

Jude uses a pointed style to open the curtain and expose the apostate preachers who were infiltrating even the first century church. In this book, pastor Tom attempts to merge some of his own experiences as a pastor with examples of modern-day preachers gone amuck, with clear, practical interpretation of this final epistle written to the church.

WE WERE WARNED!:
A TOXIC SPIRITUALITY WOULD INFECT THE
CHURCH AND ATTEMPT TO DESTROY IT
FROM WITHIN - A study of the Epistle of Jude
By Rev. Thomas Vent

Order the complete book from the publisher
[Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10424.html?s=pdf>

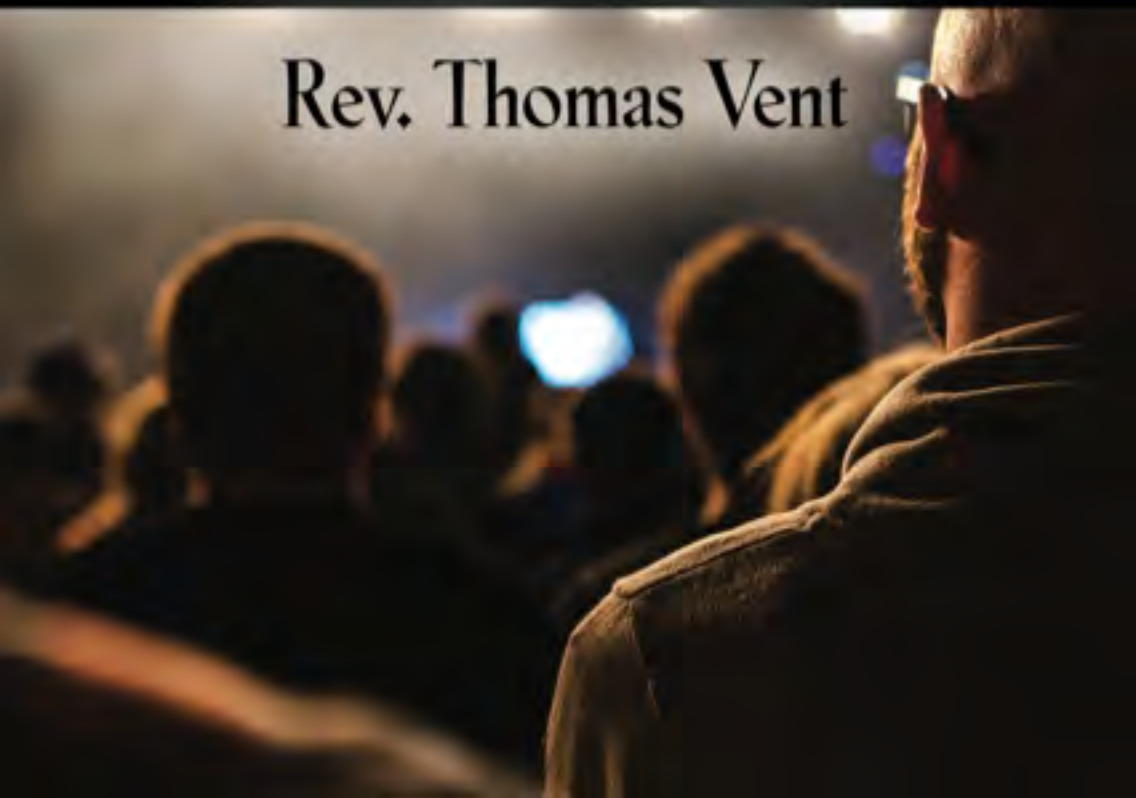
or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.

We Were WARNED!

A TOXIC SPIRITUALITY
WOULD INFECT THE CHURCH AND ATTEMPT
TO DESTROY IT FROM WITHIN

A study of the Epistle of Jude

Rev. Thomas Vent



Copyright © 2019 Rev. Thomas Vent

ISBN: 978-1-64438-765-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.

2019

First Edition

“Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”

Scripture quotations marked “NKJV” are taken from The New King James Version / Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers., Copyright © 1982.

Scripture quotations marked “KJV” are taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version (Public Domain).

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Vent, Thomas

We Were Warned: A Toxic Spirituality Would Infect The Church And Attempt To Destroy It From Within by Thomas Vent

RELIGION: Biblical Commentary / General | New Testament / General Epistles
| Blasphemy, Heresy & Apostasy

Library of Congress Control Number: 2019906716

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter 1 - <i>LEARN</i> what a real church is.....	5
Chapter 2 - <i>PREPARE</i> to fight for truth.....	19
Chapter 3 - <i>NOTICE</i> corrupt ideas creeping in the church	33
Chapter 4 - <i>REMEMBER</i> why God gave us history lessons	53
Chapter 5 - <i>RECOGNIZE</i> the unseen battle around us	65
Chapter 6 - <i>CONNECT</i> old attacks with modern ones.....	77
Chapter 7 - <i>CONCENTRATE</i> when life gets confusing.....	95
Chapter 8 - <i>LOOK</i> at everyone in the light of scriptures.....	105
Chapter 9 - <i>ENDURE</i> the natural disasters to come.....	119
Chapter 10 - <i>FOCUS</i> on the future.....	133
Chapter 11 - <i>FIGHT</i> for truth and your soul	155
Chapter 12 - <i>REFLECT</i> on why this really matters.....	175
Chapter 13 - <i>DECIDE</i> to survive the church confusion.....	187
EPILOGUE	203
AUTHOR BIO	207

Chapter 1 *LEARN* what a real church is

“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James” (v. 1a)

This small letter is for all practical purposes the last epistle of the New Testament. It comes right before the book of Revelations which is a distinctly prophetic book depicting the *future* of the church. So, God chose to use this small letter of Jesus’ half-brother Jude to close the “instructional” section of the Bible. Why? I think it’s kind of like the warning label on the bottles of medicines we have in our cabinets. We usually take the bottle in our hands and turn them as we’re looking for the dosages and scan right past the “warning” sections. We usually don’t want to be reminded of the possible reactions or adverse symptoms that may occur with the medicine, we just want to believe it’s going to help us with whatever is wrong. Jude’s letter is the warning label at the end of the epistles. The early church had been given the other apostolic letters for instruction, correction and inspiration, and now we have a direct warning epistle at the end.

