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Women's Activities Text “1” to #208.203.1777

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“One Faith”

1. Contend for the Faith

Jude 1:3 (ESV) “Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

- a. Contend means: fight, labor fervently, strive, struggle

Jude 1:4 (ESV) “For certain people have crept in [into the church] unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, [#1] who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and [#2] deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

- b. We often go wrong in contending for the faith in three ways:
 - i. #1 We call black and white matters gray.
 - ii. #2 We call gray matters black and white.
 - iii. #3 We forget to love God and others while we contend for the faith.

2. We Need to Learn How to Contend for the Faith

- a. How you go about contending for the faith matters.

“Don’t fight like the devil for the things of God.” (Jim Putman)

- i. Know what you are contending for; know the faith.
- ii. Know when to contend; know when a fight is not worth fighting.
- iii. Know how to contend; “Speak the truth in love.”

Jude 1:20-23 (ESV) “But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. 22 And have mercy on those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.”

3. Know What You are Contending for; Know the Faith.

- a. If someone you know is beginning to believe a distortion of “the faith”, contend.

Galatians 1:6-9 (ESV) “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.”

- b. Is this the right fight to fight?
 - i. Yes: Adding human works to the gospel nullifies the cross.
- c. There is a time to listen and be curious.
 - i. “What do you mean by that?”
 - ii. “How did you come to that conclusion?”
- d. “Speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15)
 - i. Notice the relational equity: Compare Gal. 1 to Acts 17
 - ii. Clearly state the distortion of the gospel in a helpful way.

4. Know When to Contend; Know When a Fight is Not Worth Fighting.

Romans 14:1-12 (NIV) "Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. 2 One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. 5 One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. 6 Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. 8 If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. 9 For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. 10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. 11 It is written: 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.' 12 So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God."

- a. There is a time to not fight. Notice that the disputes aren't over core doctrine.

5. Know How to Contend; "Speak the truth in love."

John 13:35 (NIV) "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, _____."

- a. Contending for the faith is more than apologetics... it's fighting for relationship.
- b. A sign of spiritual maturity is having hard conversations with the right person.

Philippians 4:1-3 (ESV) "Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, [Syzygus] help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."

- c. **Your Part:** Adopt a godly attitude, Begin with yourself, Confront constructively, Deal with all the issues, Entrust the end results to God, Forgive as God has forgiven you
- d. **The Church's Part: Be a Witnesses**
 - i. Be a Syzygus!

Life Group Questions

Ice Breaker: What have you had to contend for (fight, labor fervently, struggle for) in your life?

Main Passages: Jude 1:3-4, 20-23; Galatians 1:6-9; Romans 14:1-12; Philippians 4:1-3

1. Look to your neighbor and explain the word "contend" in easy English.
2. Believers are told to contend for the faith (Jude 1:3-4). What happens if we don't?
3. What does contending for the faith look like (Galatians 1:6-9)?
 - a. What does it not look like?
4. Read Romans 14:1-12. What can we learn from this passage?
 - a. Think of modern equivalents for Paul's Romans 14 examples.
5. Where are you contending for the faith in your life these days?
6. Read Philippians 4:1-3. What conflicts with other believers do you need to either move towards with a heart of reconciliation OR be like Syzygus and help others reconcile?

