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Nineveh, and extended the Assyrian empire to its greatest power. In a second Egyptian campaign, Esar-haddon died and his son, the famous Assurbanipal, the one who built the great library from which archaeologists get most of their Assyrian artifacts, succeeded him.

### QUIZ

1. Where else in the Bible does God use angels to kill people?
2. What form may angels take to do their work of killing?
3. What tradition from antiquity may be a parallel to the Biblical account of the slaughter of the Assyrian army?
4. How did Sennacherib come to his end?

### SPECIAL STUDY

#### THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED FOR ALL TIME

by

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### INTRODUCTION

#### I. JUDE IS A MOST NEGLECTED EPISTLE OF THE N.T.

- A. Because it is brief.
- B. Because its language is different than most of the N.T.
- C. Because the circumstances calling for its writing are obscure.
- D. Many preachers have preached from vs. 3 but few have left it in its own context when they used it.

#### II. JUDE IS A MOST RELEVANT EPISTLE OF THE N.T. FOR TODAY.

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- A. "There have been times in the history of the church when Jude was the most relevant book in the N.T." Barclay
- B. Jude's intention
1. First to discuss in a treatise the common salvation of Christians
  2. But, there arose men whose beliefs and conduct were a threat and a menace to the church.
  3. The need was not so much to expound the faith as to rally Christians in defense of the faith.
- C. The menace of *Antinomianism*
1. Lawless grace; grace without any conditions; what matters is not keeping a code but what's in the heart.
  2. Antinomians considered themselves so spiritual that sin did not exist for them. Their idea was that since salvation was by grace there need be no law.
  3. They believed that if we love God with our heart, we can do what we want with our bodies.
  4. They perverted the grace of God which is in essence  
A PERVERSION OF THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF GOD!
- D. The menace of *Gnosticism*
1. They denied the deity of Jesus Christ.
  2. They taught that the creator was sort of an "off-shoot" or emanation from God because matter is evil and God could not create matter or be touched by matter (flesh) for that would make God evil.
  3. They taught a definite dichotomy of spirit and matter.
  4. If there was a divine Messiah He would have to be totally spirit and not flesh—and since Jesus of Nazareth was flesh, He could not be the divine Messiah.
  5. They divided mankind into two classes:
    - a. the *pneumatikoi* - the spiritual elite, that select few who were able to embark on the long intellectual search for God
    - b. the *psuchikoi* - those who had physical life, but whose spiritual life was quite inadequate ever to

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attain to the knowledge which was necessary to reach God.

6. They denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.
- E. There are two major reasons for the church today to contend for the faith.
  1. Antinomianism - under grace we are so spiritual we cannot sin.
  2. Gnosticism - Neo-orthodoxy: God is "Wholly Other"; denial of the Divine/Human nature of Jesus Christ.
  3. BOTH ARE A PERVERSION OF THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF GOD AND JESUS.

### III. SOME OBVIOUS CONCLUSIONS FROM JUDE 3

- A. The faith is something *delivered* to us. It is not something manufactured or discovered on our own. IT IS REVEALED FROM GOD!
- B. The faith is something *once for all delivered*. Each generation is obligated to relearn and rethink and reexperience it, BUT IT IS OF PERMANENT AND UN-CHANGING NATURE.
- C. The faith is something which is entrusted to God's consecrated people. IT IS NO MAN'S PRIVATE PROPERTY!
- D. The faith is something which must be defended or tended for. A duty such as this is the obligation of every generation of Christians.

### I. WHAT IS "THE FAITH"?

- A. According to this context, and according to the general theme of the whole Bible, THE FAITH IS: THE HOLI-NESS OF GOD AND THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST!

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1. Jude said "contend for the faith" because some were perverting the "grace of God," and "denying the only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."
2. The first attack upon THE FAITH was an attack upon the *veracity* of God in the Garden of Eden (God lied or would not be faithful to keep His word).
3. The Bible, from beginning to end, is one majestic, historical account of the FAITHFULNESS OF GOD (historical demonstrations of God's mighty and powerful fulfillments of His promises) finally demonstrated in The Son.

The Bible is also God's revelation of guidelines and commandments on the proper human responses to that FAITHFULNESS.

4. The FAITH is not what man must do, however; it is what God has done! The FAITH is not our response systematized. . . . THE FAITH IS NOT baptism, Lord's Supper, prayer, stewardship. THESE ARE OUR RESPONSES TO THE FAITH! THEY ARE OBEDIENCES TO THE FAITH. (Incidentally, THE FAITH is not a particular political philosophy, theological system, evangelistic method, nor an emotion).
5. Our faith, our trust, is not in our response, BUT IN THE PERSON OF GOD AND JESUS. IT IS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. . . . NOT A SYSTEM.