DISREGARDING OR DISTORTING THE PREVIOUS CONTENT OF THIS BOOK MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH AND ETERNAL SOUL!

Jude has an interesting position in the early church, being the brother of Jesus and James whose letter to the church is believed to be the *first* epistle written. It’s curious how God’s sovereign working is seen at times, using one of the brothers of Jesus to *begin* and the other to *end* the epistle writing to the church. Jude, along with James and their sisters, grew up in the home of Mary and Joseph with their oldest half-brother, Jesus (half because Jesus’ father was God not Joseph!). I wrote in my first book on *James*, that it must have been something for him to be in the presence of the incarnate son of God all those years growing up together. Conversations around the home must have been interesting and sometimes deep. Jesus no doubt offered insights into the law that no priest ever could have. In fact, they found him once, when he was twelve, sitting in the temple discussing the weightier matters of the law with the doctors of the law (Lk 2:46-47), and they were all amazed at his knowledge and insights! But, even growing up in the presence of deity, his brothers and sisters did not accept the fact that he was the messiah. Jesus later testified that “*A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.*” (Mt 13:57). The good news is

that James and Jude became believers when Jesus revealed himself to them after the resurrection (I Cor 15:7) and before His ascension. Both these brothers had a life changing, new birth experience as they surrendered and accepted Jesus as their Savior.

Who has your passion?

Jude tells us that he went from unbelieving brother to a *servant* of Jesus. In our current society the word “servant” or “slave” is not politically correct and creates a different mental picture of this relationship than what the words portray in the Greek language. The preface to the English Standard Version of the Bible gives a good explanation of how the word was used in those days.

“In New Testament times, a doulos is often best described as a “bondservant”—that is, someone in the Roman Empire officially bound under contract to serve his master for seven years (except for those in Caesar’s household in Rome who were contracted for fourteen years). When the contract expired, the person was freed, given his wage that had been saved by the master, and officially declared a freedman. The ESV usage thus seeks to express the most fitting nuance of meaning in each context. Where absolute ownership by a master is envisaged (as in Romans 6), “slave” is used; where a more limited form of servitude is in view, “bondservant” is used (as in 1 Corinthians 7:21–24); where the context indicates a wide range of freedom (as in John 4:51), “servant” is preferred.”¹

This gives us an interesting perspective on an otherwise despicable human activity. As I write this book there is a movement in America to try to remove any and all reminders of the practice of slavery in this country. People are destroying statues of American icons that may have played a part of the slave industry in any way. There’s even a movement to change names of Federal monuments and buildings that reflect this era of American

¹ English Standard Version of the Bible, online version, *The translation of Specialized Terms in Preface*, CrossWay

history. This activity is so reprehensible to them that they do not even want people to be reminded that this was the practice in America. Even in biblical times, slavery was turned by many into an ugly and violent treatment of other human beings. So, what would draw a person to voluntarily place himself in that position? In Jude's case: Love and loyalty. Jude, like the other Apostles, was so indebted to Jesus after experiencing *His Passion* on the cross, he placed his whole life at His disposal. Many of the New Testament writers also called themselves "servants" or "slaves" of Jesus Christ. In fact, this is not something that should only be applied to the Apostles. Paul told the church to embrace this sentiment also when he wrote,

"you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor 6:20).

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (I Cor 7:23)

Every true believer should be willing to be the *servant* of Jesus Christ. How often, in a normal day, does the average Christian give thought to what Christ thinks about their words and behaviors? This begs the question: "How *do* we show our servanthood to Jesus Christ?" We certainly don't wear chains or cuffs. Jesus never *forces* anyone to do anything. This slavery must be entered *voluntarily* by a believer. How do we do it then? We become servants of Jesus by serving others with the help of the Spirit of Christ. Therefore James wrote in his letter:

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." (Ja 1:27)

What is even more sobering to consider is the glimpse of the future judgment that Jesus gave in Matthew 25 when He pointed out the basis of separating the saved from the lost. Read these words slowly:

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you

welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’” (25:31-40)

This is an interesting picture of how this king expected his servants to display loyalty to him. Jesus was preaching to the crowd that day and wanting to make it very clear that the real evidence of genuine Christianity and *servanthood* is seen in how you care for and treat others around you. The real outworking of the Spirit of God is seen when a rebellious heart is changed into a *servant* of others. Going to church is a great and healthy habit, as is Bible reading, praying, giving, teaching and preaching, but these can also be *cloaks* or mere habits that hide an unregenerate heart, *but being in love with Christ enough to care for and love others can rarely be faked*. This is even more important today in our *self-obsessed* society. Believers seem to feel like their job is over after they have attended a church service and maybe even dropped money into the offering plate. We then climb back into our expensive car and drive to our expensive home to continue our self-indulgent lives. If you profess to be a believer, when was the last time you showed your servant status by going out of your way to help someone less fortunate than you? Sharing your substance is rarely taught in churches today because most preachers are wanting their people to give all their available resources to *their* ministry.

I had taken my family on vacation one year in the mid-90’s when my five children were all still pretty young. We did the old-fashioned “load the mini-van and drive to Florida” for a week of sun, beach and of course, Disney World. During one of our days in Orlando, we loaded into the van and were heading out for a fast food lunch. We finally all agreed on one and I pulled into the parking lot looking for a space to park the van, when we all saw something that surprised us. A middle-aged, poorly dressed man was standing in a fenced area bending over a dumpster and taking out uneaten food. There were mixed reactions in our vehicle. One of my boys said, “Disgusting!”, another said, “Gross!” and I believe my wife, Cindy, looked away and covered her mouth. Of course, being the preacher in the van, I said, “If a man doesn’t work, neither should he eat!”. The only voice of reason was my 6-year-old daughter, Tamara, who then said, “But daddy, he

must be really, really hungry!” I’m not sure I responded to the voice of an immature child at that moment, but later the next day, as we were all walking around Disney World, that I had paid hundreds of dollars to enter, and hundreds of dollars for all of us to eat there that day, it hit me. I had become so caught up in our expensive vacation plans, that I couldn’t even relate to the reality that there are needy people *everywhere*, even in the shadow of Disney World.

