrong?".....

I took my Bible and handed it to him and I said, "If I am wrong, I don't want to stay in the churchh.".....I gave him my bible and started to walk away....

He said,...."Hay, wait, wait....He said, you mean to tell me that you would give it up, if you didn't know that was the Word of God?".... I said, "that is right".....I would quite.....

He said, "Oh, you shouldn't feel that way."....You know, he was trying to encourage me.....

He said, you should do that, you are doing a good thing..... I said, "Listen, if I didn't believe this book was the Word of God, we might as well eat, drink, and be marry, for tomorrow we die." ~~E~~

If this isn't God's Word folks, let's stop playing games at church. This isn't some nice little thoughts that we throw out at you each Sunday. Oh, know, this is the truth of God's Word. If I don't believe that I would give it up.....There is no point in it.....

You see, the Bible is either truth that will set us free or it is not...If it is not truth, then let's get out of it. If it is the truth, let's stand for it. And let's contend earnestly. We are in an intense struggle for the Word of God.....

Now, according to the Bible, there is a reason for this struggle. And I want to give you three reasons.....Come back to Jude, please.... And notice Vs 3...There are three reasons given to us as to why we should contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints First of all, according to this verse there is a body of truth to be w~~l~~..... believed.

Now notice that text says "to contend earnestly for THE FAITH." Not just for faith in general as though that was man's faith. No, it is to contend for THE FAITH which was once for all delivered....

Now, if it was delivered in a time past, there has to be a sum total of it. In other words, there is a body of truth that is to be believed outside of myself....

So often we make this statement...Now, listen carefully because some of you might go out of here today and say, "Boy, the pastor really missed it today...."

Some of you will go out and say, "My faith saved me".....Your faith did not save you.....Only Jesus Christ saves you.....So, often we are mixed up on this. There is THE FAITH which is the sum total of God's revealed truth, in his Word. That is what I am to earnestly contend for. I don't have to get into arguments about whether my personal faith is stronger than this other person's faith over here. I am not to contend earnestly over that. That is just matching one man's experience with another's. No, we are to contend for that which is the body of truth to be believed by Christians. Namely..the Word of God.

Secondly, there is a finality and completion to it according to this text. You ask: where did you get that idea? Notice, verse 3..."we are to contend earnestly for the faith WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL delivered to the saints.....ONCE FOR ALLLLLLL.....Not simply on one occasion..... Some people will say that this refers to the person and work of Jesus Christ, the very heart of what the Word of God is all about."....

Now, let me show why this is so important.....Those of you who have been students of the Word of God for a while. You have studied many passages. What is the number one thing that we are warned about in terms of a person being an Antichrist or denying the faith?....It is always the person and work of Jesus Christ....Every last time...The common denominator of all cults is a deviation on the deity of Jesus Christ...Everytime.... That is the common denominator.....

It isn't just a work system of salvation. The common denominator is a deviation, a going away from the deity of Jesus Christ. The sum total of what Christians are to be believing is "once for all delivered"....Not, continuously, not all the way through history thus including the book of the book of mormans and others...No.... "Once for all delivered to believers.....That is quite a statement.....

The third thing is that there is a stewardship required on the part of every believer. That, thus, makes it important that we contend for this which is the faith.....Notice for it says.....

██████████ "Once for all delivered to the saints."....

The word "delivered" means ██████████ "to entrust"...To deliver over into someones custody and care. It is interesting that the main useage of that word was to put somebody into prison. You deliver somebody over to a prison guard to take care off and watch over.....

And as it were, God has delivered to us as believers the faith and we are to be the ██████ custodians of it. Like 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 says "it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy." And that which we are a steward off, according to I Cor 4:1 is the mysteries of God contained in the Word...We are to be good stewards. It has been delivered into our care.....

Turn over to 2 Timothy for a moment. 2Timothy cahpter 1.....And look at what Timothy said in terms of how God had committed to him the ██████████ responsibility of the faith.....2 Timothy chapter 1 and verse 12....

"For this reason" Paul wrote to Timothy, "I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day." "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you."

Oh, just think of that....You have come to know Jesus Christ as your Saviour. You know about the person and work of Christ. ██████████

You have a Bible to read...You know the content of it..God says "I have delivered that to the saints." It is in your care and custody...And we are to guard it ~~carefully~~...Very carefully...

Back to the book of Jude, again..

(2 ) After giving us his purpose for writing the letter, Jude in Vs 4 gives us the problem which required this letter....The problem which required such a letter.

