

Pt 1 Why We Are Baptist, Contending for the Faith

A sermon by Pastor Byron Chesney 08-29-2018

Jude 1:1-5

- 1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:
- 2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

Recently we have been studying about false prophets and false religions and we didn't even begin to scratch the surface of them all, but I think we have a clear understanding of what determines that a religion or denomination is false.

There are really three things that cause a religion to be false and those are:

1. It is because they stray from what the Bible says and allow man made or worldly doctrine to creep into their teaching.
2. They pervert what the Bible says by twisting it's meaning to fit their ideology.
3. They add to the Bible and claim new revelation not in the Scriptures.

Therefore, I thought it would be important for us to know why we, as a Baptist Church, believe that we are of the true faith and why we believe the Baptist faith and doctrine to be the same faith and doctrine used by Jesus and his Apostles.

The Book of Jude is believed to have been written by the half brother of Jesus. His Hebrew name would have been Judah and his Greek name would have been Judas. His name is translated as Jude here in the Book of Jude.

3 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.

The whole intention of the tiny one chapter Book of Jude is to warn the Church and expose the false teaching that had crept in, even in those early days of the New Testament Church. So, false doctrine and false religion has been around since the beginning of the Church.

Jude says *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you* He wanted to write unto them about salvation but for some reason, he instead had to warn them about something that was going on among them and they had apparently become lax, lazy, or careless and they weren't even aware of it.

Notice that Jude's plea to them is for them to "**earnestly contend for the faith.**" That word **contend** means "**to strive for or defend against.**" Think of it in terms of soldier that is in charge of protecting the King. They must do everything in their power to guard the King to insure his safety. Jude sees the urgency in the Church needing to do everything in their power to defend the faith so he tells them to "contend" for the faith. In other words, be a contender, not a pretender. Because

there were obviously pretenders among them. Those of the true faith, that are concerned about keeping the Church pure and doctrinally sound must put themselves in a position of contending.

We need to put ourselves in a position of contending church. If it was bad in Jude's day, you can only imagine how much worse it is in our day.

- That is why you see so many once good churches that have fallen into apostasy.
- That's why you see little feminist preachers behind pulpits preaching a social gospel.
- That's why you see at this very moment the push in the Southern Baptist Convention to accept all things LGBT.
- That's why you see perversions of the Bible that have made it completely gender neutral.
- That's why you see these so-called "women pastors and preachers."
- And that's why you are seeing another gospel being preached which isn't a gospel.

Paul had to deal with that mess out of hell over in Galatia. Listen how he rebuked them: **Galatians 1:6-10** I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

So, to avoid all of this we must be contenders – because there are many pretenders. The Apostle John warned about these pretenders in his Epistles. He called them **deceivers** and said they were **antichrists**. He said there were **many antichrists**.

Next back in our text in **Jude verse 3**, he says for them to **contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**. So, this doctrine of faith they are contending for has already been delivered to them. It is the doctrine that the Church was started on and the doctrine that they were supposed to be practicing. That doctrine is the teaching of Christ and his Apostles. By the time Jude was written the Church had the doctrine of Christ. There was nothing new that needed to be added to it. You could call this doctrine **The Fundamentals of the Faith**.

Our Church, Highland Baptist Church, is considered an **Independent Fundamental Missionary Baptist Church**. Let me break that down for you:

Independent: All that simply means is, we do not belong to any outside governing body that we answer to and abide to their rules and regulations. We answer directly to the Lord for our faith and practice.

Up until 9-years ago, we were members of the Southern Baptist Convention. One of the greatest things that this church ever did was pull out of that convention, especially in light of the apostacy that they have fallen into in these past few years. Being independent means that we decide what is best for our Church. We decide which Bible we use, which hymn books we sing out, which missionaries we support, where our tithes and offerings go. Our tithes are not going to some fat cat corporate

Convention board member – our tithes and offerings go where we say they go. Those are just a few of the advantages of being independent.

Fundamental: Being fundamental means that we adhere to the fundamentals of the faith according to the Bible. That is why **declaration A** in our Church Bylaws states: “**The Bible is infallible and our sole authority for faith and practice.**” Not, “**The doctrinal statement of the “Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.**” Have you read their statement of faith lately? Talk about weak.

