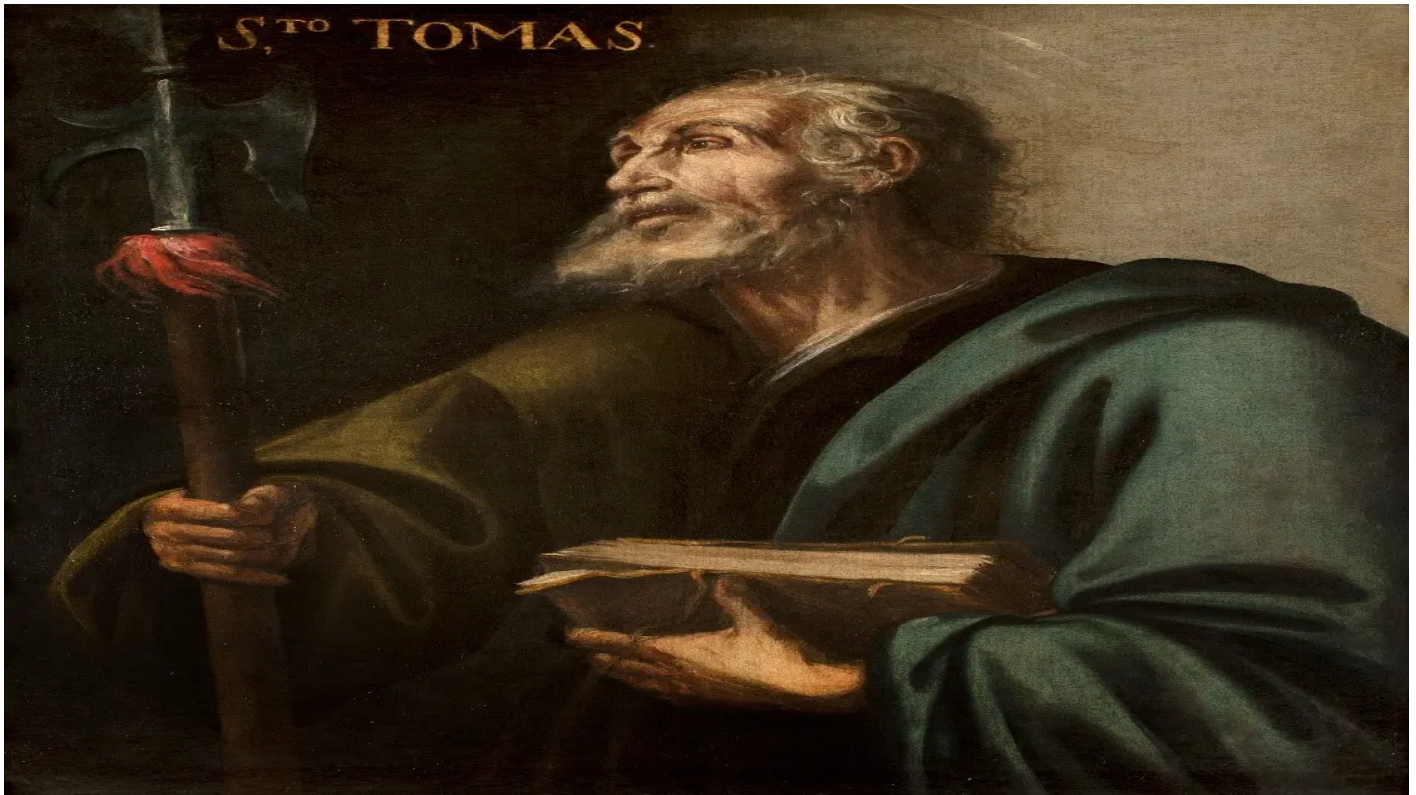




Old Testament Reading – Exodus 32:1-35
New Testament Reading – 2 Corinthians 11:1-33

Earnestly Contending for the Faith

“The Battle for Truth” # 2

Jude 1-25

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

In his brief but insightful epistle, Jude has given the Church a timely warning regarding the invasion of false teachers into the Church, those whom God marked out in the beginning, who deny the deity of the Lord Jesus and turn the grace of God into licentiousness.

- As Jude admonished the Church of the first century, so I, with an even greater urgency, challenge the Church of the 21st century to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, for the infiltration of false teachers that Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, and Jude warned us about, is now here. They are leading people away from the truth of God’s Word and into apostasy.

- As those who believe in the inerrancy, authority, infallibility, and sufficiency of God's Word and that our salvation is by grace alone, through our faith alone, and in Christ alone, we must see ourselves in a constant battle for the truth, not only from secular sources but also from the false teachers who are embedded in today's Church.