Who’s calling?

Jude was not hiding the fact that he had a genuine *passion* for Jesus and the Gospel message. Neither was he attempting to hide the fact that he loved other believers. He uses the salutation, “**Beloved**” to address the intended audience. In fact, he loved them enough to write them a warning that may save them from spiritual peril. This small letter is intentionally written and addressed to people he loves. Believers within the body of Christ. People who had made the unpopular and risky decision to believe in Jesus as their savior. Listen how he describes them:

“To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” (v. 2)

“To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.” (v. 1-2 KJV)

There is a lot of truth in this verse to grasp. I want to take some time to unpack some of the terms that Jude uses to describe his intended audience. *Is he really talking to us?* He uses three descriptive terms that carry specific meaning and relay insight into the spiritual condition of the believer. Let’s see if we fit into his intended audience. First, he refers to them as “*called*,” a concept not uncommon to the apostolic writers of the New Testament. Although I am against trying to place any kind of a formula or steps to the salvation of a soul, the letters of the New Testament share some common *descriptions* of the way a person comes to be saved. In fact, in Romans 8 the Apostle Paul shares this wonderful process of salvation:

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are CALLED according to his purpose. For those whom he FOREKNEW he also PREDESTINED TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also JUSTIFIED, and those whom he justified he also GLORIFIED.” (Ro 8:28-30)

Great theological minds have studied these verses and have come to different conclusions as to the *exact* way these declarations by God are worked out in the lives of people. One thing that they have in common is the fact that God is “calling” out to the whole world by the *preaching of the Gospel*. When a person who is *called* demonstrates it by *loving God* and placing *faith* in Jesus, he is *justified*, and God begins the process of *conforming* him to the image of His Son until he is finally *glorified!* (I will explain this important truth later in the book) It’s important to understand, for the context of this letter, that there are many people who fall into the area of *hearing the Gospel* of God, but not everyone who hears the Gospel call becomes a believer, or one of the *elect* of God (Col 3:12). Jude’s brother James dealt with a mixture of people in the church who would “say” they had faith, but, in actuality, their faith was *dead*. (Ja. 2:17)

Again, Paul wrote this to believers in his letter to the Thessalonians to remind them of their calling:

“But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth to which He CALLED YOU BY OUR GOSPEL, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (II Thes 2:13-14)

The *calling of God* is always to *believe the Gospel of Christ* which will lead us to *repentance* and becoming one of Gods’ *elect* by His grace and through placing our *faith* in Him. Think of it this way, many people *claim* to be Christian and many of them have heard the Gospel (general call of God) but have never placed their *faith* in that Gospel to be saved (this is the *elect*). Does God know every one of his children (*elect*)? Of course, He does - and he has *predestined* each of them to be *glorified* one day.

So, how do we know if we are the *elect* or not? Have you sincerely repented of your sin and placed your faith and trust in Christ alone as your Savior?

You were *elected* before the foundation of the world! What if you're not saved yet, but you have been wrestling with this truth and are concerned about your soul? God is *calling* you with the Good News that Jesus Christ is your only hope! Several years ago, after preaching a Sunday morning sermon to our church, a woman lingered around the sanctuary for quite some time speaking with a few of the members, until she saw I was finished speaking with other people. She then made her way over to me and asked if we could talk for a few minutes. We went into the prayer room off the auditorium and I listened intently as this woman shared her concerns about her salvation. After listening to her for a few moments, I determined that she had become concerned about her salvation because she had been discussing spiritual matters with a friend and was told that there was no way she could know whether she was one of the "elect" until the after-life. I shared the above verses with her, and we prayed together to restore her faith in her salvation and the promise of the Gospel.

When John wrote to the seven churches in Revelation, he said, ***"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"*** (Rev 2:7). Everyone had ears, right? But not everyone would listen, but they were all *invited* to listen. God has always had a voice to *call* and speak with. In the Old Testament he *spoke* words beginning with Adam and then to many others. He also spoke *through* the prophets to call the people to God. Then God became flesh and Jesus spoke to the world and *called* people to come to repentance and be saved. God then spoke *through* the Apostles to write the New Testament and proclaim the Gospel. Finally, he uses Christians to spread the Gospel and *call* people to Christ. This has been referred to as our *Great Commission*:

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Mt 28:18-20)

The Gospel is being used to *call* people to salvation. The Spirit of God uses the Gospel to *draw* people to Christ to be saved. No one should spend time worrying whether they are the elect or not. We should only be concerned with whether we have sincerely responded to the *calling* of God to repent of

our sin and by faith trust in Christ as our personal Savior. Paul summed this up best in his letter to the Romans, read carefully his explanation:

“THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you WILL BE SAVED. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, “EVERYONE who believes in him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “EVERYONE who calls on the name of the Lord WILL BE SAVED.” (Ro 10:8-13)

Being set apart for God!

Secondly, Jude refers to his recipients as *beloved* or *sanctified* as the King James states. Sanctification is simply the *setting apart* of one’s life for Jesus Christ. The scriptures refer to salvation as a three-fold process, the moment a person is saved he is *declared* righteous by God (justified), through his life he begins *conforming to Christ’s image* (sanctified), and in eternity we will be made *perfect* (glorified). This process of sanctification is one of the ways a Christian has assurance that his salvation is genuine. God begins changing that person in the *image* of Christ from the inside/out. What has been called the *positional sanctification* speaks to our being set apart from the world unto God. This is an instantaneous act of God’s saving grace, which takes place at the moment of our conversion (more details in the final chapter). At that very moment we are sanctified – set apart unto God for His use. A few key Scriptures will suffice to demonstrate this positional aspect of our sanctification.

“Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.” (Eph 1:4)

“But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor 6:11)

Whereas positional sanctification emphasizes God's work, progressive sanctification emphasizes our work or obedience, yet this is not without God's grace. *Progressive sanctification is the process whereby we daily become more and more like Jesus Christ, through the killing of sin in our lives as we endeavor to live daily by God's grace.* While we have been set apart to God in a positional way, we must now live accordingly, growing and maturing in it.

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God” (1 Thess 4:3-5)

Progressive sanctification is *not optional*. He who does not demonstrate growth in sanctification shows himself to be a false professor and therefore lacks a *living faith*. Sanctification is not only God's will for His people, it is the *DESIRE OF HIS PEOPLE*, who have truly experienced His grace in the gospel, and so endeavor to live in a manner worthy of their calling and be pleasing to the Lord.

When I was the pastor of a church in Illinois, I would occasionally get a request by someone to go visit relatives they were burdened for. I received one of these requests to visit a sister of one of our members who, before I was pastor, had attended and was baptized there, but had stopped attending some years back. I made an appointment and eventually went to visit this woman. After spending some time chatting and getting to know her, I found out that she had not been going to church anywhere and was quite bitter over an issue she had experienced in her life during the time she was attending this church. She basically told me that she no longer has any desire to be a part of a church again. She confessed that she didn't read the bible or pray any longer and she was very open to me about her life. She had been divorced twice, had children by both men and even developed a drug problem that she had rehabbed from. But she also made a statement that always gives me caution. She said, “But at least I know I'm saved!” When I asked her, what gives her that confidence, she said, “I prayed a prayer and asked Him to, and then got baptized and the pastor told me that I could never lose it!” I could only think how dangerous it was to tell someone that and presume to know their heart. The truth is a *genuine* believer will *never*

be lost, but it takes a lifetime of continuous examination to understand the reality of God's presence in our lives.

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you— unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor 13:5)

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” (Mt 7:21)

Progressive sanctification takes place over a lifetime and in all aspects of our lives. We may give up sinful habits in one area. Then God may work on another area in our lives. Then perhaps return and do even deeper work in that first area. Our job in sanctification is to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit and be obedient to the things we know are right. When we sin, we seek His forgiveness (*1 John 1:9*), knowing that we are already secure in Christ's hand. We also ask Him to *continually* renew and refine us. We should *desire* to be molded into His image. God is the one who does the work of sanctification. It is only by His grace and through His power that we can become righteous and be truly pleasing to our Father. But nevertheless, *it will happen to every genuine believer.*

Father, please hold my hand!

Lastly, Jude states that his readers are *kept* by Jesus Christ. This fact is very important for every true believer. When we are “saved by grace through faith” we are then “in Christ”. We have moved from the area of being “called” to being “chosen” (*Mt 22:14*). Jesus said this about being His child (elect):

“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.” (Jo 10:28-30)

John Phillips wrote this in his commentary, *Exploring the Gospels: John*:

“This statement of the eternal security of the believer is matched only by Paul’s assurances in Romans 8. We note that our possession of eternal life is stated in the present, continuous tense. We do not have to wait until we die to find out if we are saved. We are given present assurance. There is something magnificent about the picture of the Lord wrapping his omnipotent hand around us, and of the Father wrapping his own almighty hand around his. Thus, we are ensphered in Christ in God.”²

As we study this book of Jude, we will be seeing some characteristics of people that reveal they never made it into the *hand of Christ*. Many of them heard the call and hung around other believers and some even participated in the church, but they never entered into a saving relationship with Christ. Eventually, their religious, but *unchanged* hearts caused problems in the church causing Jude to sound the alarm.

Let me look at one more phrase that Jude uses to address his readers. He states:

“Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation” (v. 3a)

We have here a description of the wonderful bond Jude felt with believers. It wasn't the services or the preaching. It wasn't the traditions or the liturgy. It wasn't the fellowship or the singing. He was bound to the other Christians by a *common salvation*. After I was saved in my teenage years, I developed a hunger for the bible and to be around other believers. Coming from a broken home and being the first Christian, while attending a small public school, left me desiring the fellowship and company of other believers. I found both in the local church. But what sometimes happens to those who share this *common salvation*, is they allow it to become *commonplace* and then *confusion* can easily set in.

“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Eph 4:30)

² Phillips, John, *Exploring the Gospels: John*, Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, NJ, 1989, Pg. 203

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” (Jo 5:24)

Although the Bible gives us many promises as to the *security of the believer* who has received Christ as savior, we need to understand that just because there are *written promises*, doesn't guarantee that they are ours. Do genuine believers ever doubt their salvation? Yes. Is this a good thing or bad thing? I believe it's a good thing and helps a Christian to be concerned about the direction of their life at any given moment in time. Thomas Schreiner in his book, *The Race Set Before Us*, makes this keen observation about our *security* as believers.

“Assurance is integral to saving faith, but we should not conclude from this that assurance is a static entity in the lives of believers. Believers may doubt that they belong to God and question whether they are saved even when there are no good grounds for such tormenting thoughts. To say that assurance is constitutive of faith does not and should not lead to a simplistic view of the Christian life. Believers suffer from doubts, temptations, depression and uncertainty on occasion. The Christian life is a journey with ups and downs and some fierce attacks on our faith. In addition, since assurance is not a static entity, it can wax and wane for believers. While we are traveling on our faith journey – or, perhaps better, while we are running the marathon to obtain the prize – assurance is not a fixed entity. On the whole, it should grow and increase. Our growth in assurance is like a spiral, not in a direct and straight line upwards, but overall there is more certainty about our status with God as we run the race. At times we may regress in our assurance, but the general pattern is one of progress and advancement. Our assurance in faith depends on a three-legged stool: (1) God's promises (2) the fruit of the Spirit in our lives and (3) the witness of the Holy Spirit.”³

Now why was it important to distinguish those he was writing to? It was because Jude was writing to Christians who needed to be sure of their position in Christ because they were being exposed to and tempted by *false teachers*. He needed to *warn* them about not being *confused* by people who *never became genuine Christians in the first place* and are now attempting

³ Schreiner, Thomas R., *The Race Set Before Us*, IVP Academic, Downers Grove, IL, 2001, Pg. 276.

to *corrupt* the church. In fact, he was so burdened about what he was hearing about in the churches, when he was originally going to write to them about the *blessings* of their common salvation, he couldn't. God wouldn't let him. He had to change his theme and write this warning to them, so they would be aware of the dangers in their midst. An infiltration of people who *call themselves Christian but* hold to the immorality and philosophies of the surrounding Godless world.