Systems may offer guidelines and opportunities within which we may express this personal relationship, BUT IF WE GET TO PREACHING THE SYSTEM INSTEAD OF THE PERSON, WE WILL DEPERSONALIZE THE RELATIONSHIP!

6. I like the way Leroy Garrett says it: "The Faith is response to the fact that Jesus Christ is God's Son and the Lord of life . . . It is the acceptance of the Lordship of Christ, the yielded life. All else is peripheral. The faith is that Jesus Christ is God's Son and Lord of all our lives."

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Carl Ketcherside says it this way: "When you have skimmed off all the theological wranglings and interpretations, and strained out all the gnats, the opinions and deductions of men, the one faith is Jesus. He is the center of it. He is also the circumference of it . . ."

7. O.T. Prophets, faced with materialistic, immoral, flippant inhumane society focused their preaching on **GOD'S HOLINESS, JUSTICE, FAITHFULNESS, LOVE AND JUDGMENT**. If they were ever to redirect those people it would be in response—not to budgets, buildings and banquets—but to *God* who is holy, faithful and just.
8. Isa. 30:9-11 "Preach to us smooth things, illusions; speak no more of the Holy One of Israel."
9. The Woman at the Well — needed not a social program but to know and trust Jesus.  
The 5000 in Galilee — needed not to be fed but to assimilate the very nature of Jesus into their minds.
10. The churches of Asia Minor, at the close of the first century, faced the onslaught of political oppression, false teaching and carnal materialism. **HOW DID JESUS TELL JOHN TO PREPARE THEM FOR THIS? REPENT!! MOTIVATION FOR REPENTANCE? VISION OF THE GLORIFIED, FAITHFUL, OMNIPOTENT LORD JESUS. . . . AND SOVEREIGN, RULING THRONE OF GOD.**
11. When Jesus took the 12 aside to crystalize their faith in preparation for the coming crucible of His arrest, trial and crucifixion, **HE DID NOT TRY TO ENTERTAIN THEM, ORGANIZE THEM INTO COMMITTEES . . . HE SAID, WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?!**
12. On the day of questioning in His final encounter with the Jewish nation during the last week of His

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ministry MANY ASKED HIM RELEVANT SOCIAL, THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL QUESTIONS . . . BUT THEY DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THE RIGHT QUESTION TO ASK!

THE RIGHT QUESTION IS: "WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST; WHOSE SON IS HE?"

That is the burning issue. Always has been—always will be! That is *the faith!*

### B. What is the Church doing about THE FAITH?

1. I think she has neglected The Faith and put too much emphasis on response.
  - a. Too much emphasis on sharing, caring, experiencing, feeling . . . and NOT ENOUGH ON WHO GOD IS, WHO CHRIST IS AND WHAT THEY HAVE DONE!
  - b. Too often the church has assumed everyone (including believers) have all the depth and width and breadth and height they need in knowing God!
  - c. There is no way to know God except as we learn of His deeds in history and in the historical personage, Christ.
  - d. Too many Christians want to talk about knowing God through main-street existentialism called "my feeling," "my experience."
  - e. We cannot assimilate the faithfulness of God, His justice, holiness, righteousness EXCEPT THROUGH BELIEVING, TRUSTING THE DIVINE RECORD OF HIS NATURE . . . THE BIBLE.
  - f. We dare not trust our feelings or experiences! FEELINGS AND EXPERIENCES VACILLATE.
  - g. A man does not know he is saved and forgiven because he *feels* good after he is baptized! He may only feel wet, cold, half-drowned. He knows he is saved and forgiven because GOD IS WHO HE IS AND GOD KEEPS HIS WORD AND GOD

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HAS SAID IT! THAT MAY MAKE HIM FEEL GOOD, BUT IT IS THE VERACITY OF GOD THAT MAKES HIM FORGIVEN!

2. Let me make some suggestions:
  - a. Preachers, Bible school teachers, take the great book of Isaiah and preach through it—teach through it, chapter by chapter. I guarantee you you'll meet THE HOLY, FAITHFUL, RIGHTEOUS GOD. The problems those O.T. prophets faced are as relevant as your morning newspaper . . . and they met them by preaching WHO GOD IS!
  - b. Preach through the book of Revelation. WHAT THE CHURCH FACED THEN IS WHAT THE CHURCH FACES NOW. THE ANSWER FOR THE CHURCH NOW!
  - c. Preach and teach through the book of Hebrews, chapter by chapter. The humanity of Christ, Christ conquering sin in the flesh, earning our redemption through His absolute faithfulness, is one of the grandest themes of the N.T. But not much is ever heard about it!

