

Sunday, February 26, 2023

1 Timothy 4:13, “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.”

Title: Contending for the Faith

**Series: Growing in Our Walk,
a Journey Through Colossians...5**

Text: Ephesians 2:17 - 22; Jude 1:1 - 25

Purpose: I want to MOTIVATE my congregation to DEVOTE themselves to the apostles teaching (Acts 2:42) and to contend for the faith!

Introduction:

Review of Colossians 2:16 - 23:

- ~ 1. Jesus Christ is the Substance and the Reality
- ~ 2. Jesus Christ is Our Head
- ~ 3. Jesus Christ is Our New Life

Reading Ephesians 2:17 – 22 and Jude 1:1 – 25

This devotional study is an appendix to the devotional of last week. An appendix is a section of extra information added to the end of a book. Equivocal meaning: open to more than one interpretation, ambiguous ~ saint ~ baptize ~ apostle

1. Considering Ephesians 2:17 - 22:

~ vs. 2:19 – 20, “*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.*”

Why do I believe that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh and that he is the Lamb of God who takes away my sin and gives me new life? First, because of the writings of the PROPHETS in the Old Testament! Josh McDowell in his book, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, refers to Professor Peter W. Stoner; he was the Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy at Pasadena City College and Chairman of the science division at Westmont College. In his book, Science Speaks, Professor Stoner outlines the mathematical probability of one person in the first century fulfilling just eight of the most clear and straightforward Messianic prophecies. “We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17 power (1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000).” Stoner went on to calculate the probability of one person fulfilling 48 prophecies: 1 in 10 to the power of 157. That is 1 followed by 157 zeros!

~ Acts 3:18, 21 - 26

~ Hebrews 3:1 – 2, “*Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, (2) who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house.*”

~ Meaning of apostle, G652, a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders (used 81 times); Mat. 10:2 (the twelve), Jn. 13:16 (messenger), Acts 1:26 (Matthias), Acts 2:42 (devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching), Acts 14:14 (the apostles Barnabas and Paul), 1 Cor. 12:29 (Are all apostles?), 2 Cor. 11:5, 13 (*), Eph. 3:5 (important), Rev. 2:2, Rev. 21:14

~ The ministry role of the apostle and prophet was NOT a governance role but that of divine messengers anointed by God to reveal Holy Truth, the continuing ministry of apostle and prophet is to

declare the truth of God (Ephesians 2:17 – 22 and Hebrews 3:1 – 2). They do not add or take away from the foundation! Example – Missionaries, Bible Translators

~ If/when PJ says his desire is that our fellowship be an apostolic fellowship he is NOT taking about a denomination; he is referring exclusively to Ephesians 2:17 – 22, Hebrews 3:1 – 2 and Acts 2:42 (verbal for none of the New Testament and been written).

~ Military illustration of apostles (believers are sent but we do not all have the same assignment; like a military unit sent on a mission there are various specialists and differing responsibilities within the assigned mission force). The role of the Holy Spirit – pictures

~ Remember of the original TWELVE one was the son of perdition (Judas Iscariot) one was chosen in Acts 1 and at least two others are identified in Scripture, Paul and Barnabas. Consider the writers of the New Testament.

2. Considering Jude 1:1 - 25:

~ This little book is given entirely to the subject of apostasy; the abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief.

~ Luke 18:8, 2 Thess. 2:3, 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 4:3 – 4, 2 Peter 2:1, 2 Peter 3:32 - 4

~ vs. 1, “*kept for Jesus Christ.*” Cf. Jude 1:6, 13, 21, Rev. 22:7 & 9

~ vs. 3, “*...I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.*”

~ Christianity Today, September, 2022: Top 5 Heresies Among American Evangelicals by Stefani McDade – 53% believe that the Bible is not literally true: 1) Jesus isn’t the only way to God. 2) Jesus was created by God. 3) Jesus is not God. 4) The Holy Spirit is not a personal being. 5) Humans aren’t sinful by nature.

~ vs. 4, “*For certain people have crept in unnoticed...*”

~ vs. 5, “*...that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt...*” From the prophets.

~ vs. 6, “*...until the judgment of that great day –*”

~ vs. 7, “*serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.*”

~ vs. 12 – 13, “*These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; (13) wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.*”

~ vs. 14 – 16, the Lord comes to execute judgment!

~ vs. 17 – 19, “*remember; beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

~ vs. 20 – 23, build yourself up, keep yourself in the love of God and demonstrate mercy!

~ vs. 24 – 25, Doxology

Conclusion:

The frequency and intensity of deception will increase in the last days. We all need to be on guard. How do I/we contend for the faith. ~ Read the Bible; ~ Use tools like...Smart phone, Blue Letter Bible; ~ Journal – SOAP Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer; ~ Prayer: ~ Fellowship; ~ Cross Examined, Lee Strobel, Nabeel Qureshi, Sean McDowell, Dr. John Lennox, Dr. James Tour

Song – In Christ Alone