



“Stand Up”

Jude 1-4

Idea: Stand strong against the spiritual deceptions that threaten the church.

Intro: *16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God’s revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.”

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We live in an age of biblical skepticism. It seems that the Bible’s trustworthiness and standards are being doubted and dismissed on every level of our culture. The question, however, regarding the veracity and authority of God’s Word is nothing new. It is as old as time itself. [Read Genesis 3:1-7](#)

The serpent cast doubt upon God’s Word when he asked, “*Did God actually say?*” He twisted God’s Word and maligned His character when he said, “*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.*” By doing so, the serpent marginalized God’s authority.

The questioning of God’s Word resulted in the fall of humanity and the curse of God upon creation. Adam and Eve’s fall, though, could and should have been avoided. God gave His command regarding the tree of knowledge to Adam (2:17), and he was standing nearby when the serpent spoke to Eve. As the one who was given dominion to rule over the earth and to protect his wife, Adam should have taken a stand for God and against the threat that came against the Word and his wife.

It has been said, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” We live in a day of moral, ethical, and spiritual confusion. Many historic and traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs are being blurred and replaced with a version of thinking devoid of God. This transition is not just happening outside the church. Unfortunately, it is greatly influencing many within the church. So how should Christ-followers respond? Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, calls us to “contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the

saints.” Over the next three Sundays, we will look at this call to stand from Jude’s epistle, and together we will learn to Stand Up, Stand Back, and Stand Fast.

Inquiry: The greatest threat to the Church is not and has never come from outside but from within the church. It is not governmental or societal persecution and pressure that harms the church. In fact those often strengthen and expand the influence of the church. Tertullian wrote in the second century, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” The greatest threat to the church has always been false teaching. It’s subtlety and severity make it a spiritual poison unlike any other. This is why Jesus warned His followers about the deadly dangers of apostates who come in sheep’s clothing (Matt 7:15-20). Jude wrote his letter to believers to encourage them to stand strong against the spiritual deceptions that threatened to wreak havoc in their church. He also wanted to expose the false teachers and their heresy. He called believers to stand. We too must stand. We must stand up.

Read Jude 1-4.

In this passage we see three reasons to stand up.

1. A Salvation to Cherish

Several years ago, I came up with a statement after thinking through the excuses believers give for not sharing their faith with others. “That which you are passionate about, you will have no problem talking about.”

Is that not a true statement? People have no problem talking about:

- Politics
- Sports
- Careers
- Vacation destinations
- Hobbies

Why do people talk so much about these things and others? The answer is passion. They are passionate about them, so they cannot help but speak of them.

What we possess in Jesus Christ is worth getting excited about. Jude begins his letter by reminding his readers that they have a salvation in Jesus worth cherishing. There are four aspects to this salvation. It involves His...

1) Calling

The verb “call” (κλητός) is the main verb in the sentence with two perfect passive participles describing believers set in apposition to it. This calling speaks of God’s special, internal call through which He awakens the human will and imparts spiritual life that enables once-dead sinners (Eph 2:1) to embrace the gospel by faith.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. – John 6:44

I have people tell me, “Pastor, I don’t feel like giving my life over to Jesus right now, but some day I will.” No you won’t because you do not have the ability to come to Him. When the Lord calls you, He changes your “want to.” So the desire you sense today to come to Jesus will not always be there.

When God called you to Himself, the call sent out inviting you into a saving relationship also contained the enablement to respond in faith. We see in this, that salvation is not based on merit but on grace. It cannot be earned, lost, or taken away. Therefore, we can rest in the grace of God and cherish the salvation that is found in Christ alone.

2) Loving

God has chosen to love sinners and redeem them from sin (Rom 5:8). The word Jude uses here is a perfect passive participle derived from the familiar verb ἀγαπάω. The perfect tense indicates that God placed His love on believers in eternity past (Eph 1:4-5), with results that continue in the present and into the future. This love is infinite, eternal, and completely secure.

3) Keeping

This perfect passive participle (τετηρημένοις) means “to observe, keep under guard, or maintain.” Perhaps a better translation of this verse is “*kept by Jesus Christ.*”

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. – John 10:27-28

Jesus has promised to keep believers secure for all eternity, and His promise is guaranteed by His death on the cross. God has lovingly called believers to Himself and set His affection on them. That love is what keeps believers in relationship with Him. We are called by God to be set apart for God that we might enjoy love with God. While our fellowship with the Father might change from day to day, our relationship as children cannot change.

4) Blessing

The salvation God provides for His children is rich with blessing. Jude mentioned three of the blessings believers have in Jesus (mercy, peace, and love).

Mercy is you not receiving what your sin deserves. What a blessing to know with certainty that as a believer when I commit a sin my sin won't be met with condemnation. Instead, what I find is an ample supply of mercy at God's throne of grace.

The blessing also includes peace...peace with God that leads to peace with man. The work of Christ on the cross paid the penalty for sin. Therefore, the believer no longer carries the burden of his or her sin. They don't have to worry about getting caught with their sin. They don't have to hide it or deny it. They can instead rest in the fact that the debt has been paid for and the condemnation lifted.

This blessing culminates in love (Rom 5:5). We are children of God and He is our loving Heavenly Father, which gives us infinite privilege and spiritual blessing. The salvation we find in Jesus is definitely something worth cherishing and standing up for.

2. A Faith to Champion

Jude informs his readers that his initial plan was to write an encouraging letter about their “*common salvation*” (vs. 3). The name Jude (Judah) means “praise,” and he was anxious to praise God and rejoice in the salvation God gives in Jesus Christ. He was eager to lift up his fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord by reminding them of all that Jesus had done.