IF EVER WE NEED TO TAKE THE PULSE OF LOST HUMANITY IT IS NOW. THAT PULSE BEAT CRIES OUT . . . "IS THERE SOMEONE I CAN TRUST ABSOLUTELY?" "IS ANYONE WISE, FAITHFUL AND JUST IN CHARGE OF THIS CHAOTIC WORLD OF OURS?" WILL JUSTICE EVER BE DONE? WILL GOOD TRIUMPH? IS THERE AN ABSOLUTE BEING? THE PULSE BEAT OF HUMANITY IS IN ITS LITERATURE AND MUSIC—MODERN LITERATURE AND MUSIC SAYS NOTHING SOLID, ABSOLUTE, DEPENDABLE, HONEST.

C. Peter tells us that (II Pet. 1:3-4) through His precious and very great promises, we escape from the corruption that is in the world and become partakers of the divine nature.

1. A most significant passage is in II Cor. 1:20 . . . "All the promises of God find their 'Yes' in him."
2. In other words, men need above all else to hold on to the veracity of God. . . . and the whole work of

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Jesus was to establish beyond any reasonable doubt the veracity of God!

3. The great need of the church of the first century was *not* to find God in their own experience, but to remember the veracity of God confirmed by the resurrected Christ. TOO OFTEN THERE IS NOT MUCH IN OUR OWN EXPERIENCE WHERE GOD MAY BE FOUND!

Governments betray us; friends betray us, even the human heart is deceitful above all things.

The great apostle Paul, dealing with the frustration of men when they experience the unfaithfulness of their fellow men, advised, "What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! Let God be true though every man be false . . ." Rom. 3:4

When David Livingstone sailed for Africa the first time a group of his friends accompanied him to the pier to wish him Bon Voyage. Some of them, concerned for the safety of the missionary, reminded him of the dangers which would confront him in the dark land to which he was journeying. In fact, one man urged Livingstone to remain in England.

In response, David Livingstone opened his Bible and read aloud the portion of our Lord's last recorded words in Matthew's gospel, chapter 28: "Lo, I am with you always." Turning to the one who would have prevented his going, the missionary said: "That, my friend, is the word of a Gentleman. So let us be going."

4. The world tries to motivate people and change people into peace-loving, caring, helping individuals by programming, entertaining, indulging, feasting, organizing, working, legislating them—AND IT HASN'T WORKED YET!
5. I fear that in some places the church has tried to copy the world. . . . BUT LIFE'S GREATEST CRISES AND PROBLEMS CANNOT BE DEALT WITH BY ORGANIZATION, ENTERTAINMENT.



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THE ONLY SURE THING UPON WHICH TO CLING IN THE STORMS AND DARKNESSES IS THE FAITHFULNESS, HOLINESS, JUSTICE, MERCY OF GOD. . . . THIS IS SURE WHETHER WE FEEL GOOD OR HAPPY, OR WHETHER WE ARE FED OR HUNGRY, AND WHETHER WE CAN DO ANY WORK OR NOT!

6. When this fleshly light begins to go out—all I want to know is: WHO IS GOD? WHO IS CHRIST? DO THEY KEEP THEIR WORD?

It would be comforting, should I linger at death to have friends and family reassure me of their love and concern. . . . BUT WHAT I WILL REALLY BE CRYING OUT IN THE DEPTHS OF MY SOUL, IS, IS JESUS WHO HE CLAIMED—WILL HE MAKE GOOD ON HIS PROMISES—WILL I GO ON LIVING—WILL I STAND BEFORE HIM JUSTIFIED. It certainly won't be, Was my program right—did I do enough for Him—

EVERYBODY WANTS SOMEBODY TO CARE . . . . Isaiah cared, Daniel cared, Ezekiel cared, Paul cared, John cared, BUT WHAT THEY PREACHED WAS THE FAITHFULNESS AND MERCIFULNESS OF GOD, MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH IN JESUS CHRIST.

Lots of people cared about Mary and Martha and Lazarus at the graveyard. Lots of people were trying to comfort them by sharing in their suffering. BUT WHAT THEY REALLY NEEDED . . . THE REALLY CRITICAL QUESTION . . . THE FOCAL POINT OF THEIR VERY BEING WAS . . . IS JESUS REALLY THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE! WHO IS THIS JESUS?!

E. J. B. Phillips, author of the famous Phillips N.T., wrote, *Your God Is Too Small*. In it he says:

"The trouble with many people today is that they have not found a God big enough for modern needs. While their experience of life has grown in a score of directions, and their mental horizons have been

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expanded . . . their ideas of God have remained largely static. It is obviously impossible for an adult to worship the conception of God that exists in the mind of a child of Sunday school age, unless he is prepared to deny his own experience of life. . . . if he tries it he worships or serves a God who is really too small to command his adult loyalty and cooperation."