According to the latest survey:

- Only 37% of America's pastors claim to have a biblical worldview.
- Only 28% for associate pastors and 12% for youth and children's pastors.
- 62% of ministers of all denominations hold a hybrid worldview called Syncretism: a blending of religious beliefs and ideologies into a system that allows each individual to develop their version of truth.
 - **Psychologists call it Moral Relativism** – absolute truth does not exist, or if it does exist, it cannot be known.
 - **Theologians call it Moralistic Therapeutic Deism** – contextualizing the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith to fit a changing culture.
- 66% of young adults who attended church regularly during their teenage years dropped out of church when they left home.
- In one college, 50% of the 3,500 incoming freshmen who identified as born-again Christians when they entered high school said they no longer believed in Jesus Christ by the end of their senior year.

“Just as parents should not trust their children's physical health to an untrained, uneducated, and unqualified doctor, neither should they trust their soul to a person who denies the Word of God as absolute truth.”

Therefore, to preserve the next generation from today's false teachers, we must deepen our understanding of and our devotion to the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith.

- That is not to strengthen “our faith” in those essential doctrines but to grow in our understanding of “**our most holy faith**,” that body of truth called the gospel.
- The doctrines of the Christian Faith cannot be changed, revised, modified, contextualized, or personalized to fit societies changing moral values.
- There is no place for moral relativism regarding the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith, for they are either true or false.

***“And there is salvation in no one else,
for there is no other name under heaven given among men
by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12***

To prepare ourselves and those we love to survive spiritually in this age of apostasy, Jude said we must remember:

- **We are betrothed to Christ** – 2 Corinthians 1:1-4 –
 - Paul was concerned that those he had led to Christ through the preaching of the gospel were taking his warnings of deception by the false teachers too lightly.
 - In leading them to salvation through their faith in Jesus Christ, Paul had, in effect, ***“betrothed them to Christ.”***
 - Paul viewed himself as a “friend of the bridegroom,” the intermediary between the prospective bride and groom, and whose responsibility was to keep the bride pure until the marriage ceremony.
 - Paul said having led them to Christ by preaching the gospel, it was his responsibility to keep them faithful to Christ through the continued preaching of the gospel.
 - Verse 3 – ***“But I fear, lest somehow...your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”***
 - Paul had observed that, as new believers, not yet being grounded and growing in the knowledge of their most holy faith; they were too tolerant of those who preached a lesser gospel.
 - In 1 Thessalonians 5:20-22, the Apostle Paul exhorted his converts: ***“Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.”***
 - As we see the severe lack of expository preaching from the majority of pulpits and the severe lack of hunger for the true preaching of the Word from those in the pews, most Christians today are not spiritually prepared to even test the things they are hearing and seeing, much less abstain from every form of evil and hold fast to that which is good.
- **We are to remain faithful to the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith and the disciplines of sanctification.**
 - Basically, this comes down to a daily, consistent study of God’s Word with a view toward our spiritual growth and maturity.

- Acts 20:32 – ***“I commend you to God and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up.”***
- 1 Peter 2:1 – ***“Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow.”***
- Colossians 2:6 – ***“As you received Christ Jesus, so walk in Him, firmly rooted and built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed.”***
- In 1 John 2:12-14, the Apostle defined three levels of spiritual development:
 - Little children – know about God and, believe He exists.
 - Young men – know enough about God to overcome the evil one.
 - Spiritual fathers – know God in an intimate way, and can witness to others.

- **We are to learn how to pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

- Romans 8:26-28 – ***“The Holy Spirit helps our weakness for we don’t know how to pray as we should.”***
- Praying in the Holy Spirit is to come before God the Father, having studied His Word to discover His will and His ways, and being willing to walk in obedience to that discovery.
- Every Christian has two advocates with God the Father.
 - God the Son is at the Father’s right hand, interceding for us.
 - God the Holy Spirit dwells within us, who knows God’s will for us, and leads us to follow it.

- **We are to keep ourselves in the love of God.**

- According to Romans 8, ***“Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God.”***
- According to Jude 24, God is able to make us ready to stand in His presence.
- To keep ourselves in the love of God is to always do those things that please Him so we are always in the pathway of His full blessing.

- **We are to wait anxiously for the return of Jesus Christ.**

- Jude 21 – ***“Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”***
- Titus 2:13 – ***“Looking for that blessed hope in the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”***
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17 – ***“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance; Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost. And yet for this reason, I found mercy.” And what was that mercy? That mercy was that “I would receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”***