This change of mind he had was nothing less than the Spirit of God *moving him* to write these words. This is referred to as the *inspiration* of scriptures, one of the foundational doctrines of the Christian church. Peter wrote this:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Pet 1:21)

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim 3:16)

What we learn from Jude's comment is that he and other writers of *inspired* letters in the bible were *moved* by God, or literally “carried along” by God. Although God *breathed out* and men wrote, the bible is a perfect union of man and God. In other words, God inspired men who wrote letters and books using their own experiences, backgrounds, personalities and theological training. When we read a book of the Bible, we are reading actual words *from* God and actual words written *by* men. So, when Jude tells us that he wanted to write to them about the *common salvation* but “I felt compelled” or “constrained” to write about something else, he was being *moved* by God. Therefore, it is for our good and our safety that we take heed to what Jude is going to warn us about. It will help us to remember as we go through this letter from Jude that it was God, way back then, who wanted him to write these warnings for us today as well as those in his day.

Jude closed out his introduction with a prayer for his readers:

“May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” (v. 2)

His desire is for the letter he's writing to help them experience God's *mercy* more intimately, his *peace* more completely, and his *love* more firmly. Jude uses his pen, empowered by the Holy Spirit, using strong words and deep phrases like “servant,” “called,” “beloved,” “kept,” to call believers to attention to a battle ground within the church. He desires for them to have

these internal virtues *multiplied* in their lives as they read his words and become stronger in their faith. This is the only real way that believers will be able to withstand the confusion and corruption of the Gospel that had infiltrated the church, and would no-doubt continue to spread throughout them. So, as we listen to the news of rampant immorality around us and the demands of the godless world pushing their agenda on people and trying to penetrate every aspect of society, we must remember who we are and where our allegiance should be directed – to Jesus Christ, the Infallible Scriptures and *not* towards men. We must become aware of how easy it is to become complacent and ignore immoral behaviors as they enter our churches from an increasingly wicked, unrepentant society.

“Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us this letter from Jude to remind us of who we are in Christ. Thank you for mercy and peace when we need it most. Teach us what we need to learn from these words to be able live our lives better prepared to bring you glory. Amen”

Chapter 2 *PREPARE* to fight for truth

Most people have heard about the fabled Trojan war against Greece recorded by *Homer* in his epic writings. It was a bloody war that took place in Troy and had gone on for around ten long years with many casualties including their leading warrior, Hector, who was the son of King Priam. Legend has it that Hector was killed by another great warrior, Achilles, who was himself killed by being shot in the heel with an arrow. The war was supposed to have started when Hectors' brother Paris, abducted Helen of Troy, the wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta. Through the years of this war, the stronger Greeks were decimating the armies and the surrounding areas of Troy. They would have conquered Troy itself if it hadn't been for the huge walls that had been built to protect the city from invaders. The walls were very tall, deep and virtually impenetrable. Then one day a man named Ulysses, came up with an idea, let's build a huge wooden horse hollowed out on the inside. We'll put 30 soldiers inside it and offer it to Troy as a gift of surrender and then we'll take to ships and sail away making it look like we quit. Mythology has it that, after some debate over what this large horse was, the people of Troy decided to keep it and bring it into the city. That evening, they all had a huge victory party and celebrated until most everyone passed out drunk. The door of the horse then opened, and Ulysses and the other soldiers came out and opened the gate of Troy to let in the returning Greek soldiers, who then went through the city murdering all the leaders and burning the city down. Although this story is based more on mythology than history, it's famously known in literature because of the valuable insight into war strategies, because in the end, the great city of Troy was in ruins, and the Trojan Horse is written down in history as one of the greatest deceptions of all time.

As Jude continues penning his letter to the first-century Christians, he also turns the conversation to a warning about *deception in the church*. Before he goes into details about the apostasy (claiming the faith then denying it later) that was occurring within the early church, he makes a statement that serves as an introduction into what he plans to deal with next. He wrote:

“I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly

people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (v. 3b-4)

Should Christians really be fighting?

It had been about 6 months since I felt led by the Lord to resign my position as Pastor of New Life Baptist Church and take some time to be ministered to while I sought what He wanted me to do next. During that time period, my grandmother passed away. She was very dear to me and the closest thing to a mother that I knew, seeing that I came from a broken home and my dad had legal custody of me and my three siblings and she raised us. I didn't think I was strong enough to do her funeral myself, and remain in control of my emotions, so I asked my home pastor to perform the ceremony. During those days of speaking with my him and listening to discussions about his ministry, I felt strongly that the Lord wanted me to return to this church with my family while I was waiting for my next ministry opportunity. We joined the church in November of 1999, and in March of 2000, the pastor asked if I would accept a position as his assistant, due to him having some declining health issues, and help him with teaching and preaching from time to time. I agreed, then in April, he resigned abruptly, and left me to sort things out for this small church. Not knowing, exactly what God was doing, I felt strongly that I needed to make an “appeal” to the church on the first Sunday filling the pulpit in his absence and spoke from Acts 20 using the text:

“I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:29-32)

I made as strong of an *appeal* as I could for the members to be “alert” and stay together in prayer during those days of deciding who God wants to be the next pastor, because those were the times when the devil would send in people to “twist things” and try to infiltrate the church with false doctrine. Some of the members over the next few weeks wanted to have a meeting to call me as pastor, but I declined until more time was spent praying and

seeking God. I preached for them as the interim pastor for 6 months before the church held the business meeting to call me, and we both felt agreed that it was God's plan for me to accept.