Then he goes on to list 13 "Unreal Gods" which are too small. **YOU OUGHT TO READ THIS BOOK!**

It seemed as if all seven hundred reporters from newspapers, radio stations, and TV networks wanted to talk to Wernher von Braun following the launching of the mighty Saturn V. The Cape Kennedy noise was at a high decibel range. And von Braun wanted to escape it all for the moment. He grabbed the arm of a newspaper friend, Adon Taft. "Come on, let's get away where we can talk." Taft, religion writer of the Miami Herald, pushed away from the crowd with the space scientist and made his way toward the shoreline. Pacing rapidly back and forth, von Braun seemed to be in deep thought. Taft waited for his companion to speak. "We must learn to consider God as creator of the universe and master of everything," von Braun began. "We need a greater Lord than we have had in the past."

This is life eternal that they know thee—the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Jn. 17:3

## II. WHY MUST WE "CONTEND FOR THE FAITH"?

- A. Because "evil *homilia* corrupts good morals" I Cor. 15:33
  - 1. The false teaching that denied the resurrection was corrupting the morals of the Corinthian Christians.
  - 2. It was the false teaching in the church that prompted Jude to exhort the brethren to "contend for the faith."
  - 3. The symbolically representative churches of Asia Minor in the book of Revelation had one great problem above all others—false teachers.

4. The first line of attack for the church is not in the area of doing—but in the area of thinking. The doing will never be right until the thinking is right.
5. In a very small but dynamic book, John Stott's *Your Mind Matters*, the author says, "The battle is nearly always won in the mind. It is by the renewal of our mind that our character and behavior become transformed." He says further, ". . . there must be *solid content* in our evangelistic proclamation of Christ. It is our responsibility to set Jesus Christ forth in the fullness of his divine-human person and saving work so that through this . . . God may arouse faith in the hearer. Such evangelistic preaching is far removed from its tragic caricature, all too common today, namely an emotional, anti-intellectual appeal for 'decisions' when the hearers have but the haziest notion what they are to decide about or why."
6. Brethren, short-term, high-pressure, emotional-manipulation of men and women is not only contrary to scriptural principles—and not only fails to bring true and lasting discipleship—the sheer superficiality of it makes enemies of the faith, those who have been dishonestly manipulated.
  - a. One minister wrote in to *Christianity Today*, "Motivational talks . . . are not needed . . . Supply techniques . . . Please show us the 'tricks of the trade.'"
  - b. It is imperative that the church get serious about its whole teaching program. Sermons, Bible school classes, mid-week Bible studies, youth programs **ALL MUST BECOME GEARED AND FOCUSED ON PLANTING THE WORD OF GOD CONSTANTLY ON THE CONSCIOUS MINDS OF CHRISTIANS!** The church must become an intense, thorough, honest educational organism! It's program must be Biblical with continuity. Not just a verse here and there, **BUT WHOLE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE IN**

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CONTINUITY.

- c. A startling, shocking book was written two years ago. *Subliminal Seduction: Ad Media's manipulation of a Not So Innocent America*, by Wilson Bryan Key.

A reviewer in *Christianity Today*, 1-31-75, says: "Quite disturbing from the Christian point of view, is Key's assertion that 'no significant belief or attitude held by any individual is apparently made on the basis of consciously perceived data.'"

- d. The word subliminal is derived from the Latin *sub*, (below) plus *limen* (lintel or threshold). Thus *below the threshold* of consciousness.
- e. Satan is wise enough to know that most people will not consciously do evil. HE SEEKS TO BYPASS OUR CONSCIOUS MINDS.

THERE IS A WIDE-SPREAD CONSPIRACY OF SATAN AND HIS ARMY OF HELPERS TO BYPASS THE RATIONAL FACULTIES OF MEN AND WOMEN TODAY. PRACTICALLY UNNOTICED AND UNCHALLENGED, HE IS SLIPPING FALSE INFORMATION, UNHOLY SUGGESTIONS INTO MEN'S SUBCONSCIOUS MINDS AT THE RATE OF LITERALLY 1000'S OF STIMULI DAILY!

AND THE TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES IS IN MANY PLACES THE CHURCH IS UNWITTINGLY AIDING AND ABETTING THE ENEMY BY ITS HALF-HEARTED, SUPERFICIAL, EMOTIONAL, ENTERTAINMENT-ORIENTED PROGRAM.

