

## **Contending For The Faith** by Dr. Lee Roberson

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.—Jude 3.

We have announced that this service is going to be different, and different it is. First, it is different because every person here has in his hand a copy of the Scripture to be discussed. Second, it is different because we are going to preach right out of this one little book. There are many interesting sidelights in this book by "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" which we would like to discuss, but time will not permit.

We will tell you about the threefold position of believers, as found in verse 1:

First, sanctified by God the Father.

Second, preserved in Jesus Christ.

Third, called.

We want you to see the three eternal things mentioned:

First, eternal life (vs. 21).

Second, everlasting chains (vs. 6).

Third, eternal fire (vs. 7).

Then, the words "keep" and "kept" are mentioned several times.

First, the Lord's people are kept ones. The revised version reads in verse 1.. ."kept for Jesus Christ." Thank God, we have that assurance that we are kept!

Second, some angels "kept not their first estate," so they are "kept" in chains (vs. 6).

Third, we must keep ourselves in the constant full assurance that God loves us (vs. 21).

Fourth, He is able to keep us, not merely from "falling" but as the revised version gives it, from "stumbling," for stumbling precedes falling (vs. 24).

The key phrase of the book is "earnestly contend for the faith" (vs. 3).

We will make the following divisions for the facility of our study: First, the troublemakers; second, God's judgment against evil and evildoers; third, twofold exhortation to believers.

### **I. THE TROUBLEMAKERS**

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God

into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—vs. 4.

Yes, false teachers had come into the midst of certain Christian bodies who were turning the grace of God into filthiness and wantonness. These false teachers claimed that because they were free from the law, they were therefore free to indulge in all kinds of sin.

They were also guilty of "denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." All false teachers are wrong about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Watch out for "certain men.

## II. GOD 'S JUDGMENT AGAINST EVIL AND EVILDOERS

The Holy Spirit says, (verses 5-9) We are now going to illustrate God s judgment with a play in three acts.

The first act shows God delivering the children of Israel from bondage. We see the gracious mercy of God in preserving and caring for His people across the Red Sea and through the desert. But then instead of lovingly obeying God s command to take the land of promise, they refused. God s judgment came upon the disobedient and unbelieving. He decreed that not one of the unbelieving should enter into Canaan.

The second act of the play takes us into Heaven. Certain angels of Heaven are rebelling against Almighty God. Judgment falls; they are cast out and kept in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. I agree with Scofield that this judgment of angels will take place when Satan is judged after the thousand years. The saints will have a part in this judgment.

Listen, friend! God will not spare sinners, whether in low or high places, for He spared not the angels. As soon as they developed an evil nature, He saw they were not fit for the holiness and joys of Heaven; so He cast them out. God deals first in mercy, but afterwards in judgment.

The third act of this play begins at once after the second. You have time just to see the awfulness of rebelling against God. And now, act three opens upon a scene of great hilarity and merrymaking. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are running wide open. Money is plentiful; wild parties and immoral orgies are held nightly. In the midst of it all, God speaks; and fire and brimstone rain from Heaven. Laughter turns to fearful screams. Sin and sensuality are paying off in tears and destruction.

Those who are not on God s side—beware! You can t go on forever in sin, despising God and God s Son and loving evil, without coming under judgment. That fearful day is coming. Don t be foolish!

But now the Holy Spirit comes to say still more about those troublemakers and filthy dreamers. They are like three men of olden days who also called forth the judgment of God.

They are like Cain who rejected redemption by blood. He wanted to do things in his own way. A lot of folks are like that today.

Also, like Balaam, who was a hireling prophet, anxious only to make money. He tried to tell God what to do.

And like Korah—his sin was denial of the authority of Moses as God's chosen spokesman, and trying to come to God without the mediation of God's appointed high priest. The earth opened up and destroyed Korah and his company. The lesson for us is that we can only come to God through Jesus Christ, our High Priest.

Judgment is coming upon evil and evildoers, upon all who are not under the blood. It is coming when Christ comes in power and great glory (Vss. 14,15). Three thousand years before the first coming of Jesus, Enoch prophesied the second coming of Christ. The day of judgment is coming, and the only safe place to be is with the Judge.

### III. THE TWOFOLD EXHORTATION TO BELIEVERS

"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."  
—Vs. 3.

Earnest contenders for the faith are very few in this day. I am afraid the number is going to get less and less. The world is breeding a kind of tolerance for all religions and heresies until there will be but a few voices raised in the next few years for the old-time faith.

I believe in religious freedom. I believe in freedom of expression. Our boys are fighting for it now, fighting so that all groups may have absolute freedom of worship and expression.

In my own mind, they are not fighting for the spread of heresy. But heresy is being spread today; therefore, it is up to the saints who have been called, sanctified, and kept to "earnestly contend for the faith."

In all love I want to express myself plainly. Some of you sitting before me doubtless have an idea that just so a fellow has some kind of "religion," he is all right. It doesn't matter what kind he has.

That is the very kind of tolerance this war is promoting. I SAY,  
IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

IT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL.

It makes the difference between getting your prayers answered and just blowing words into the air.

It makes the difference between victorious Christian living and a makeshift farce of pious Sunday morning attendance at the "church of your choice."

There are so many "isms"—first, the Russellites. If they are right, we are wrong. They deny much of the Word of God. They do not believe in Hell. They do not believe in the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Russellism would destroy every church in the world. Russellism denies the

deity of Christ. They say He became divine only after His resurrection. In contending for the faith, also shun profane and vain babblings; they increase unto more ungodliness. Don't allow the deceptive Watchtower literature in your home.

Second, Christian Science. We have been a lot kinder to the Christian Scientists than they have been to us. This group, originated by Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, is an attempted combination of religion, science and philosophy.

She wrote a book called Science and Health, With a Key to the Scriptures. This book is placed above the Bible. Christian Science rejects the fact of sin, denies blood redemption. Since there is no reality to sin, it thinks, also, there is no reality to Hell and the judgment.

If Christian Science had charge of this country, there would be no hospitals, no doctors, no nurses, no vaccination. Christian Science cannot cure anyone, because, according to Christian Science, you have never been sick.

If you want the truth, unvarnished and plain, read ReligioMedical Masquerade, by Peabody. This book was printed ten times, copies running into the thousands. It was written during the lifetime of Mrs. Eddy. The author invited Mrs. Eddy and the Scientists to sue him for slander if he was wrong. He was never sued.

Christian Science is like a guinea pig, which is neither guinea nor pig; or like grapenuts which contain neither grapes nor nuts, it is neither Christian nor scientific.

Third, the Roman Catholic Church, said to be the strongest religious body in the world. I have no personal grievance against any Roman Catholic. But the Bible and Roman Catholicism both cannot be true. If we are right, they are wrong. If they are right, then we are wrong. WE HAVE ONLY ONE DECIDING AUTHORITY—THE BIBLE.

This copy of a letter recently came to my desk. Listen to some of it:

This war time is giving the Catholic church a great advantage in many respects. Protestants and Baptists are gaining but little numerically and spiritually from the war. Catholics are gaining numerically in spheres of influence.

Catholics are protesting against our missionaries being allowed in South America.

Yes, we are exhorted to earnestly contend for the faith. We are exhorted to "build" up our spiritual lives. Having laid well our foundation in gospel faith, we must build upon it, ever making progress in spiritual things.

We can build ourselves up by:

Praying in the Holy Spirit. He makes our prayers fervent. He makes them

loving. He makes them believing, for a man prevails only as he has faith. Keeping ourselves in the love of God. This will keep us from mistakes and worldliness.

We are to look for the Lord's return.

We are to build ourselves up by being soul winners. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."