Fundamentals of the faith include all the important doctrinal teachings of the Scriptures and not straying from them. While there are many fundamental truths in the Bible, the key five fundamentals of the faith are:

1. The inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures.
2. The Deity of Christ
3. The Virgin birth of Christ.
4. The Blood Atonement of Christ.
5. The Bodily Resurrection of Christ.

If you take away any of those 5 fundamentals, then you have no truth at all. Everything hinges upon acceptance of the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures. We throw those words around a lot in our Baptist churches, but you must understand what they mean.

Inerrant = Free from error of any kind.

Infallible = Completely trustworthy and reliable.

In other words; the Bible is completely accurate, there are no errors or mistakes and you can completely trust it as the guide for your life.

If you do not believe that then none of the rest matters. If you cannot believe and accept the entire Bible as written, then you cannot accept it at all.

Some may say, “well, I believe in Jesus, but I don’t believe in the flood and Noah’s Ark.” Or, “I believe in Jesus, but I don’t believe in all that stuff about feeding 5,000 people with 2 fishes and 5 loaves of bread and having leftovers too.”

Oh, no, no, no, my friend. If you do not accept and believe the whole Bible, then why would you accept the part about Jesus’ blood being the atonement for your sin? Why would you accept his bodily resurrection?

You either believe it all or you don’t believe it AT all.

So, our fundamentals are based exclusively upon the teachings of the Scriptures, ALL the teachings of the Scriptures, that’s where we get our faith and practice.

Baptist: I almost named this sermon, “**Why We Are Baptist,**” because everything that I am preaching about tonight is the core beliefs of historic Baptist.

There are 8 Baptist Distinctives that we often use to describe our core beliefs:

- 1) **Believer’s Baptism only by immersion only**
- 2) **Authority and Inerrancy of the Bible**
- 3) **Priesthood of the Believer and Polemics**
- 4) **Two Ordinances: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper**
- 5) **Independence of the Local Church**
- 6) **Saved Church membership and Soul Liberty**
- 7) **Two Officers: Pastor and Deacon**
- 8) **Separation; Church and State, Personal, Ecclesiastical**

There are many groups that call themselves “**Baptist,**” and they should all have the same core beliefs, however, there are different types of Baptist, so you have to be careful by placing all Baptist under the same tent. While the Baptist faith was named so because of the belief in total immersion of baptism of the believer, there are many other distinctions involved.

I’m not going to go into the whole history of Baptists tonight, we will save that for an upcoming series that I have in the works. But for tonight’s message let me just say that there are many variations of Baptist. For instance, we have:

1. **Southern Baptist** = This is the largest sect of Baptists, though its numbers are falling rapidly due to the division from within and the influence of liberals. SBC churches follow the Baptist Faith & Message of the Southern Baptist Convention. But there are even different sects of Southern Baptist:
 - a. Fundamentalist
 - b. Revivalist
 - c. Traditionalist
 - d. Orthodox Evangelical
 - e. Calvinist
 - f. Contemporary church practitioners
 - g. Culture Warriors
2. **Primitive Baptist** (also known as **Hardshell Baptists**. These churches are Calvinistic churches and prescribe to the five major tenets of Calvinism called: **T-U-L-I-P**. Total Depravity – Unconditional Election – Limited Atonement – Irresistible Grace – Perseverance of the Saints.
 - a. Primitive Baptists do not believe in musical instruments in the Church.
 - b. They do not believe in missions.
 - c. They do not believe in Sunday school or any other program.
 - d. They still practice foot washing.
3. **Free-Will Baptist** = These churches believe in the free-will of man to choose to be saved so they reject Calvinism, but they believe you can lose your salvation.
4. **Seventh Day Baptist**
5. **General Baptist**
6. **Particular Baptist**
7. **Landmark Baptist**
8. **American Baptist**
9. **Reformed Baptist**
10. **And of course, here in the U.S. there are more than 100 different Baptist associations some of those are:**
 - a. Alliance of Baptists
 - b. American Baptist Association
 - c. American Baptist Churches
 - d. Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America
 - e. Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptist
 - f. Baptist Bible Fellowship International
 - g. Baptist General Conference
 - h. Baptist Missionary Association of America.
 - i. Central Baptist Association

And the list just keeps going and going and going...but I think you get the picture.