- f. The reviewer mentioned earlier, states: "Satan now seems to be making extensive use of the merely emotional as his special ploy. Satan, the author of imbalance and disharmony, is responsible for the current pendulum-swing away from God-ordained reason toward a mindless emotionalism, from thought to 'touchy-feely' sensation, from the reasonableness of sound doctrine to the

intuition of visionary experience." WHAT'S THE ANSWER? Listen: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts (lintel) of your house and on your gates. Deut. 6:4-9

- g. CHRISTIANS MUST DAILY, CONSTANTLY, SPRINKLE THE THRESHOLDS OF THEIR MINDS WITH THE POWERFUL WORD OF GOD TO GUARD AGAINST UNHOLY STIMULI THAT WOULD ENTER UNNOTICED BELOW THE THRESHOLD . . . INTO THE SUBLIMINAL!
- B. Satan was trying to destroy the church in Jude's day by scoffers, those who rejected Christ's authority, false teachers attempting to subvert the veracity of God and Christ.
  1. What the church must do is contend mightily for the authority and veracity of God and Christ.
  2. The church has been fighting the diversionary actions of Satan. We get all excited and spend our energies on the more immediate, spectacular symptoms of man's problem. BUT THE REAL BATTLE IS WHERE, PRACTICALLY UNNOTICED AND UNCHALLENGED, SATAN IS PLANTING UNBELIEF IN THE SUBLIMINAL!
  3. Evolutionism in our public schools and on TV—not only in science classes but in literature classes. The constant barrage of destructive teaching made respectable by calling it scientific . . . is subliminally planting attacks upon the veracity of God and the

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authority of Christ.

4. *Passover Plot* — nationwide best-seller at one time. Destroyed the veracity of the word of God.
5. *Life* magazine, December, 1964 — whole issue devoted to destroying the veracity of the Bible and of God.
6. The superficiality of some of our church programs—entertaining people, programming people, contesting people—PLANTS SUBLIMINALLY IN THINKING PEOPLE'S MINDS THAT CHRISTIANITY IS NOT ALL THAT SERIOUS . . . GOD IS NOT ALL THAT HOLY OR ALL THAT HONEST (IF THE CHURCH MANIPULATES PEOPLE, WHAT ABOUT GOD?)
7. The very core of false teaching is denial of the veracity, sovereignty and authority of Christ and the Bible. The very essence of a powerless church is not smallness in number but non-existent curriculum of training in Bible evidence and exposition!!

When we reduce God to a program or contest or entertainment, we get back only what we have put in — we get back programmed people, contested people, entertained people.

HOW MANY PREACHERS, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, PARENTS, ARE READY TO DEFEND AGAINST EVOLUTION, PASS-OVER PLOT, DEMYTHOLOGIZING THE SCRIPTURES? DON'T THINK YOUR CHURCH MEMBERS, YOUR CHILDREN AND THE WHOLE WORLD ISN'T BEING SUBLIMINALLY ATTACKED!

SOME CHURCH EDUCATION, PREACHING-TEACHING PROGRAMS ARE SHALLOW AND SUPERFICIAL, AND SO . . . MEN AND WOMEN GET THE SUBLIMINAL IMPRESSION THAT THE CHURCH IS NOT REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT IT . . . THAT IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER WE PUT IN OUR MINDS WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS AS LONG AS WE GET TO SERVICES, BE SPECTATORS FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS PER WEEK, AND GO HOME FEELING GOOD!

- C. Serious, constant, thorough, contextual Bible exposition is the answer.
1. We want men and women to take on the nature of Christ "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another . . ." II Cor. 3:18
  2. We want men and women to be able to check the indulgences of the flesh.  
 "human regulations and systems have an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh. . . . Set your minds on things that are above . . . seek the things that are above . . ." Col. 2:23—3:2
  3. We want men and women to serve Christ. "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Rom. 12:2

IGNORANCE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL IN SATAN'S SUBLIMINAL SEDUCTION. WE DARE NOT ABANDON THE MIND OF MAN . . . ESPECIALLY THE SUBCONSCIOUS . . . TO THE ENEMY. "THY WORD HAVE I HID IN MINE HEART, THAT I MIGHT NOT SIN AGAINST THEE."

- D. One of the most profound statements in all scripture is Hosea 9:10. They came to Baal-Peor and consecrated themselves to Baal, etc.
1. Men inevitably assimilate and take on the nature of that which they worship, adore, enthrone, place supreme value upon.
  2. There is no such thing as detachment in worship.
  3. When men adore or worship the god of deception, they will become deceitful; materialism—they will become materialistic; sensuality—they will become sensual.