I share this story because there are times in every ministry when an *appeal* must be made for the health of the church and the purity of the work of God. The Apostle Paul found himself in this situation as he wrote to the church at Rome as he said:

“I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.” (Ro 16:17)

Jude finds himself in a similar situation, having wanted to write about a more positive “common salvation” theme and do some rejoicing about the wonderful life that Jesus had given them. But he needed, instead, to *appeal* to them about the dangers facing the Christian church. In fact, he tells them that they must get ready to fight or *contend* for their faith. In his book, *The Truth War*, Dr. John MacArthur makes this assessment of Jude's day.

“Does it amaze you to think this was necessary even in the days of the apostles. We sometimes tend to think of the early church as pristine, pure, and untroubled by serious error. The truth is, it wasn't that way at all. From the very beginning, the enemies of truth launched an effort to infiltrate and confuse the people of God by mangling the truth and by blending lies with Christian doctrine. Attacks against the truth regularly came not only from persecutors on the outside but also from false teachers and professing believers within the visible community of the church. Satan's strategy of placing ministers within the church to sow bad doctrine was proving dangerously effective even while the New Testament was still being written.”⁴

Jude saw a battle ground forming in the early church and was calling the believers to attention with this letter. He was not referring to a fight over personalities or people, but rather over structure and doctrines. The church today is still in a battle for its doctrinal purity and biblical emphasis. It is being barraged by immorality, legalism, emotionalism, and pseudo-miracle workers all claiming to be true and replacing the practice of biblical exposition and doctrinal truth. One of the first issues that I had to deal with

⁴ *The Truth War*, Dr. John MacArthur, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 2007, Pg. 67

at this church, did not involve immorality or doctrinal issues, but instead involved people who wanted to control the music ministry. This seems rather trifle compared to the weightier areas that could have been battlegrounds. We had meetings to discuss this area of ministry and my position on the subject, as well as the direction I felt in my heart that we needed to go as a church. Unfortunately, what I ran into was a very conservative group of music people that placed songs written by men on the level of Scripture, at least that's how it appeared in our discussions, and I pointed it out to them. They were set on not having anything sung in the church that didn't come out of their particular hymnal and wasn't accompanied by only a piano. I expressed my concern with their view and some of them eventually left the church unwilling to sing worship songs not in their hymn books and accompanied by various instruments. Normally, this would not be the "bridge to die on" for some pastors, but I felt that their reverence for *hymns* cheapened the emphasis that I needed to place on Scriptural authority in the weeks ahead. I needed to help them put their trust in the authority of scriptures *not* songs, personalities, worship styles or a preachers' preferences. Many evangelical churches that claim to hold to the "fundamentals" of the faith, cling to many extra-biblical issues. I decided to nip this one in the bud right then.

Christians have always needed to be on guard and willing to contend for their honest biblical convictions as necessary. Jude now moves past the sentimental theme of his letter and calls these "saints" to action. He says it's now time to *contend* for what you say you believe. The Greek word he uses here, translated *contend*, is only found in this letter in the New Testament. A variation of the word is used in other places in the NT and is translated *strive*, *fight*, *conflict* and *labor fervently*. The basic meaning is "to give great effort as in a wrestling match."⁵ Paul wrote to believers in Ephesus and reminded them of the real focus of our battle:

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." (Eph 6:12)

⁵ The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Frank Gaebelin, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 1981, vol. 12, pg. 388.

Fighting for THE faith!

Jude writes these words to Christians as a battle cry. It's kind of a "call to arms" for every true believer in Jesus Christ. The purity of the church is at stake. But let's not make the mistake of thinking that he is referring to physical violence, that's not the case at all. The area around Jerusalem had for too long been the setting for violent religious take-overs by zealots with little regard for human life. Many people, through the centuries, had been killed in the name of God, Baal, Allah, Diana and others. The progressive movement today has also become very aggressive with their protests and confrontation of conservatives, Christians and those who reject their amoral positions. This is not what Jude is advocating. He is calling the church to battle for *the faith* by not allowing people to enter in and change revealed, inspired *truth* as taught by the Apostles.

Christianity has never been about *killing* for the truth, it has always been about *dying* for the truth. That's right, the history of the church is filled with the blood of martyrs who valiantly stood for the Gospel even at the risk of their lives. What first century Christians needed to be reminded of was the fact that Jesus was never impressed by crowds or the fleshly commitments of some followers.

As I pointed out in the introduction, Jesus was able to see the hearts of people and know when they wanted *HIM* and when they wanted what He could *DO FOR* them. Jesus often preached to reduce the size of the crowds around him because He knew their hearts were misdirected. As a pastor for several small-town churches, I know what it's like to have a family visit for a while only to leave because the "smaller church" couldn't meet their perceived needs. Many families are continually looking for "*what the church can do for me*" instead of "*how will my family grow spiritually here?*" Many church-hopping families are looking for entertaining programs and feel-good sermons rather than Gospel centered, expositional preaching that affects the soul.

So, when Jude says that we must "*contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints*" (v. 3b), what was he referring to? Since he says it's the faith that was "delivered to the saints," it can't be the faith that we express from *within* our heart and spirit. He refers to it as "*the faith*" that was given to the saints "once for all." The emphasis is on the substance of

the faith. He's not referring to the Bible as we know it today because it wasn't even completed at that time. Although he may not have been aware of it at the time, Jude was helping to write the bible with this very letter. The Bible was a product of *progressive revelation* over many centuries of God speaking *uniformly* to men who were then moved to write what they felt in their spirit. So, Jude couldn't have been referring to the systematic organization of Christian doctrine that we hold to in the twenty-first century, although it's important to hold fast to those truths also. The Apostle Paul made some clarifying statements in his letters to the churches of the day, referring to this "once and for all" event. Let's examine a few descriptions that he used in his writings.

First, consider that Paul called this *faith* that he was given, "a mystery." He wrote to the Colossian believers:

"to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col 1:25-27)

And to the Corinthians church he made this plea:

"To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak." (Eph 6:18-20)

Paul knew that this "faith" was something that had been misunderstood by Israel for generations as they looked for a messiah that would come as a king to establish a throne in Israel and drive out all the enemies of Israel.