Christians need to be reminded of the goodness of God. We need to celebrate and talk out the salvation we cherish. We need to champion it. We need to hold it high for everyone to see. This is one of the many reasons we gather weekly as a church. We talk about the gospel from the platform, in the pews, in

our small group rooms, throughout the halls, and on the parking lot. We champion our faith because Jesus is the only One who can help when life falls apart. We champion the faith because only Jesus can put the brokenness of our lives back together. This is why we unashamedly lift high the name of Jesus and His gospel. This is why we declare that there is life found in no other name other than Jesus.

Championing the faith also means that we defend it. As Jude set out to write about the common salvation he shared with his audience, the Holy Spirit changed his mind and led Jude to write about the battle against the forces of evil in the world. He called the church to “*contend for the faith.*” The word group from which “contend” (ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι) comes designates a military or athletic contest. It is a compound verb from which we derive our English word *agonize*. Championing the faith is no cakewalk. It is hard and sometimes dangerous work. It may mean you standing alone when the majority walks away from the Word.

We champion the faith because it was “*once for all delivered to the saints.*” Jude is not speaking of a nebulous body of religious teachings. He is referring to the faith of the gospel, which was given to the apostles (Acts 2:42). He speaks of the objective truth that would later make up the canon of Scripture. This faith is what Christ-followers are to champion and guard (2 Tim 1:13-14). And this leads us to a third reason to stand up.

3. A Perversion to Combat

The greatest danger to the church came from within rather than from without. Jude informs his audience that what Peter warned against (2 Pet 2:1-3) had become a reality for them. False teachers had secretly infiltrated the church with evil intentions. Jude describes them as being ungodly, sensual deniers of Christ. They perverted the truth of God’s Word.

How did that kind of person ever become a member much less a teacher in the church? They played the part of a Christ-follower. They talked a good game. They didn’t openly and completely reject the truth. They followed the pattern of Satan in the Garden. They subtly questioned and slowly perverted the truth.

The enemy is patient. He rarely attacks full-bore from the front. No, he usually flanks from the side and nips a little here and a little there. The enemy knows that if he can create a little doubt today, there is a good chance there will be full-on rejection down the line.

Illust: This past week the United Methodist Church defied mainline Protestant history by saying no to the sexual revolution. In a vote of 53% to 47%, the church upheld biblical sexuality. The United Methodist Church was the only remaining mainline Protestant denomination to not have officially and fully embraced the LGBTQ movement.

During the mid-twentieth century the mainline Protestant denominations as well as the Southern Baptist Convention began to be influenced by leaders who questioned traditional doctrines that did not align to the new and emerging philosophical and scientific beliefs of the modern age. They sought to adapt the church’s teachings to the ever-evolving cultural landscape. And they did so by rewriting the church’s view on the virgin birth, questioning the veracity of Scripture, and dismissing the Bible’s teaching on sexuality among other things. The movement within the various denominations was slow and incremental, but it was a clear departure from the teaching of Scripture.

Thankfully, there were within the SBC strong leaders who championed the truth and combatted the perversion infiltrating the church’s doctrine. What has come to be known as the Conservative Resurgence began in 1979 in Houston, Texas. There at the SBC Annual Meeting, Adrian Rogers was elected President. For the next decade or more he and many other conservative leaders led the fight to

take back the SBC from the jaws of theological liberalism. Today, as a convention of more than 45,000 churches, we still believe the Bible because of the leaders who combatted the perversion that threatened the church.

The historical vote this past week within The United Methodist Church was a vote against perversion and a vote for truth. The slippery slope they have been on began in the 1960s amid the “Free Love” movement. Rather, than extinguishing the perversion then, it was allowed to stay and even given a place to live among Methodists. The slight departure from biblical sexuality has steadily increased, resulting in some Methodist churches and conferences openly embracing and even ordaining LGBTQ ministers and members.

Jude calls the church to contend for the faith that was once full all delivered to the saints. It is a faith that is complete and final. There is no need for it to be rewritten, reinterpreted, or adapted. It is God’s Word, and we must stand up for it. When must confront those who espouse a new and different doctrine in hopes of bringing correction to their misunderstanding of Scripture. But if and when the person refuses to correct his or her course, we must root out the error and as well as the false teacher.

Conclusion: Standing up and contending for the faith can be and is often extremely difficult. The current of worldly culture is ever working to erode our theological and biblical foundation. How can we as Christ-followers and Bible-believers stand up in a godless culture?

3 Behaviors for the Believer and the Church

1) Affirm the Truth

There is a creek behind my house. After Hurricane Michael came through last fall, I walked upstream along the creek to see how the flood changed the landscape. I found all kinds of giant oaks, poplars, and sycamore trees uprooted and pushed over. The forces of wind and rain from Michael were too much for the trees to withstand, so they fell. The forces of biblical erosion coming against us are just as powerful. They may not knock us over today, but if we are not careful they will little by little chip away at our biblical foundation.

How do we continue to stand up? We need to do what the trees didn’t do. We need to continue to deepen our roots in God’s Word. We must ever affirm the Truth of God’s Word. In the face of new teachings that either contradict or alter the Bible, we must affirm and remain committed to what the Lord has said.

2) Reject the Error

Line up everything against the Bible, and reject anything that deviates from its clear teachings.

3) Defend the Faith

Don’t be afraid to contend for the faith in the ring of life. Don’t give in to peer pressure and the force of cultural thinking. Don’t be a jerk. Don’t be contentious. But be willing to graciously and biblically defend the faith.

Standing up for the faith will require you to be in the faith. You cannot stand up for something or Someone you have not yet faithed into. Standing up for the faith will also require you to be growing in the faith. You need to deepen your roots in God’s Word and the gospel. It stands to reason that you cannot defend something or Someone you don’t know very well. You must continue to faith into the Lord and His Word.