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4. If they worship a god of religion, they will become religious; a god of superficialities, they will become superficial.
5. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CONTEND FOR THE HOLINESS AND FAITHFULNESS, AND HONESTY AND PURITY OF GOD IF WE WANT PEOPLE TO BECOME HOLY, FAITHFUL, HONEST AND PURE!

### III. HOW SHALL WE CONTEND FOR THE FAITH, ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED? (Jude's answer)

- A. Study the Scriptures, Jude 17, "remember the predictions of the apostles."
  1. The reason Christian preachers and Christian Bible school teachers and Christian families are not contending for the faith once for all delivered, IS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT STUDYING!
  2. Why not?
    - a. Too busy organizing
    - b. Too busy committeeing
    - c. Too busy going, going, going
    - d. Too busy watching the TV
    - e. Too difficult to really put to practice the disciplines of hermeneutics and exegesis (contextual relationships, word studies, background studies, original language studies)
  3. Paul told Timothy to "give himself to, or attend to, the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching, . . . to devote himself to them."
  4. Jesus relied totally on His knowledge of and trust in the Scriptures to overcome the temptations of the devil.
  5. A PREACHER OR A CHURCH THAT IS NOT SERIOUS AND INTENSELY DEVOTED TO A PROGRAM OF THOROUGH BIBLE STUDY IS NEVER GOING TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH! THERE MAY BE STATISTICS TO QUOTE, BUT WHAT DO STATISTICS PROVE....ANYTHING YOU WANT THEM TO!



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FIVE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR (REVELATION) HAD GOOD STATISTICS BUT WERE TOLD TO REPENT OF THE FALSE TEACHING AND IMMORALITY RAMPANT IN THEM LEST THEIR CANDLE-STICK BE REMOVED.

TWO OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR WERE STATISTICALLY "POOR" AND "POWERLESS" BUT CHRIST SAID THEY WERE RICH AND HAD AN OPEN DOOR SET BEFORE THEM!

6. The teachings of the apostles cannot be remembered if they are not constantly and thoroughly studied!

If you dare, give your church members the Bible Knowledge Test we give our freshmen when they come to OBC!

SHOULD WE EXPECT TO DEVOTE OUR MINDS AND ENERGIES TO LEARNING TO REMEMBER HOW TO FRAME A HOUSE, ASSEMBLE AN AUTO, OPERATE ON THE HUMAN BODY. . . . AND NOT DEVOTE OUR MINDS AND ENERGIES TO LEARNING IN ORDER TO REMEMBER THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED! MAY GOD HAVE MERCY UPON US!

B. Preaching, Teaching, Jude 20-22 ". . . build yourselves up (edify) on your most holy faith . . . And convince some, who doubt . . ."

1. Preaching is persuasion. This concept has fallen on hard times. Too many have the idea that preaching is emotionalism or entertainment. I'm not denying there is an element of emotion in persuasion. BUT I DESPISE AND RESIST ANY EFFORT TO BYPASS REASON TO MANIPULATE PEOPLE BY PLAYING UPON EMOTIONS SO THAT THEIR CHOICE OR COMMITMENT IS DEPENDENT UPON THE FEELINGS AND NOT UPON THE FACTS!
2. I'm a strong advocate of Alexander Campbell's formula, FACT, TESTIMONY, FAITH, FEELING . . . in that order.

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3. The work of the Holy Spirit is not to give us an exhilarating, mind-by-passing, feeling. . . . IT IS TO CONVICT, CONVINCe, PERSUADE! John 16
4. Paul went into the synagogues and reasoned daily with them from the scriptures. . . . Paul said, Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. Jesus was a Master logician.
5. In a little book entitled, *Your Emotions and Your Faith*, by Franklin M. Segler, the author says:  
"The efficacy of faith depends not upon the faith but upon the object of faith, namely Christ."

EMOTIONS ARE NOT CONSTANT. . . . CIRCUMSTANCES ARE NOT CONSTANT. . . . BUT GOD IS CONSTANT!

OUR PREACHING AND TEACHING, IF IT IS TO BE EDIFYING, IF IT IS TO BUILD CONSTANCY AND SOLIDNESS INTO PEOPLE'S LIVES, MUST BE PERSUASIVE.

- C. Discipline, Jude 23, "save some by snatching them out of the fire."
  1. College cheating is astonishingly high according to a report of an experiment in *Intellectual Digest*. When teachers appealed to students' consciences, cheating increased! Threatening punishment was discovered to be the only way to cut down on the dishonesty!
  2. Discipline is another concept that has fallen on hard times, both in the home, in the school and in the church. Discipline is correction. People do not like to be corrected. None of us. Hebrews 12:11 "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."
  3. What else could Jude mean here? NO ONE HAS EVER BEEN "SNATCHED FROM THE FIRE" GENTLY OR TENDERLY OR PAINLESSLY!
  4. Psychologists all over the country are changing their tune about permissiveness. *Reader's Digest*, February,

1975, article "Back To Basics In The Schoolhouse": "N.Y. psychiatrist Richard Robertiello . . . has rethought his once-permissive policies on child rearing. The children of permissiveness who are now his psychiatric patients, he says, are 'warm, loving and lovable,' but they can't hang on to anything, they can't master anything."