Secondly, we are told this "faith" was given to "common" people to confound the wise who thought they knew everything God was doing:

"God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption," (1 Cor 1:27-30)

This message of “faith” was based solely on what Christ did on the cross:

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Cor 1:18, 21-24)

“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, NAILING IT TO THE CROSS.” (Col 2:13-14)

Anyone who thinks that “dying on a cross” was a popular way to establish a new religion is very wrong. In fact, to the world of Jesus’ day, the cross was a despicable instrument of punishment for criminals and the means the Romans chose to humiliate other nations. The concept of crucifixion was degrading to everyone, and the thought that someone would worship someone who was crucified was appalling. For this reason, Paul made it a point to say, “*We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles*” (1 Cor 1:23). The cross was not a popular topic and it never will be for some.

Thirdly, this “faith” that created the first church, was declared as “once for all” by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews;

“But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he ENTERED ONCE FOR ALL into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption” (Heb 9:10-12)

“Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared ONCE FOR ALL at the end of the ages TO PUT AWAY SIN by the sacrifice of himself.” (Heb 9:25-26)

“And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a SINGLE OFFERING he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.” (Heb 10:11-14)

What a wonderful event that was for mankind! The God of the universe became a man and offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of the whole world! This is the faith that was delivered “once for all!” It’s the Gospel! It can never be repeated, and it cannot be adjusted, altered, adapted or annihilated! Anyone that attempts to change it, Paul said would be “accursed” (Gal 1:8-9).

Lastly, this “faith” of Christ on the cross *must be* embraced by his followers. Even before Jesus was brutally tortured and hung on a cross, he expected his disciples to be so totally devoted to Him that they would be willing to die on one too.

“And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and TAKE UP HIS CROSS and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.” (Mk 8:34-35)

So, I hope you get the picture of how crucial it was to the early church to “strive” for this faith. It was given “once for all” and it is called “The Gospel” of Christ. It cannot be tampered with. It cannot be added to, or twisted, or de-emphasized. It cannot be bought or sold or bartered for in any way. The eternal destination of a world lies in the balance. It was “once for all” in that it covered the sins of all mankind for all time, from the first Adam to the last Adam to ever be born.

Some years ago, I had the chance to speak to a very sweet Muslim woman in her early twenties that I occasionally worked with. She was very willing to discuss some of the nuances of her religion with me and in turn I shared some principles of Christianity. Our conversation was quite interesting and kind, until one time I narrowed my conversation down to the Gospel and shared what that was. She then became somewhat bothered and told me she had been taught that Jesus was a “good man and a prophet” but that was all. The more I discussed the Gospel, the more uncomfortable she became, and

when I mentioned the cross, she almost chuckled and told me that the crucifixion was a myth and that even history doesn't record that event. How unfortunate was her misinformation and her blinding to the Gospel.

The "faith" that Jude says we must "fight" for is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth that *HE IS THE ONLY WAY OF SALVATION*. Jesus told us that He is "the way, the truth and the life", He is the "door", He is the "true vine", He is the "light of the world" and the "bread of life". The Apostles declared Him as "The only mediator between God and man", as well as "The only name given among men wherein we must be saved!" This is the faith we must protect and even be willing to die for.

Through the centuries since the cross of Christ, men have found a way (with Satan's help) to alter the Gospel of Grace from something that *only God does*, to something *God and I do together*. Is a person really saved who believes that he or she has contributed something to their salvation? In the book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul "withstood" Peter to the face over his not standing against a Jewish sect that attempted to add circumcision to grace. That's right. Peter behaved cowardly again, and Paul got in his face and called him out for it. You see, he knew that the grace of Christ would be no grace at all if we could add one scintilla of our own efforts to it. A person must come to grips with the truth that we are completely depraved and even our "*righteousness*" is like filthy rags to God. We must acknowledge our hopelessness to save ourselves and confess this sinfulness with a repentant heart and trust Christ and Christ alone to save us, because - *Christ lived the life we couldn't live and died the death that we should have died*. He was OUR substitute on the Cross. The Roman Catholic church believes in the Christ on the cross, but they have added experiencing the sacraments to complete salvation. *This nullifies saving grace*. Some churches believe in the saving grace of the cross-plus baptism. This also nullifies saving grace. Remember, the Bible clearly teaches:

"And you were DEAD IN THE TRESPASSES AND SINS in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN OUR TRESPASSES, made us alive together with

Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH. AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD, NOT A RESULT OF WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus FOR GOOD WORKS, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:1-9)

We were completely dead in our sins, and by God’s mercy saved by Christ that we should then begin to show good works, like baptism. When I was pastoring, I had the opportunity to speak to a Christian church pastor who was living in our community. During my conversation with him, I sensed his emphasis on baptism as part of completing salvation and I attempted to share that this was a dangerous position to hold. During our discussion he quoted a few passages in which he confused *spirit* baptism with *water* baptism and even attempted to make the *work of baptism* the equivalent of the *work of repentance*. I wasn’t buying this at all, since repentance is a completely *internal response to our sinfulness and an awakening of our need for Christ’s forgiveness*, while baptism is an *outward activity that requires our effort and the effort of a minister to complete*. We continued to disagree amiably over what constitutes the Gospel. I asked him if he had studied the concept of biblical *justification*, he said, “sure I have” (I will explain this later in the book). I then asked him at what moment is a person justified before God? He (almost reluctantly) said, when the salvation experience is completed. I asked, “after baptism?” He said yes. I asked next, didn’t that mean it’s a *sacrament* that imparts grace similar to the Roman Catholic practice? Since Paul said, “*For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel*” (1 Cor 1:17), wasn’t he making a clear distinction between baptism and the Gospel? I asked him next, why did Paul not baptize more people then instead of leaving them hanging and still unsaved? We agreed to disagree on this topic. If the Gospel of Christ is tampered with it ceases to be the true Gospel.

The American Version of the Gospel?