So Highland Baptist Church is an **Independent Fundamental Missionary Baptist Church**. I don't think I need to explain what **Missionary or Church** means... So, Jude is writing this letter to the Church to make them aware of what is going on and urging them to **earnestly contend for the faith. Be a contender, not a pretender.**

Then he describes what these "pretenders" are up to: **4 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.**

"**certain men crept in unawares.**" These were men who have gotten into the Church and are sitting there among the rest of the members and they fit right in. They are "**unaware**" of their true intentions. These men have "**crept in.**" That means that they "**slipped in in stealth mode.**" It was no accident that they were there, the purposely slipped in and kept a low-profile as to not draw attention to themselves and they did it for a purpose. The purpose of interjecting their false doctrine and ideology into the church. You may have noticed that I do not have very many "guest preachers" come in and preach. Some pastors willingly give up their pulpit to anybody that walks through the door that calls themselves a preacher. Not me. I'm not going to allow someone to "creep in" here and start indoctrinating this Church with false doctrine. You need to be very careful who you listen to. The Bible says **1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**

who were before of old ordained to this condemnation – they may have crept in and fooled the people in the church, but they didn't get past God. He saw them and knew them before they were even born. He condemned their actions long before they even performed them.

Jude says that these men are "**ungodly men.**" That means that have no regard, no respect, no reverence for God. They are irreverent and unholy.

He says that they were **turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness** – that word means; **filthy, lustful, animal desires.** These ungodly pretenders are turning the precious grace of our Lord into something filthy, lewd, disgusting. Remind you of anything that is going on today? How about the **Roman Catholic Church and their perverted priests?** Over 1,000 documented cases of sexually abused children by over 300 different Roman Catholic Priests was reported and covered up as far up as the Pope himself! The Grand Jury that investigated said: "**They found that there was not only widespread sexual abuse, rape of children, but they found that there was a systematic cover-up that went all the way to the Vatican.**"

And this is only from 6 different cities in the state of Pennsylvania where this was investigated. You can only imagine how many others that are out there that have been covered up.

And the liberal news media is resisting from saying anything negative about this Pope Francis because they love him. He's the most liberal Pope the Catholics have ever had – placing his blessing on abortion and same-sex marriage, two things that the Roman Catholics have always strongly opposed.

But now, in light of these latest allegations, they are fighting inside the Catholic church with many calling for his resignation and talks of removing him as Pope.

That whole Roman Catholic system is of Hell. Pope Francis made the following statement this past Sunday: "**I ask our Blessed Mother to intercede for the healing of the survivors of abuse and to confirm every member of our Christian family in the resolve never again to permit these situations to occur.**"

I can't even begin to describe how weak and pathetic that statement was.

First of all, if he's praying to "**Blessed Mother Mary**" then he might as well not pray at all. Mary isn't listening to anybody's prayers. **1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;**

And, the Pope referred to the rape and sodomizing of children as a "**situation.**" Like it was just some minor irritation or something. Hey, it isn't a situation – it's a low down, nasty, hellish, perverted, sexual deviant abomination. **They have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness!**

denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ – And as if turning the grace of God into lasciviousness isn't bad enough, they actually deny the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

What does the Bible call those that deny God and Christ?

1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2 John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Those that deny God and Christ are antichrist. The **an-tee'-khris-tos – opposers of Christ, adversaries of Christ.**

They claim to be OF Christ or working FOR Christ, but they are actually working AGAINST Christ.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

Jude wants them to remember what happened to those that opposed God in the past. They were destroyed. Since God is the same today, yesterday, and for ever then there is no reason think he would treat those that opposed him in these days as he did those that opposed him in the old days.

The truth is denying Christ is the unpardonable sin. There is no coming back from that. It is only through Jesus Christ that men can be saved: **Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**

So, the same urgency that Jude had in writing to the Church in his day, is the same urgency that I preach with to you tonight in our day. We must Contend for the Faith. It is too important not to. For the sake of our families, our children, and all those that come after us, we must be contenders and not pretenders.