5. Jesus was firm, almost rough, with His mother, His disciples, His hard-headed countrymen.
6. The apostles were firm with one another (Paul with Peter) . . . with their converts and with those who would oppose their preaching.
7. Jesus was firm and rough with the seven churches of Asia Minor in snatching them from the fire of Roman worldliness. He admonished them to wake up and repent. He threatened them!

**BRETHREN, THERE CAN BE NO DISCIPLESHIP WITHOUT DISCIPLINE. THERE CAN BE NO CONVERSION WITHOUT CORRECTION. NOT FOR ANY OF US! IF WE ARE GOING TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH IN A WORLD DEDICATED TO DECEIT, DECADANCE AND DESTRUCTION, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO BE FIRM, RESOLUTE, AND CONSTANT. SOME ARE GOING TO HAVE TO BE "SNATCHED" FROM THE CONSUMING FIRE OF UNBELIEF AND IMMORALITY!**

8. Listen to a characterization of these people Jude had to deal with.
  - a. defiling the flesh in their dreams
  - b. rejecting authority
  - c. reviling glorious things and persons
  - d. acting on instincts like animals
  - e. walking in the way of Cain
  - f. abandoning themselves for the sake of gain
  - g. boldly carousing together
  - h. looking after themselves
  - i. waterless clouds (empty) carried along by winds
  - j. fruitless trees

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- k. wild as the waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame
- l. wandering stars, out of orbit
- m. grumblers, malcontents, loud-mouthed boasters
- n. flattering people to gain advantage
- o. scoffers
- p. those who cause divisions

ENTERTAINMENT, PARTIES, CONTESTS. . . . FRIEND, IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN THAT TO DEAL WITH THAT LIST!

D. Compassion, "on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." v. 23

1. There are some whom we must pity and fear at once and the same time.
2. Sinners are in danger. But, sometimes, so are the rescuers.
3. Before a man can rescue others, he must himself be strong in the faith. His own feet must be firm on the dry land before he can throw a life-jacket to the man who is being swept away.
4. THE OLD SAYING IS TRUE; WE OUGHT TO LOVE THE SINNER AND HATE THE SIN.

C.S. Lewis said that troubled him unceasingly about Christianity until he realized he had been doing it all his life . . . HIMSELF HE LOVED BUT HATED HIS SIN!

5. We are not prepared to have true, saving compassion on a man if, while loving the man, we do not hate his sin. COMPASSION WILL NOT HELP A MAN COMPROMISE WITH SIN . . . JESUS NEVER DID!
6. The essence of mercy is to treat a man or woman as you would want to be treated were you in their difficulty.

THE SINNER IS NOT GOING TO BE MERCIFULLY RESCUED BY A LIBERAL, WATERED-DOWN GOSPEL WHICH DENIES THE DEITY OF JESUS, THE HOLINESS OF GOD OR THE AUTHORITY OF HIS WORD!

BRETHREN, TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH IS TO BE MERCIFUL!

CONCLUSION

I. BRETHREN, WE MUST CONTEND, EARNESTLY, INTENTLY, AGONIZINGLY.

A. The Greek word *epagonizesthai* means *agonize, struggle, wrestle*.

1. Paul said, "We *wrestle* not against flesh and blood . . ."
2. He said, "The weapons of our *warfare* are not carnal . . ."
3. We are in a struggle. . . . this is not a game that matters not whether we win or lose . . . IT IS A LIFE OR DEATH STRUGGLE.

B. We must put on the whole armor and take up the sword of the Spirit.

1. We must bring every thought into captivity unto Christ.
2. We must not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

C. Vance Havner tells this incident: A minister asked a famous actor once, "Why do you draw out crowds to see you act while very few come to hear me preach?" The answer came back, "I act my fiction as though it were fact; you preach your facts as though they were fiction!"

BRETHREN, NOWHERE IS IT EASIER TO PLAY WITH THE GOSPEL THAN IN THE MINISTRY. WITH A PLEASING PERSONALITY, A GIFT OF ELOQUENCE, ADEPTNESS AT EMOTIONALISM, AND PLENTY OF BUSINESS SENSE, ONE CAN TAKE THE GOSPEL FOR A FOOTBALL AND MAKE A FEW SCORES FOR THE SPECTATORS.