(Read Vs 4)

You know, something strick me as I was reading Jude..It is almost like Jude saying: "Boy, let's fight them."...."Those people".....And the more you read about "those people" and you stick your finger out, the more that old thome is looking right at you.....

You see, the persons were in the assemble of ~~Ch~~Christians....We learn the same thing over in the book of 2 Peter. And Peter warns us that it is Christians who by their own life style and what they tolerate in their lives who are doing exactly what Jude here tells us what certain people have done. Here is the real punch line, people, and it really hits home: Our life style often reveals the fact of what is discribed in Vs 4....And I will show what I mean.

First of all, the problem which required such a letter, I see in the discription of these persons who crept in unnoticed. And I want to give you three things about those persons..

First of all, as to their comming into the fellowship. Vs 4 says, "they crept in unnoticed."....Here is what it jsays in a literal translation. There are three words....One is the word "into"....then the word "enter".. and the other is the word "alongside of".....Now watch that.... "They entered into, along side of you.".....Very interesting....

In other words, they were accepted as believers. They came into the Body of believers and they were even along side of us in terms of ministry and work. ~~Did you know the persons of~~

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Did you know that some of the people described in Jude maybe seating right next to you, right now? ..... You say....'Hay, what are you trying to say?' That is what Jude is saying...Somebody seating next to you right now maybe a person like what Jude is describing. Even though they themselves see it. Or, may not understand it.

Because of their life style they may be doing exactly what was true of these people. They came into the fellowship along side of them in terms of ministry and works and no body would have thought that there was anything wrong at all.

The second thing deals with their condemnation. Their condemnation. He says in Vs 4 "who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation." Now, what is he talking about? The judgment of God?.....No..... When he said "long beforehand marked out for this condemnation," what condemnation?....The condemnation he is giving in Jude. That they are not of us. Know matter what they say, their life style proves that they don't belong here. So, it is the words of Jude which is condemning them. Even though the believers have already accepted them.

But, it say that it was long beforehand marked out. Now, what does that mean? I think that is talking about the days of Enoch....You say, "Epy, you had to dig for that one."....

Well, look down at verse 14 and I will show you...In verse 14 he says, "about these also." Now, he hasn't changed who he is talking about from Vs 4. These are certain people who have come in among the believers. And in Vs 14 he says, "~~about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, marked out, saying, 'Behold, the Lord cometh with many thousands of His holy ones.~~"

(Read Vs 14-16)

That is powerful. Enoch spoke about that...You ready for this?.... Enoch, According to the Bible preached about these people who Jude is describing. Enoch was the 7th from Adam...



Now, Enoch had a son named "Methuselah". Methuselah means in Hebrew, "WHEN HE DIES, IT SHALL COME"...What shall come?...The very judgement that Enoch predicted  would come upon a generation whose life style  continued to violate what God's Word really taught. Because if you count literally the number of years that are in Genesis chapter 5, you will discover that Methuselah died in the same year that the flood came in Genesis 7 and 8. Back up to the generation before the flood and ask yourself the question: "why did God bring a world wide flood?"...Why?...Because the life style of that generation had become so corrupt. The Bible says that every imagination of their thoughts was only evil continuously. Violence was great upon the earth and the earth was corrupt before God and therefore God said, "I am going to destroy all flesh."

Now, Enoch predicted and warned his generation that if they continued in sin, God was going to bring judgement. And then by divine prophesy and revelation from God telling him the exact year, He named his  boy that in the year he dies that's when God's judgement will come.....

And here in Jude verse 14 it says the same thing about the kinds of people Enoch mentioned. And Vs 4 says "they were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation."

Let me put this all together for you a little tighter...The whole point of that is: that you cannot get away with sinful practice, friends...You can't get away with it. And if your life style is not being lived in obedience to the Word of God, you are marked out even if you are a believer for the temporal judgement of God on this earth in your life time. You are already marked out. God will not excuse an unrepentant heart....He is going to bring judgment.....

These people were in the assemble of the believers. Not outside attaching them. They came in along side of them. And their life style proved they deserved the judgment of God and the condemnation of what Jude writes in his letter. Something that has long existed as far back as the days of Enoch when Enoch warned his generation that you cannot continue to violate

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the revelation of God. You cannot continue in sinful practices. And sure enough God brought a universal flood judgment to judge that generation.

