

# Earnestly Contend for the Faith, Part I

Text: Jude 3-4

- Jude originally picked up his “pen of inspiration” to write concerning some truth about the gospel and salvation.
  - Concerning our common salvation: Our salvation isn’t common in the sense that it is cheap or that everyone has it. It is common in the sense that we are saved in common fashion, God doesn’t have one way for the rich and another way for the poor, or one way for the good and another way for the bad. We all come to God the same!
  - Like the song writer wrote “..Some through the water, some through the flood, some through the fire, but all through the blood!”
- The Spirit of God arrested this purpose and directed him to a different subject. The subject of apostasy
- Rebuking apostasy, like taking out the trash, isn’t necessarily a fun job, but it has to be done!
- Simple definition: Apostasy is a rejection of essentials/fundamentals of Christianity, while maintaining the outward form of belief.
- Apostasy, from the Greek word apostasia, means “a defiance of an established system or authority; a rebellion; an abandonment or breach of faith.”
- Apostasy- “falling away”
  - See Hebrews 6:4-6- If they fall away: There is a necessary distinction between falling and falling away. Falling away is more than falling into sin; it is actually departing from Jesus Himself. For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity (Proverbs 24:16). The difference is between a Peter and a Judas. If you depart from Jesus (fall away) there is no hope.

- If someone falls away we must understand why he or she can't repent – it is because they don't want to. It is not as if God prohibits their repentance. The desire to repent is evidence that he or she has not truly fallen away.
- The idea is not that “if you fall away, you can't ever come back to Jesus.” Instead, the idea is “if you turn your back on Jesus, don't expect to find salvation anywhere else, especially in the practice of religion apart from the fullness of Jesus.”
- See Mark 4:16-19
- Apostates include those who deny the Virgin Birth, bodily resurrection, or the deity of Christ. They differ from those with relatively minor doctrinal errors.

## **I. WHY WE MUST CONTEND FOR THE FAITH**

- a. What is “The Faith?”- body of doctrine we believe
  - i. Was once delivered- once for all. It is a completed body of doctrine
  - ii. This is our answer to false cults and groups that seek to add new revelation
- b. We have a duty- v. 3- exhort
  - i. Jude said it was needful
  - ii. Exhort- to plead or persuade
  - iii. This letter was written to a specific audience, but it was also written to all believers for all times. Not just to church leaders, but to all Christians!
- c. Because of the danger
  - i. V. 4 Ungodly men who deny the truth- V. 4- The only Lord God, Jesus Christ
  - ii. See Galatians 1:6-8- why we must contend!
  - iii. The church is the pillar and ground of truth- I Tim 3:15. Uphold the truth!
  - iv. Unholy men will corrupt the church- lascivious
    - 1. The idea behind the ancient word lewdness is sin that is practiced without shame, without any sense of conscience or decency.

- d. They have already crept in- I John 2:18-19- Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.
- e. They are sneaky- “unawares.” Jesus called them wolves in sheep’s clothing!
- f. Their judgement is set- Before of old ordained...their works and their condemnation were foretold.
  - i. God told us that these kinds of people would exist
  - ii. Their condemnation has been prepared long beforehand..men are lost because of their own sin and disobedience
- g. Sadly most of the mainline denominations, and many churches that once stood for truth have compromised and are now no longer Bible believing movements. And for that reason, we have separated ourselves from them. “Ecumenical Movements” “World Council of Churches” “National Council of Churches”, and even newer movements that are on a slippery slope such as T4G, and TGC.
- h. Much of this has been happening for decades in America- Harold Ockenga, who coined the term, “New Evangelical,” himself defined it as a “ringing call for a repudiation of **separatism** and the summons to social involvement ... It differed from fundamentalism in its repudiation of separatism and its determination to engage itself in the theological dialogue of the day.” Note Ockenga’s theological dialogue meant compromising with liberal theologians who denied foundational elements of Christianity (inerrancy, miracles, etc.)
- i. Billy Graham’s inclusive policy of working with theological liberals was first officially announced and implemented in his 1957 New York City Crusade... In 1960, Graham had Bishop James Pike offer a prayer at his Detroit crusade. Pike, a notorious liberal who denied every major fundamental Christian doctrine, was an alcoholic, was divorced multiple times, was an adulterer, and he practiced the

occult. Graham's cooperation soon extended to Roman Catholic churches and leaders.

- j. Slippery slope...TGC founding documents leave the door open for debate on the subject of the Bible's inspiration. New Evangelicals often use accommodating phraseology

Conclusion:

- Ronald Reagan- "We don't negotiate with terrorists!" We don't negotiate with apostates!
- Who are these men in our day and age? Some are pastors, bishops, seminary professors- but they share one thing in common- they deny the Christ of the Bible and preach "another Jesus."
- It is needful- not optional- to contend!
- It is not our job to make the truth acceptable...it is our job to make the truth available!