

Jude Introductory Comments

I think I'd like to preach through the truths of Jude in Sunday morning services then follow that up with discussion questions for small groups. The reason being too few Sunday mornings are given over to important theological issues. Today's pulpits tend to preach comfort and encouragement, rather than the rebuke, correction, and instruction in righteousness as Paul instructed Timothy. We have become an illiterate Christian community. We don't know the Bible much less know how to defend the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. We are ripe for false teachers and false prophet that lead to apostasy.

Jude is an apologist, not in the sense of arguing faith against atheists and agnostics but in arguing, defending and reasoning THE FAITH once for all time delivered to the saints. He is an in-house apologist. He is interested in making every believer a defender of the faith. Every believer should be able to reason the Scriptures with those who would distort it and teach something new or different than the Bible.

THE FAITH once for all delivered to the saints is his concern. There was an evolution of truth, a watering down of the Gospel, a compromising of absolutes, a distortion of grace into license to sin and to enjoy it. His concern is that he has seen many men slip into the congregation and distort the truth for the purpose of getting a following. These sneaky fellows plant themselves in the congregation, gain a teaching position, and then lead people away from the truth of the Word of God.

There are fundamental truths in the Word of God that cannot be compromised, changed or adapted. They are God's absolutes. They cannot be tampered with or culturally tweaked. Truth is absolute. It does not change from age to age. It does not change from culture to culture. It does not change from generation to generation. It is absolute and unchanging as the One who gave it is unchanging.

In his day, as in our own age, there are those who would dilute and pervert the Gospel message. There were men in the church who wanted to change the Gospel message to suit their sinful lifestyles and their natural sinful cravings. They wanted to dilute the Gospel, to adapt it to the culture, to make it more palatable to the younger generation. Paul knew this and warned of it in his farewell address to the Ephesians in Acts 20:27-32.

The devil is a liar from the beginning and he seeds every body of Christ with deceitful men with wrong motives to distract us from the Gospel of Christ. The Scriptures remind us that even the devil disguises himself as an angel of light.

False teachers, preachers, writers, and popular evangelists and educators will always be among us. They look good, sound good, speak well, and are well reasoned and educated. They are handsome, attractive, and have dynamic personalities. They are winsome, likable, and humorous. They are silver-tongued orators. They have charismatic personalities. They are good salesmen. They are hucksters like street hustlers selling the newest and best elixir that will cure all your ills. They draw to themselves sensual people seeking pleasures and spiritual highs. They draw away the vulnerable, the unstable, the needy, the hurting, the easily duped and the gullible. But most of all they prey on the ignorance of Christians who do not know their Bibles.

Jude is concerned with the “SAINTS” and the “AINTS” in this post-card size letter. He is concerned about how to identify the “Aints” among us. He identifies the people of God as saints and their security in Christ.

The church will always need the Christian apologists like Walter Martin and Hank Hanegraaff and the solid teaching and preaching ministries of those who earnestly contend for the faith. But in another sense every believer needs to be a defender of the faith, a sentinel of the Word of God, a watchman on the wall warning the ignorant and innocent of lurking wolves in sheep’s clothing.

We need men and women who are Biblically literate, who know the Word of God, who have memorized its truths, and digested the deep things of God. We need every believer to be a light in the darkness that shines into the shadowy corners of the body of Christ where deadly deceivers lurk seeking to devour the innocent. Every believer needs to be a student of the Bible, a theologian of truths, who knows how to defend the FAITH and rightly divide the Word of truth.

People have itchy ears. They love to hear some fresh view or some new interpretation of Scriptures. They are easily led by their emotions and feelings. They love the shinny sparkly glitter of novel ideas that tickle their ears and cater to their struggle with carnal natures. The “lures” of false teachers are always tricky. They look good, smell good, taste good, and feel good, but they are still “lures” to hook and capture vulnerable fish and lead them to the slaughter.

The Book of Jude is very similar to 2 Peter 2 and 3. Some say Jude might have borrowed from Peter to write this letter. Others say Jude probably wrote first and Peter borrowed from him. We may never know. But we know that the Spirit of God is speaking to the church for it is at the end of the New Testament that Paul, Peter, John, and Jude say the same thing, and the Book of Revelation reveals the effect of false teachers on the seven churches that leads the way to the AntiChrist and the great deception and falling away of many.