

## Some things are worth fighting for Jude 1-4



Jude's original intent was to write about "our common salvation"; but the infiltration of false teachers led him to urge the church to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints." The word "contend" means to vigorously struggle or agonize over. The word "the faith" (note the definite article; not any faith but *the* faith) describes the core teaching of Christianity--1Now, brothers, I want to remind you

*of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4 NIV)*

Jude asserted that the Gospel was not discovered by us but delivered ("entrusted") to us. The Gospel's origin is from above! Furthermore, it was "once for all entrusted to the saints," meaning that no revisions, updates, modifications, or amendments are needed. The Gospel is sufficient as delivered! Galatians 1:6-8 reminds us that any modifications to the Gospel are inherently false--6I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

Finally, the Gospel has been given to "the saints"; meaning, not a privileged class of Christians, but Christians. All Christians. The word "saint" in the New Testament refers to Christians; or the church community. It literally means "holy one," which is who we are in Christ. **So then, the Gospel is worth fighting for because it is the ultimate, all-sufficient news of what God has done, is doing, and will do to bring us to His kingdom.** The Gospel is about God calling us in the past, loving us in the present, and keeping us for the future.

### The Gospel is about the God who calls!

When Jude wrote "to those who have been called", he is saying that God was the One doing the calling! The calling-loving-keeping triplet was also true of Old Testament Israel (Isaiah 42:6; 43:4; Hosea 11:1-2, 8). To be called meant to be invited at the banquet feast of the Supreme Maker of all! It meant that the Sovereign Creator of the universe had stepped into their lives and acted specifically within their history. To be called meant that God had a future prepared for Israel. It meant that they had a destiny. To be called is more like being summoned! One does not decline the calling of the Almighty! That said, v. 2 means that what was true for Israel then, is

just as true for Christians—the new Israel—today. Through Christ God has chosen us, named us, and given us identities! Through Christ, we have a purpose and reason for existence. *Our problem with the modern pursuit of happiness is that it has left us to be self-focused little kings ruling miniscule little kingdoms with a population of one.* Life was meant for one King to occupy its throne—Jesus Christ. To know that is to know life that is truly life. Jesus—the true King—left His throne to rescue us from our self-imposed prisons of self-centeredness; His grace (at the Cross) cut a hole through our prison and with His nail pierced hands, he pulls us out into His amazing, eternal, glorious kingdom. We've settled for cinderblocks but He has prepared a new City for us! And why?

## **The Gospel is about the God who loves!**

*Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV)*

Sometimes we joke and say about marriage, "The honeymoon is over." But that's because we are finite. We can't sustain a honeymoon level of intensity and affection . . . But God can! But God says his joy over his people is like a bridegroom over a bride. He is talking about honeymoon intensity and honeymoon pleasures and honeymoon energy and excitement and enthusiasm and enjoyment.

And add to this, that with God the honeymoon never ends. He is infinite in power and wisdom and creativity and love. And so he has no trouble sustaining a honeymoon level of intensity; he can foresee all the future quirks of our personality and has decided he will keep what's good for us and change what isn't; he will always be as handsome as he ever was, and will see to it that we get more and more beautiful forever; and he infinitely creative to think of new things to do together so that there will be no boredom for the next trillion ages of millenniums. (John Piper)

## **The Gospel is about the God who keeps!**

This is about hope! This is about God our Heavenly Father who—after all is said and done—will not disappoint us. Jesus won't hold out heaven like a carrot only to whip it away from us on some technicality! You cannot be overcome by Satan against your permission! The Gospel has been entrusted to us; so, where are we entrusting our hope? Is our hope "below and less" or "above and more?" What false teachers are whispering in our ears: "If you only had \_\_\_\_\_, your life would be great!" Why are we listening to them? God calls us beyond our own Bonsai-sized visions to the magnificent redwoods of His glory! Whose call are we heeding? Whose love are we seeking? Whose security is seeking to keep us? These phony voices serenade us ceaselessly; but we can choose whether or not we listen. Do you know how you can tell if you're listening to right call; receiving the right love; or resting in the right source of security? Look at v. 2—*Mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.* Only Jesus can produce these. When you have these, what else do you need?