

JUDE: Wielding the Truth

Devo and Discussion type lesson- information, question, and answer

Exegetical Idea: God's holy people are called to contend earnestly for the faith in defending biblical truth against apostates threatening to weaken the faith and spread false teachings.

Pedagogical idea: Students will learn the importance of and how to remain firmly planted in the truth of Jesus Christ and diligently seek to defend the faith against lies, deception, apostates, and false teachings.

Cognitive Lesson Aim: Students will become aware of false teachers and apostates that threaten to diminish the faith by studying Jude's letter of warning to the church.

Affective Lesson Aim: students will have confidence in the ultimate truth of Christ by sharing unique ways they can actively maintain their lives with God.

Behavioral Lesson Aim: Students will internalize the importance of combating false teachings with truth by writing plans to daily read the Word of God.

HOOK

- Pose the Q: How does a soldier prepare for battle?
 - A: According to a secular article from Boot Camp and Military Fitness Institute by Andrew Marshall titled, "5 Ways to Prepare for Combat Duty," here are five tips for remaining calm and preparing in the best way possible-
1. Undergo Situational Awareness Training
 2. Learn How to Survive
 3. Get Fit
 4. Put Your Matters in Order

5. Practice Mindfulness

SOURCE: Marshall, Andrew. "5 Ways to Prepare for Combat Duty." *Boot Camp & Military Fitness Institute*, 31 Aug. 2022, bootcampmilitaryfitnessinstitute.com/2021/07/01/5-ways-to-prepare-for-combat-duty/#:~:text=5%20Ways%20To%20Prepa,In%20Order%20...%205%205.%20Practice%20Mindfulness%20.

- Illustration: With this in mind, as often as we emphasize our desperate need to contrast the world around us, living as lights in the darkness amongst unbelievers, we also tend to dismiss false teachers or wolves hiding in sheep's clothing.
 - For example, when soldiers march into battle with their armor, sword, and shield they are fully on guard. But when they reach their home base they let down their guard, they'll hang up their sword and shield and tuck away their armor. And the spies, liars, deceptive enemies working for the other side that are unknowingly in their midst take the opportunity then to attack. I'm not saying we should be paranoid, I'm just saying that we need to be prepared and on guard in discerning truths from lies in all areas of life by using God's Word/Scripture as our guide. Beware of the ungodly not only on the battlefield, but among those who seem to be our comrades as well.
- Relate it to the audience:
 - Naomi and Pernie: You guys go out into combat every day at school. At school you're constantly bombarded and attacked by outside ideologies, beliefs, and opinions that contradict the Word of God (which is what you believe). In a way, Armstrong MS and Williams HS are your specific battlefields! On top of that however, you must also be trained enough to

discern lies and truths among your closest peers as well, particularly among fellow believers who seem to be friends but are truly foes.

- Transition: While these tips mentioned in the beginning are specifically written for soldiers going into combat, this also can literally apply to believers as soldiers of Christ. Believers wield God's Word as their sword or weapon in spiritual warfare. While we may not encounter physical threats over the faith, we will inevitably face spiritual ones. We must be trained in keeping aware of our environments, learn essential spiritual survival skills, exercise our faith and constantly remain spiritually fit, keep our priorities in check or unroot any sins or temptations, and we must continually meditate on God's Word!

BOOK/LOOK

Introduction: give a background and context on Jude's letter

- Who is Jude? Jude is a bondservant and half-brother of Jesus Christ
- The book of Jude is a letter to the church, we aren't told which church but we do understand that the information inside is applicable to every believer in the faith
- Furthermore, the book of Jude is a letter of warning to believers in the church about false teachers. These wolves hiding in sheep's clothing circulating false teachings among the church.
 - Calls all believers to contend earnestly for the faith; understand their common salvation and the truth of the Gospel so that they can be on guard against what is false. Defend the faith.

- In the context of our analogy, we are called to be soldiers of Christ that are firmly planted in the truth to defend the faith against lies, false teachers, and deceptions not only on the battlefield but among our comrades as well.

READ THE TEXT: Jude 1:1-25

Alright so here is a mini run-down or preview of what we'll be covering this afternoon:

What does it mean to contend earnestly for the faith? Verses 1-4.

Who are we contending from? Verses 5-19.

How do we contend for the faith? Verses 20-25.

And before we start let's first define this key phrase: CONTEND EARNESTLY. Do you guys know what it means?

Answer: The Greek word Jude chooses, translated "contend earnestly," usually describes an athlete striving with extreme intensity to win the victory in a physical competition. The Amplified Bible translates the command as "fight strenuously for [the defense of] the faith."

