

JUDE

Contending for the Faith

1. INTRODUCTION

January 16, 1999

Someone has tagged this little letter with an appropriate title, "The Acts of Apostates". While the Book of Acts is titled as "The Acts of Apostles", that title is quite a comparison.

What is the apostates? The people with acts of departing from one's faith; abandonment of belief in the basic doctrine of Christianity and the renunciation of the standards of the faith. A lot of fancy words, to make it in a simple way, it means major backsliders.

2 Thess 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

1 Tim 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

Hebrews 3:12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

The apostates at the time when this letter was written were the Gnostics-those who embraced the incipient philosophy that distinguished between matter as being inherently evil and spirit as being good. Such heresy produced and cultivated the idea that the flesh could do anything it wanted to do, because no one is under moral obligation.

In that day, it was called "Antinomianism"; in our day it is often referred to as "hedonism." No matter what it is called, it leads to rebellion against authority, irreverence, presumptuous speech and a lifestyle marked by unbridled license. Does that sound familiar? When I drive around in the city, I see a lot of different bumper stickers which tell about the person who drives the vehicle. Some says, "My kid can beat up your honor student kid.", or "Challenge the authority". Very rebellious, obnoxious and resistant without reasons! Attitude without a cause! Living however they feel like without thinking about the consequences or harms to others, extremely selfish and immature childish attitude!

In 1521, King Henry VIII of England helped produce a tract titled Assertion of the Seven Sacraments, directed against a German Monk, Martin Luther who had been causing some trouble for the Catholic Church. The tract horribly misrepresented Luther's theology, and overall, it was pretty weak. But, Pope Leo X was rather impressed with it, and awarded King Henry a title as a reward: "Defender of the

Faith." Later, when Henry wanted to break with the Catholic Church because they wouldn't annul his marriage so he could marry another woman, the Pope tried to take the title away -- but the English Parliament awarded the title to Henry and all of his successors. Today, one of the official titles of the Queen of England is "Defender of the Faith". I think that it is strange that such a title could be passed on, whether the person deserves it or not; but if anyone ever deserved the title "Defender of the Faith," it is our writer Jude.

A. OBSERVATION

We should start with Observation / Outlining first:

- Who: Jude (v. 1)
- When: About 60-65 A.D.
- Where: Most likely from Jerusalem
- What: Contend for the faith (v. 3)
- Why: To defend the genuine faith against false teachings
- How: Jude is putting a sermon in a letter, and he is preaching against dangerous practices and doctrines that imperil the Gospel of Christ. It is a sermon that is broken and rugged, bold and picturesque, energetic, and glowing with the fires of passion and conviction.

Backsliders hate the Book of Jude due to his stern warnings and uncompromising stance against false teachings & doctrines.

There is a lot of similarities between Jude and 2 Peter. Both books mentioned about extra biblical facts that we don't find anywhere else in the Bible.

B. OUTLINING

v.1-4	Greeting and purpose	- Appealing
v. 5-16	Exposure of False Teachers	- Revealing
v. 17-23	Warnings and Commands to Christians	- Reminding
v. 24-25	Benediction	- Praising

C. INTERPRETATION

Jude 1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:

Jude: The name is literally "Judas," but to avoid connection with the infamous betrayer of our Lord, most translators have used "Jude"

Which Jude (or Judas) is this? There are six people named "Judas" mentioned in the NT, but the best evidence identifies this Judas with the one mentioned in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 -- Jude, the half-brother of Jesus

Jude, like the other half-brothers of Jesus, didn't believe in Jesus as Messiah until after the resurrection of Jesus (John 7:5; Acts 1:14).

Though he is a blood relative of Jesus, notice how he identifies himself: a servant of Jesus Christ; few things tell more about a man that the way in which he speaks of himself; few things are more revealing than the titles by which he wishes to be known. Jude could have said, "here I am, the half-brother of Jesus, listen to me!" But he was fully content to be known simply as Jesus' servant.

He considered the blood of the cross by which he was saved more important than the family blood in his veins which related him to Jesus. A brother of James: James was an important leader of the church in Jerusalem, and the author of the letter that bears his name.

The readers: they are Christians; this is a letter to all Christians - it isn't really an evangelistic tract.

It is wonderful to have those who haven't made their minds up about Jesus at Church; but you should understand that if you are in that position, you simply can't understand the Bible the same way one who has surrendered everything to Christ can.

How Jude identifies his readers as Christians:

- They are called: we are Christians because God has called us to be; the important thing is to answer the call when it comes, just as we answer the phone when it is ringing.
- They are sanctified by God the Father: set apart
- They are preserved in Jesus: Christ is our guardian and protector
- Each of these workings will be in the life of a true believer; none can really exist without the other

Called by the Spirit, loved by God the Father, and kept safe by Christ. We could fill in our names here, for Jude's words of warning are not addressed to one specific church or person but apply to Christians in every generation.

This reminds me the infamous verses in Romans regarding "Predestination".

Romans 8:29-30 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Jude 2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

v. 2 Jude gives a warm and typical greeting, asking for mercy, peace, and love to be multiplied to these Christians.