You say, "well, that is them, not now." May, the same principle is being taught in Jude and applies to us today. You cannot continue in sin and expect to escape the judgement of God. If you don't think I am right in this, I urge you to stay with me for every message in this book. And you will see very clearly that there is a warning in Jude to Christians about continuing a life style that is contradicting the Word. That is the very opposite of "contending earnestly for the Faith."

If you say you are fighting the battle for the Bible, May, that means your life style demonstrates that you are in obedience to the Word of God.

Now, as to their character. He describes them, in vs 4, as being "ungodly persons."....

Now, remember they are in the midst of Christians. You say, "Couldn't we recognize them?"...It is interesting that he used the word "ungodly." That basically means: "they were not responding to the authority of God in their lives." They were ungodly. They were lacking in obedience to God. Anyone who lacks in obedience to God is ungodly no matter if you would describe them like that or not. [REDACTED]

You say, "these are people in our church. How can you say this of them? But if their life style is in disobedience to God, they are being described as "ungodly persons."

One last thing...This problem which required such a letter as Jude is not only seen in the description of certain persons who have crept in among the believers, but also in the doctrine they teach.

According to vs 4 there are two parts of that doctrine which they are teaching by their life style. Two things that are very clear. And if this is true about your life, I warn you in the name of the Word of God, I warn you under the control of the Holy Spirit of God, Listen, this is God's Word. You are heading for disaster.....These two things are pointed out to us as terrible things in the mind of God. And they deserve judgement..

What are these [redacted] two things that formulate the doctrine which so called believers promoted.

One, was a development in attitude and practice of compromising with sin. It was the development in attitude and practice of compromising with sin.....Of acting like you can do it and get away with it and it doesn't make any difference.

vs 4 says "they turned the grace of our God into licentiousness." Now, I would like to explain this very clearly...First of all, I believe in the Grace of our Lord Jesus. Man, I am thankful for God's grace. God's grace has made it possible for me to be accepted as perfect and righteous and holy in the eyes of God. God's grace is [redacted] giving to me that which I do not deserve. I have everlasting life. I have complete forgiveness of sin. And I praise God for it. I praise God for his grace. And where sin abounds, grace much more abounds. I thank God for his grace...

But, I want to tell you. It is easy to turn what you know is the truth about God's grace and complete forgiveness into licentiousness....

Now, what does licentiousness mean?....In the Greek it has two words put together. One, is a city and the other is a word meaning "no"....

Now, let me tell you about the name of the city. It is a word called "cell-guy"....(selge). It was a city located in the district of Antioch. Do you remember on Paul's first missionary journey he went to Antioch. And one of the cities near there was called Cell-guy...Now

Now, what was cell-guy? It was a city with people who practiced a very high standard of morals. They were called [redacted] stoics. If you want to know what the city was [redacted] like, the Roman soldiers said in their day, "Man, I hope and pray we don't get assigned to Cell-guy"....

There was a crew in early evening...There were no houses of prostitution. There was no public drinking. There was no immorality allowed. It was a strict city....Totally in every sense. And the Roman soldiers said, "Man, I hope I don't get stationed in Cell-guy".....

One thing I know. This is the only place in the Bible where we have this particular phrases.....Deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.....

The Word "master" means "soveringity"....He is soverign over your life. It is absoulate obedience. "Lord, what ever you want me to do, I will do it.

These people, continue as a pattern of life which is the meaing of the word "deny"...to deny as a pattern of life the soveriegnity of the Lord, himself. That he is soveriegn over everything. If you have parts of your life which you feel do not belong to the Lord, whether in attitude or practice.

Then he is Lord of all. This basical indicates ownership of everything we have...In those areas where we decide "I own this. This is mine"... In those areas we are violating the Lordship of Christ. He who is owner of it all.....Everytime we say I don't have to obey God in this area, I can do what ever I want to, we have denied the Lordship of Christ.....

You see, friends, the problems are not outside the church, The problems ~~are~~ are in the church...among the believers....it becomses very easy for us to ~~propose/by~~ teach by our life style the doctrine whereby we turn God's grace into no standards of morality. We do what ever we want to. And secondly, we start violating the soverignity of God in our possesssions, the way we use our money, our time, and that which we call 'mine"..And thus, by our life style we prove that he isn't Lord of all.....

Boy, this really brought conviction to my life....And it forced me to turn to I John 1:9....If we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive our sin and cleans us from all unrighteousness....

How we need to practice confession as a habit of life.....

Let us close in a word of prayer