

Memory Verse

Jude 3

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

GRACELIFE



CHURCH

JUDE

Defend the Faith,
Grow in Grace

**Pt. 3 – Contending Without
Being Contentious**

We are in our series on the book of Jude, the brother of Jesus. He wrote before 70AD, to a group of Jewish believers. They were under persecution, and *false teachers* and *false brethren* infiltrated the church.

It is *probable this was a circular letter*. He wrote to *the called, beloved and kept*, wanting their *mercy, peace and love* made full in their lives.

Jude 3

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. [NASB]

A. 3a – Jude's Desire for Writing

He opens with the word, "*Beloved.*" This is related to *verse 1*, about being *beloved of God*. Here, Jude tells his readers they were loved by him. Because of this love, he was *eager*, or *wanting to be diligent* to write to them about "*our common salvation.*"

A. 3a – Jude's Desire for Writing

It could be he *wanted to tell them the blessings they had in salvation:*

- forgiveness of sin,
- a personal right relationship with a holy God,
- freedom from condemnation,
- a direct line of communication with God through prayer and more.

B. 3b: 1 – Jude's Decision for Writing

He says it was *necessary*, a *necessity was laid upon him* by God to write something else. It could be that he was being *diligent to write to them* about salvation, and had to change, compelled by the Lord, to warn them about false teachers. He *admonished, appealed* or *exhorted* them to *contend earnestly*, or *earnestly contend*, for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

“The word “contend” is a translation of the Greek word *epagonizes-thai*, from which we get our word *agonize*. The word appears in both military and athletic contexts. It means “to fight or struggle with intense effort.” Jude calls on us to strive after and fight for the faith, and his words suggest that he knows it will not be an easy battle; it will be agonizing at times.”

Christ-Centered Exposition - Exalting Jesus in 2 Peter, Jude.

B. 3b: 1 – Jude’s Decision for Writing

I want to define “the faith, which was once for all handed down to the saints.” Jude was writing to *Jewish believers*, thus the word *saints*. In the Old Testament a *saint* followed God, and by faith fulfilled the Law. *Daniel 7:18-27* uses the word “*saints*” about 5 times. It is *not referring to Christians*. Paul uses this word for *Jewish followers of Jesus* in *Ephesians*.

B. 3b: 1 – Jude’s Decision for Writing

This word can be a general term for Christians; its **primary use** is for *Jewish followers of the Messiah in the New Testament*. It was **through the Jews** God gave the *promises of the coming Messiah*. To them was *given the word of God*. To them was *given the promise of the Kingdom*. To them was *given the covenants*, including the New Covenant.

B. 3b: 1 – Jude's Decision for Writing

It's important to note the phrase "*once for all*."
God's truth **doesn't change!** There are people, churches, denominations and more that change God's word to *justify* their *sin or selfishness*.
Scripture is taken out of context, denied and changed because they don't like what God says.

B. 3b: 1 – Jude’s Decision for Writing

God has *given us His word*. There is **no new revelation**. Another growing problem is the idea that *God is giving new revelation*. That is a denial of the faith *once for all delivered*, or given. This is a **denial** in the sufficiency and authority of the Bible.

Every human has an authority. It is *Scripture*, *themselves* (which is most of the world) or *something or someone else*.