Before I leave this topic, I need to make a stark (and sad) contrast to what is happening in our current culture. The Gospel is being declared faithfully in many Christian churches across America, but not in all. Many have adapted the Gospel message to be compatible with a degraded American culture. Look around at our country, the cities, the work places and what do you see? We are surrounded by a pagan culture that claims to be Christian but denies the Christ of the Bible. We live in a country that refuses to be guided by biblical truth or accept the fact that the bible is relevant for today. Ours is a godless society that is hiding behind *political correctness* and demonstrating biblical intolerance. It's not *en vogue* to restrict desires or narrowly define acceptable behaviors by an age-old book. Many American's do not feel like they can make stands for moral traditions or speak up for biblical standards anymore. This should not surprise us about the God-rejecting world, but when the Christian church goes silent, there's a big problem.

I'm sure that when Jesus called out the first church, He did not have in mind the American version of it. Many churches in America no longer preach a Gospel that brings *sinner*s to the *Savior*. It instead, has offered a more palatable version to the American culture. Preachers like to attach various words to the Gospel in a seeming attempt to improve it. It has become the *full Gospel*, *Prosperity Gospel*, or a *Faith Gospel*, to bring their own emphasis to it. It's popular to say, "I believe in God," but not if it comes with any conditions of living differently or changing. It's acceptable to claim Christianity as your religion, as long as you aren't dogmatic about anything. The Christ that demanded his disciples to "take up their cross and follow me" is no longer acceptable. The Jesus that told a man to "let the dead bury the dead, you follow me," is no longer acceptable. The Christ that said, "No man comes to the Father but by Me," is no longer acceptable. The thought of having to "repent," of sin to become a Christian, is no longer acceptable. Today, the clear message is, "As long as your sincere, God understands." Many churches are teaching that being *prosperous* and *healthy* is the goal of Christianity. Churches are built like businesses and run like corporations churning out *their own type of converts* to fill their buildings. Preachers who disseminate a message of *self-esteem* and *self-improvement* to keep their messages *positive*, have changed the Gospel message. The "faith once delivered" has been distorted and buried behind an

artificial image of Christ and a feel-good Gospel that comes with no demands and no restrictions. The modern church has become so weak and undecided on biblical matters in this country, it's no wonder that a recent survey of one thousand "20-somethings" who regularly attended church as children and teens revealed that these "Christians" are MORE LIKELY:

**To believe that all the accounts/stories in the Bible are NOT true/accurate.*

**To doubt the Bible because it was written by men.*

**To doubt the Bible because it was not translated correctly.*

**To defend that abortion should continue to be legal.*

**To defend premarital sex.*

**To accept that gay marriage and abortion should be legal.*

**To believe that God used evolution to change one kind of animal into another.*

**To believe the earth is NOT less than 10,000 years old.*

**To view the Church as hypocritical.*

**To have become anti-church through the years.*

**To believe that good people don't need the church.⁶*

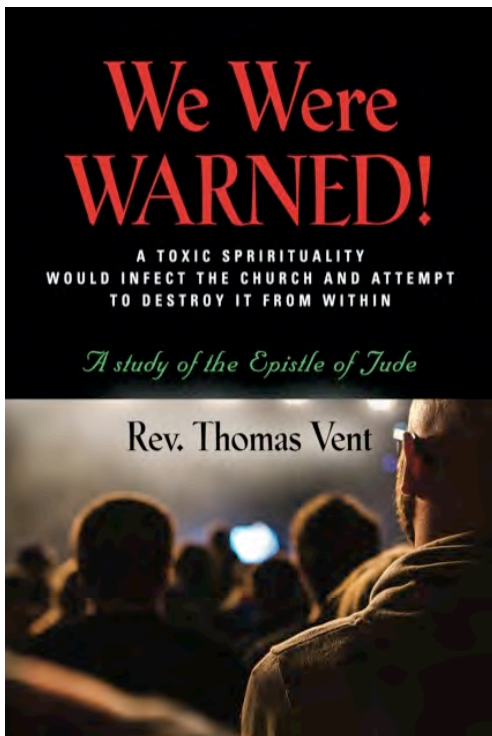
Who is responsible for this incredible weakness of conviction in these young adults who spent their youth in the church? The pastors and teachers of these churches are! The church has stopped focusing on sound exposition of scripture and has been focused more on *felt needs* and *relationship theology* than the Cross of Christ. It has been more focused on bodies, buildings and budgets than the Gospel. Jude knew where it would lead if false teachers could *creep in* and stay undetected in Christ's church. We must heed Jude's warnings and consider if our churches are really contending for the faith in our generation.

⁶ Already Gone, Ken Ham & Britt Beemer, Master Books, Green Forest, AR, 2009, pg. 39.

“Lord, help us esteem you above all else in our lives. Let the Gospel of Christ become more precious to us than gold or worldly goods. As we read, speak to us with your Spirit to help us clearly understand the condition of our own soul. Amen”

AUTHOR BIO

Thomas Vent is an ordained minister, church planter, counselor and writer. He emerged from being raised in a broken home in a small town with 3 other siblings, to serve in various church ministries for over twenty-five years. After graduating from college with a bachelor's degree in theology, Tom developed a burden for the practical exposition of scriptures, which he maintained consistently throughout his ministries as a pastor. Whether speaking from the pulpit, teaching a class or sharing by writing, he loves to explain Biblical truth by interjecting life experiences, real world events and personal insights. More than anything else, Tom feels a deep devotion to and love for God's word and enjoys showing how it reveals the wonders of Christ throughout. He currently resides in the Midwest with his wife and high school sweetheart of 41 years, Cynthia. He was blessed with 5 children and 16 grandchildren (so far) who constantly keep him laughing and running around. When he is not working or studying, Tom can usually be found just enjoying life with his family, kids and grandchildren.



Jude uses a pointed style to open the curtain and expose the apostate preachers who were infiltrating even the first century church. In this book, pastor Tom attempts to merge some of his own experiences as a pastor with examples of modern-day preachers gone amuck, with clear, practical interpretation of this final epistle written to the church.

WE WERE WARNED!:
A TOXIC SPIRITUALITY WOULD INFECT THE
CHURCH AND ATTEMPT TO DESTROY IT
FROM WITHIN - A study of the Epistle of Jude
By Rev. Thomas Vent

Order the complete book from the publisher
[Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10424.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**