1. **What** does it mean to contend earnestly for the faith? (v.1-4)
 - a. Answer: To contend earnestly for the faith is to defend the truth of Jesus Christ from false teachers.
 - b. In other words, fight earnestly for the defense of the faith!
 - i. The faith refers to the ultimate truth of Jesus Christ, His teachings, the Gospel, and His Word
 - c. Which was once for all delivered to the saints

- i. Refers to the common, final salvation given to all believers through Christ Jesus. We have confidence/assurance knowing that we are saved first. This involves truly understanding the truths spoken of in the Bible to God's people.
- d. Relate it back to the audience: These past weeks in youth Bible study and the youth fellowship Kuya Zion was encouraging us to really understand our salvation, that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ. He said that once you understand the Gospel and your salvation (which can only be achieved by spending time with God in His Word and in devotion), you are then able to fully live it out.
 - i. Do you know WHY we must contend earnestly for the faith? Why is it so important that we understand the Truth by reading God's Word?

1. Answer: This is literally what we believe in, after all.

2. **Who** are we contending from? (v.5-19)

- a. Answer: (v.12-13) and (v.16-19) Grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts, use flattering words. Mockers walking in their own ungodly lusts, sensual persons, devoid of the Spirit.
 - i. In other words, we are contending from apostates and false teachers. Apostates are those who walk according to their own knowledge, understanding, and ungodly ways of this world.

1. Those who commit apostasy which is the ABANDONMENT of or willing FALLING AWAY from the faith.

- b. There are several references to the Old Testament about apostates, can you point out a few?
 - i. The land of Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah, Micahel the Archangel and the body of Moses, Cain, Balaam, Korah, Enoch prophesying about judgment of apostates.
 - ii. Apostates are nothing new, they were even active back in the Old Testament, active in the New Testament, and still thriving in today's churches. This is why we must be on guard.
 - 1. Jude referencing texts all the way back from the OT show that the topic of false teachers is nothing new, it began in the fall and it continues today.
- c. Why is it so important that we understand who apostates are? Why do we need to defend the faith against them?
 - i. We need to know the character of the apostates as spoken of according to God's Word so that we can guard ourselves and others against them. Essentially using the truth to combat lies.
 - ii. By knowing who apostates are we can guard ourselves from false doctrines then further SAVE others from falling into the snare of false teachers.
 - 1. Read (v.22-23) snatch and save others from the fire that the truth may be revealed to them.

3. **How** do we contend for the faith? (v.20-25)

- a. Now that we know who false teachers are, their character, their motivations, and ungodliness, how are we supposed to guard against false teachers?
- b. Answer (v.20-21)
 - i. Build yourselves up on your most holy faith
 - ii. Pray in the Holy Spirit
 - iii. Keep yourselves in the love of God
 - iv. Wait for the eternal life Christ promises us according to His mercy
- c. Better put in the context of our soldier in combat analogy: Remain trained in keeping aware of our environments, learn essential spiritual survival skills, exercise our faith and constantly remain spiritually fit, keep our priorities in check or unroot any sins or temptations, and we must continually meditate on God's Word!

Conclusion: The truth of God's Word is constantly being threatened by blatant enemies and hidden false teachers. As God's saved children, we are now called to keep on guard and *contend earnestly for the faith*. **Keep your Christian beliefs, behavior, and way of living ready for spiritual battle by understanding what you believe and why.**

Maintain your life with God and be prepared to defend it against apostates and their false teachings.

Application:

- How can you wield the truth and contend for the faith in your personal life? What does it look like for you to maintain your life with God as a soldier of the faith?

- How can you SPECIFICALLY maintain your life with God as stated in verses 20-21?
 - Know it so well that you can speak it back. One way to know that you know the Truth is to teach it back.
- (Build yourselves up on your most holy faith, Pray in the Holy Spirit, Keep yourselves in the love of God, Wait for the eternal life Christ promises us according to His mercy)
- For me, this includes daily Bible readings to remain in Christ, our firm foundation, taking the time to pause and pray throughout the day to realign my heart with God's heart, and setting my eyes on our eternal future with the Lord in heaven.
- Write down these activities and make it a priority to complete at least one of them. For example: diving deeper into a book of the Bible and starting your Bible reading journey in searching for the truth.
- Close in prayer that the Lord would help to keep themselves in God's Word and to remain grounded in the true faith; that they would use the sword of the Spirit to brave the battlefield of spiritual warfare.

Make it a priority this upcoming week to spend intimate time in God's Word so you may know the truth and be properly equipped to defend the faith!

TOOK

- I'm going to make a personalized sword bookmark for the members of my group to symbolize the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," from Ephesians 6:17 so that they may be reminded to defend the faith. A little takeaway gift.
- Additionally, the backs of the bookmark will have the memory verses for them to meditate on after the lesson: Jude 1:20-21.
- In our next discipleship group session we will run through a quick recap and I'll ask them how they applied what they learned from the book of Jude to their everyday lives.