



**Old Testament Reading – Judges 16:4-20 – New Testament
Reading – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11**

**Earnestly Contending for the Faith
“The Battle for Truth” # 3
Jude 1:20-23**

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

If today's Christians are to preserve the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith from the heretics and have a sufficient gospel to hand down to the next generation, every born-again believer in Jesus Christ must forsake their self-centered fantasy of finding fulfillment in the things of this world, and unite with all believers in the battle for truth.

- However, while Satan certainly uses humans to carry out his agenda, as the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 6:10-20, ***“We do not wrestle with flesh and blood,”*** but rather the evil powers behind them.
- Therefore, as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:4ff, ***“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”***
- Every generation of Christians has the duty to communicate the gospel to the next generation in ways they can understand. By every measure, today’s generation of Christians has lost touch with the generations behind us, and they are turning away from the true faith.
- Do you see yourself as a soldier in this battle for truth?
- Are you willing to die to yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Christ, regardless of what it may cost you?
- Have you surrendered your life unto the Lordship of Christ?
- Is the priority of your life to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness?
- Is your daily communion with God and your weekly worship of God the most important times in your schedule?
- Do you see yourself as a witness of God’s power to transform a sinner into a saint so that everything you say and do brings glory and honor to Jesus?

“Today’s Christianity is not transforming people; it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society, it is reflecting the moral level of society, and congratulating itself that society has accepted our surrender.”

A.W. Tozer

The battle of truth rages around us, especially in the churches.

- Satan is at work through false teachers who preach a heretical theology, a false gospel, and the doctrine of demons.
- They use the power of their deception to produce false miracles and false visions to lead immature believers away from the truth and to embrace the lies.
- In Jude 8-15, the Apostle profiled false teachers; apostates who professed faith in Jesus Christ, but without a transformation of their minds, (Romans 12:1-2) there was no regeneration of their spirit, and therefore, their lives were never changed.
- They said they were saved, but Jude said they remained lustful, licentious, lewd, lawless, insubordinate, and rebellious to those in authority over them; defiled, greedy, materialistic, self-centered, shameless, proud, and sensual in their character, and void of the Holy Spirit.

To some degree, false teachers have wormed their way into every Christian denomination, church, school, college, seminary, and media outlet.

- However, the power of God and Satan are not equal opposites.
- God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient, but Satan is *omni-nothing*. Therefore, if we are in Christ, and Christ is in us, then, as it says in 1 John 4:4, “**Greater is He that is in [us] than he that is in the world.**”

So, Jude said, if we are to win the battle for truth, we must:

- **Remember** the Lord told us these days were coming, and so did Paul, Peter, and John. Jude said those days are now here.
- **Remain** true to our own confession of faith by:
 - Building ourselves up on our most holy faith – Bible study
 - Praying in the Holy Spirit.
 - Keeping ourselves in the love of God.
 - Waiting anxiously for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life – to live in anticipation of His imminent return.

- Reach out to those who have been captured by the enemy or who are about to be.
- Jude identified three kinds of people to whom we are to reach out:
 - **Verse 22 – those who are doubting –**
 - They heard the true gospel and believed the true gospel.
 - They have been exposed to the false gospel, and now they are confused – even doubting the true gospel.
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:14 – ***“We urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish the unruly, but encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.”***
 - **Verse 23 – those who have bought the lie –**
 - ***“Snatching them out of the fire.”***
 - While we cannot save anyone, we can partner with God in that process.
 - James 5:19-20 – ***“If any among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”***
 - We confront them with the biblical truth that counters the specific lies Satan used to deceive them.
 - **Verse 23 – those who are under Satan’s deception –**
 - ***“On some, have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.”***
 - False doctrine, and the wickedness produced by it, stain the souls of men.

- **Romans 16:17-18 – “Note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them, for those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ,”**
- While we are to reach out to them, we must be careful and prayerful lest we become deceived by them.

There are over 4,000 recognized religions in the world.

- The six major ones are: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Judaism, with Christianity being the only religion based upon the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.
- However, within Christianity, some groups have established a false gospel or a false interpretation of the true gospel.
- While claiming to believe in Jesus, those groups that deny His deity are called “cults:” Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and to some degree, the Roman Catholics.
- There are also groups within Christianity that have twisted the Scriptures to form their version of the gospel:
 - **Prosperity Gospel** – The Word/Faith Movement – eternal salvation is not enough – they also want temporal blessings.
 - **Suffering Gospel** – the more you suffer in this life, the greater your reward in heaven.
 - **Poverty Gospel** – the fewer riches you have in this life the greater your riches in heaven.
 - **God is “Love Only” Gospel** – God is so loving He accepts us just as we are and doesn’t require us to change our lives.
 - **The Permissive Grace Gospel** – no need for conviction, confession, repentance, etc., for God has already forgiven us.
 - **The Gospel of Social Justice** – the preaching of the cross is replaced with the call to help the poor and needy.
 - **The New Age Spirituality Gospel** – one’s experience with God is equal to the truth of God’s Word.

- **My Sexual Preference Gospel** – allowing people to become church members regardless of their lifestyle.
- **The Interfaith Dialogue Gospel** – befriending those of other religions to building a unity of faith.
- **The Therapeutic Gospel** – Jesus helps us achieve our full potential.
- **The Formalist Gospel** – Jesus helps me keep the rules of religion.
- **The Moralists Gospel** – Jesus died to give us a second chance to become better persons.
- **The Social Club Gospel** – Salvation is all about relationships.
- **The Mystic Gospel** – Salvation is all about experiences.
- **The Quietest Gospel** – Salvation is about spiritual things not about changing the way we live.
- **The New Apostolic Reformation** – an unbiblical, political agenda to reclaim dominion over the earth and to bring God's Kingdom down to earth.