BUT CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH IS NO GAME, AND WOE UNTO HIM WHO PLAYS AT IT!

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II. BRETHERN, THE FAITH WE MUST AGONIZE FOR IS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS.

- A. It is the sovereign grace of an absolutely faithful God accomplished in and demonstrated by the Incarnate God—Jesus Christ. The Faith is the Divine Person and Authority of Jesus Christ.
- B. Our appropriation of The Faith is by a personal response of faith and obedience to His authoritative commandments.
- C. WE NEED CONTEND FOR NOTHING ELSE . . .
- D. "Is there any word from the Lord?" Zedekiah asked Jeremiah that (Jer. 37:17) after Jeremiah had been preaching for 23 years the word from the Lord! SURE THERE WAS A WORD FROM THE LORD . . . BUT ZEDEKIAH WANTED A WORD THAT WOULD SUIT HIS CARNAL, WORLDLY PURPOSES!

AN EVIL AND ADULTEROUS GENERATION TODAY SEEKS A SIGN . . . ANOTHER WORD FROM THE LORD. . . . THE WORD HAS ONCE FOR ALL BEEN DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS!

One of the most significant statements of this generation, in my opinion, was made by Edward John Carnell, when he said, "IF IT IS TRUE THAT JESUS CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS TO SAVE SINNERS, HAVE WE ANY RIGHT TO SAY THAT WE LOVE SINNERS IF WE FAIL TO CONFRONT THEM WITH THIS TRUTH? AND WHERE CAN WE FIND A DIVINELY VALIDATED ACCOUNT OF THIS TRUTH APART FROM SCRIPTURE? IN SUM, WE CAN EXPRESS NO HIGHER LOVE TO LOST HUMANITY THAN TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN THE PRECISE FORM IN WHICH GOD HAS BEEN PLEASED TO REVEAL IT!

MAY GOD HELP HIS CHURCH TO CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS!

# IS A I A H

## EXAMINATION

### CHAPTERS THIRTY-SIX AND THIRTY-SEVEN

#### IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

(Identify and locate the following by telling all you know about them.)

- |                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Sennacherib             | 10. Assyria        |
| 2. Rabshakeh               | 11. Hamath         |
| 3. Lachish                 | 12. Nineveh        |
| 4. Upper pool              | 13. Nisroch        |
| 5. Samaria                 | 14. Adrammelech    |
| 6. son of Amoz             | 15. Sharezer       |
| 7. Libnah                  | 16. land of Ararat |
| 8. Lebanon                 | 17. Esar-haddon    |
| 9. virgin daughter of Zion | 18. Haran          |

#### MEMORIZATION

And Hezekiah prayed unto Jehovah, saying, O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, that sittest above the \_\_\_\_\_, thou art the God, even thou \_\_\_\_\_, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made \_\_\_\_\_ and earth. Incline thine \_\_\_\_\_, O Jehovah, and hear; open thine \_\_\_\_\_, O Jehovah, and see; and hear all the words of \_\_\_\_\_, who hath sent to defy the living God. Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of \_\_\_\_\_ have laid waste all the countries, and their land, and have cast their \_\_\_\_\_ into the fire: for they were no \_\_\_\_\_, but the work of \_\_\_\_\_ hands, wood and \_\_\_\_\_; therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Jehovah our God, \_\_\_\_\_ us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art \_\_\_\_\_ even thou only. Isaiah 37:15-20

## EXPLANATION

1. Explain why the king of Assyria is at this particular time in history delivering an ultimatum to Hezekiah, king of Judah? (Isa. 36:1ff)
2. Explain why the representatives of Hezekiah asked the Rabshakeh to speak in Aramaic? (Isa. 36:11)
3. Explain how 185,000 Assyrian soldiers were slain in one night. (Isa. 37:36-38)

## APPLICATION

(In its context every scripture has one meaning—the author's intended meaning. How may the following be applied in the believer's life?)

1. Are there times when it is best to remain silent in the face of threats by those who oppose God as Hezekiah's representatives were before the threats of the Rabshakeh? Why? What examples of this are there in the N.T.? (Isa. 36:21)
2. When Hezekiah prayed for deliverance from the threats of the Rabshakeh he made the glory of God his primary request. Should we pray that way today? What other O.T. and N.T. examples of this do we have? (Isa. 37:20)
3. Can pagan rulers defy the living God and get away with it? Is God aware of their defiance? What about godless nations today who defy God's sovereignty over the world? (Isa. 37:21-29)

## C. PROSTRATION, CHAPTER 38

## 1. PERPLEXITY

TEXT: 38:1-8

- 1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah. Set thy house in order; for thou