

SOUL FOOD

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JUDE CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

When we think of the understanding of the word, "faith," we typically think about our personal beliefs. However, when we see the word preceded by the definite article, "the," we know that something bigger is being discussed. In other words, "the faith," refers to that deposit of truth that we have been given concerning the life and teaching of Jesus through the prophets and the apostles. This is what Jude, the brother of Jesus, is referring to when he tells his readers to contend for THE faith. It is this faith that must inform our personal faith and we must live our lives standing on this faith. The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are clear summaries of this faith.

False teachers were threatening the confidence and the assurance of many sincere believers. Jude goes to great lengths to discuss what was going on in the lives of these false teachers that motivated them to stand against and contradict the doctrines of the grace of God. Jude states that these people were led by their desires rather than the objective truth of Christ. These false teachers perverted the grace of God into sensuality and used the freedom of grace and forgiveness to justify their own self-centered, sensual desires. Jude demonstrates the unity of the Old and New Testaments when he taught that Jesus, "**who saved a people out of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe.**" By referring to this reality Jude wanted his hearers to remember that true faith perseveres in THE faith.

Unlike these false teachers, who were only "professors" rather than "possessors" of the faith, believers continue to grow in their relationships with Jesus. Fallen angels and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are further examples of how God is the God of judgment as well as the God of love. Jude goes on to describe these people as people who rely on their dreams and reject authority. They live according to their desires rather than the desires and the truth of God. They are perverted. Do not give their teaching hospitality in any way. Contend for THE TRUTH.

what must we do in the light of such affronts to the faith? "**But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God.**" We must continue to live lives of submission to God through the Holy Spirit. This is demonstrated through praying in subjection to the Holy Spirit and staying in the love of God. We must pray according to God's will and agenda and we must stay in God's love through actively waiting for and living in the light of the return of Jesus. We have the joy and assurance of knowing that we are KEPT by God for that day. Amazingly, we are also given assurance that we will stand before our perfectly, holy God as being BLAMELESS. WHAT A FAITH!