C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

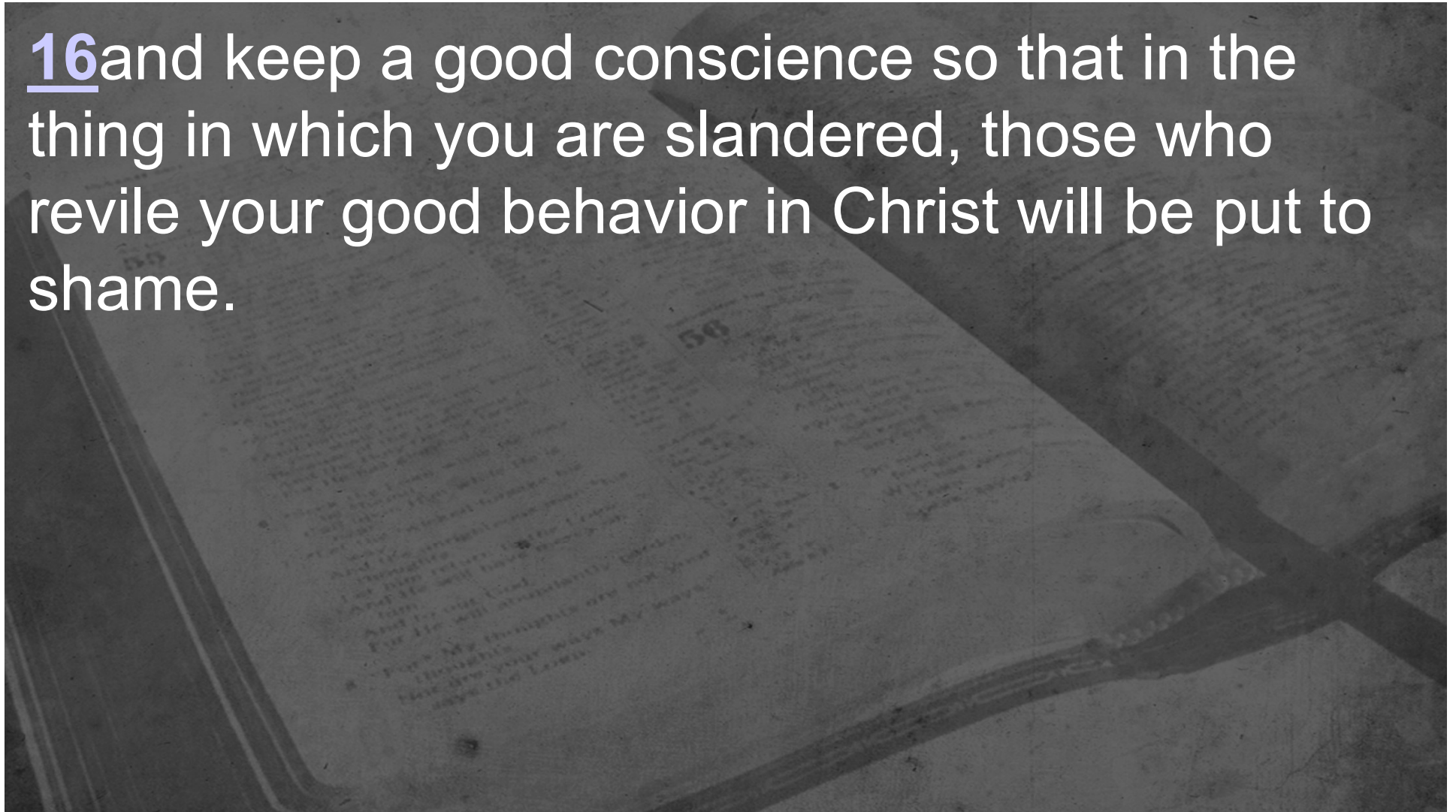
He *declared* that they and we must *earnestly contend* for the faith. I *defined that* and talked about *sports* and what "*the faith*" is, as we understand today. Now we will *look at what it means to contend earnestly or earnestly contend for the faith* given to them and for us. But in order to *contend* for it, we must *hold* to it.

C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

Though we are to *contend sincerely, honestly, and intensely*, we are *not to be contentious in contending*. What does *contentious* mean? Given to angry debate, provoking dispute or contention, or quarrelsome. How are we to stand for the truth? For that we go to *1 Peter 3:14-16*.

1 Peter 3:14-16 - But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, 15but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.



C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

The context refers to those who are *suffering for doing what is right*. He says don't be afraid of or troubled by those who *try to intimidate you*. Set Christ apart as Lord in your *heart or mind*, and *be ready to defend the faith* through your *lifestyle* because of the *hope in you*. Defend the faith with *gentleness and reverence or respect*. Be **bold**, but be **gentle and respectful**.

C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

*Focus on the **issue**.* Don't make fun of someone or laugh at his or her beliefs. Don't put them down, but *proclaim the truth calmly, passionately, and reverently.* This can be done in a straightforward way, or through dialogue, and even in debate. But **always** *get to the truth.*

C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

Paul gives advice to the Colossians and us.
Walk in wisdom. This takes time, learning,
decision-making and applying truth in our life.
What we say must be with *grace*, with *salt*
seasoned in there.

C. 3b: 2 – Jude's Declaration in Writing

It is with these 3 things: *wisdom*, *grace* and a *seasoning of salt* (with *gentleness* and *respect*) that helps us know how to answer those who ask questions, or question our life and beliefs. We can ask questions to get to the *core worldview issue*. Remember that everyone knows God exists, but **most refuse to submit to Him**. We also **lovingly**, but **truthfully** proclaim the truth.

"Beloved brethren, when I saw it necessary to write to you concerning the common salvation, my mind being deeply affected with the dangers to which the Church is exposed from the false teachers that are gone out into the world, I found it extremely necessary to write and exhort you to hold fast the truth which you had received, and strenuously to contend for that only faith which, by our Lord and his apostles, has been delivered to the Christians." *Adam Clarke Commentary*