

## "CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH"

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Jude 1:1-4**. From Roy H. Enoch (09/05/1993).
- B. The writer identifies himself as Jude (Judas).
  - 1. "a bondservant (slave) of Jesus X.  
This would not identify him from several others named Judas, as all Xians are slaves of X.
  - 2. Therefore he says that he is the "brother of James."
    - a. There was only one "James" so prominent in the church at this time that would need no further description.
    - b. He was the leader of the Jerusalem church and known as "James the just."
    - c. He was the leader of the church at Jerusalem at the Jerusalem conference of Acts 15.
    - d. Paul referred to him as a "pillar" in the church at Jerusalem in Gal. 2:9
    - e. Those who went from Jerusalem to Antioch in Gal. 2:12 were "from James."
    - f. See Gal. 1:19 and Mt. 13:55.
  - 3. Therefore, he is the fleshly brother of Jesus.
    - a. In humility, he never claims a fleshly relationship with the Lord.
    - b. There are no fleshly ties in the kingdom of God (2Cor. 5:16).
  - 4. Jesus taught, while on earth, that the obedient are His family (Mt. 12:46-50).
    - a. He also rebuked a woman who blessed His mother (Lk. 11:27-28).
    - b. Mary, the mother of Jesus' physical body, is never mentioned even one time after the church is established in Acts chapter two.
- C. Jude said that he was very diligent to write to them concerning "our common salvation."
  - 1. It was "common" in that it was shared with those to whom he was writing.
  - 2. He was not planning to write anything with which they were not familiar.
  - 3. He writing to exhort/warn the brethren against the dangers that would come upon them.
  - 4. It was also "common" in that it was for both Jew and Gentile.
  - 5. The term "common salvation" means the same as "the common faith" in Titus 1:4.
- D. Although Jude had been planning to write about the "common salvation" he "found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."
  - 1. We do not know the exact details of what "constrained" him, but he focuses on the threat of false teachers.
  - 2. The urgency is indicated by the brevity of the letter: he only wrote what was necessary.
  - 3. But he covered the danger of false teachers well in the short message.
- E. Today we want to study this "faith once for all delivered to the saints."
  - 1. How was it delivered once for all time?
  - 2. What is this "faith?"
  - 3. What were the false teachers teaching?

### I. THE FAITH WAS "ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS" BECAUSE GOD DID NOT PLAN LATER REVELATIONS.

- A. Jude is not claiming a new revelation for what he writes.
  - 1. He was not an apostle, and does not claim even his physical relationship to the Lord.
  - 2. He is simply stating that they should strongly defend what had already been revealed.
  - 3. In fact, Jude seems to have developed 2Peter 2 for this epistle.
- B. Jesus had told the apostles at the last supper before His death that the "comforter," the Holy Spirit, would "guide you in all truth" (Jn. 16:13).
  - 1. The apostles warned Xians not to accept anything different from what they preached (Gal. 1:6-8; 1Jn. 4:1; 2Jn. 9-10).

2. These passages confirm Jude's contention that there would be no further revelation.
- C. The revelation of the Gospel was not to be piecemeal by installments down through the centuries as the OT prophets.
  1. Church councils, synods, and teachers would not have the authority to proclaim new doctrines or traditions.
  2. We will be judged by the words of X, but not by "church doctrines or traditions."

## II. THIS "FAITH" THAT THEY WERE TO "CONTEND FOR" WAS THE GOSPEL.

- A. The "gospel" was the center of Paul's message to Philippians:
  1. Paul prayed "for your fellowship in the gospel" (1:5).
  2. Even in chains and prison, Paul was "in the defense and confirmation of the gospel" (1:7).
  3. His imprisonment had turned out "for the furtherance of the gospel" (1:12).
  4. Paul was "appointed for the defense of the gospel" (1:17).
  5. The Philippians' conduct was to be "worthy of the gospel" (1:27).
  6. They were to stand fast in one spirit with one mind, "striving together for the faith of the gospel" (1:27).
  7. Paul said of Timothy, "that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel" (2:22).
  8. Paul speaks of women "who labored with me in the gospel" (4:2).
  9. Paul told the Philippians that "in the beginning of the gospel" they were the only church that supported him (4:15).
- B. The expression "the faith" is often used in the NT to refer to the gospel.
  1. Paul says some shall depart from "the faith" (1Tim. 4:1).
  2. He speaks of some who "denied the faith" (1Tim. 5:8).
  3. He said some make "shipwreck of the faith" (1Tim. 1:19).
  4. Paul declared that he had "kept the faith" (2Tim. 4:7).
  5. In Gal. 1:6-9 Paul said that he preached "the gospel" and in v.23, he says he preached "the faith."
  6. Paul contrasts "the law" (of Moses) with "the faith" which is the gospel (Gal. 3:19-29).
  7. In Romans, Paul does the same (Rom. 3:27-28).
  8. Paul speaks of "faith coming" in X (Gal. 3:23-25).
    - a. Yet, Heb. 11 speaks of the faith of godly men from Abel through the prophets.
    - b. The faith of men refers to their act of believing, but "the faith" which came by Jesus X is the gospel or doctrine which X taught.
- C. Some have concluded that since "a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law" (Rom. 3:28) that no obedience to God's commands are involved in being saved.
  1. But "faith without works is dead" just like the body without the spirit (Jas. 2:26).
    - a. The devils believe that there is one God and tremble (Jas. 2:19).
    - b. They even confess that "Jesus, You Son of God" (Mt. 8:29) or "Jesus, Son of the Most High God" (Mk. 5:7).
    - c. But the devils would not obey Him, they had "faith only" (Jas. 2:24).
  2. This is what Paul called "obedience to the faith" at the beginning and end of Romans (Rom. 1:5; 16:26).
  3. Those who "believe to the saving of the soul" of Heb. 10:39 are described in Heb. 11 as obeying the Lord's commands.

## III. JUDE URGED THAT THEY "CONTEND FOR THE FAITH" BECAUSE FALSE TEACHERS WERE A THREAT TO THE SAINTS.

- A. These men "have crept in unnoticed."

1. This expression in the Greek seems to indicate that they slipped in by the side door.
2. They used deception, and probably claimed to be Xian teachers.
3. Paul describes some false teachers at Corinth (2Cor. 11:5; 11:13-15).
- B. Jude seems to be referring to the same kind described by Peter (2Pet. 2:1).
  1. He identifies them as Xians who had left the truth (2Pet. 2:15).
  2. He further describes them in the last part of the chapter (2Pet. 2:18-21).
- C. These false teachers were teaching fleshly gratification.
  1. Jude says that they "turn the grace of our God into lewdness."
    - a. Peter says that "they promise liberty" (2Pet. 2:19).
    - b. Paul reflected this doctrine in Rom. 6:1.
    - c. This is the theme of America in the 20th century: "Get all the gusto out of life you can."
  2. Some still emphasize that God is love and therefore that He would not punish anyone.
  3. But the Bible is filled with examples of God's wrath on the sensual and with His promises for eternal punishment.

## **CONCLUSION.**

- A. Jude seems to use the second chapter of Peter's second epistle to give a similar warning concerning false teachers.
- B. He warned that it is necessary to earnestly contend for the faith that was once for all time delivered to the saints.
- C. We must still argue for the same gospel the apostles preached.
- D. False teachers are still trying to get us to gratify fleshly desires instead of denying ourselves and taking up our cross and following Jesus.
- E. Are you defending the truth?