

Jude 1:1 - 3 (NASB)

¹Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,

To those who are the **called**, beloved in God the Father, and **kept** for Jesus Christ:

²May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

³Beloved, 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.**

Called: Christians are those who are called by God. The Greek for to call is *kalein*; and *kalein* means summoned and selected to duty.

Acts 4:12 (NLT) ¹²There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

MONDAY MORNING MOMENT: Action Step

“Get in the fight and keep fighting to the end!”

Luke 1:16 - 17 (NASB) ¹⁶“And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷“It is he who will go as a *forerunner* before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Review from last week:

Q. But what about so-called backsliders? Weren't they saved at one time?

A. According to Scripture, people who profess to know Jesus at one time but later deny Him were never really saved to begin with. **1 John 2:19 (NLT)** ¹⁹These people left our churches, but they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left, it proved that they did not belong with us.

Examples: John 6:64; 66 - 67 (NASB) ⁶⁴“But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. ⁶⁶As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. ⁶⁷So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” (*also Matt. 7:21-23*)

A true believer will never depart from the faith, so those who do so are revealing that they were never truly saved.

- **John 8:31 (NLT)** ³¹Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain (*continue*) faithful to my teachings.
- **Heb 3:14 (NLT)** ¹⁴For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.
- **Phil 1:6 (NLT)** ⁶And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

Jude: ³Beloved, 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

1. Jude could not resist **appealing** (GK. *parakaleo*, “exhorting, encouraging”) to his readers that they **contend earnestly for the faith**.
2. The powerful expression **contend earnestly** translates to the Grek word: *epagonizomai* and stresses the need to defend the truth continually and vigorously.
3. It is a compound verb from which the English *agonize* is transliterated. From Jude’s day until now, true believers have always had to battle for the purity of the salvation gospel.

Examples:

1 Tim 1:18 (NASB) ¹⁸This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my son*, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,

1 Tim 6:12 (NASB) ¹²Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Tim 4:7 (NASB) ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

Matt 11:12 (NLT) ¹²And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. **Matt 11:12 (NASB)** ^{12a}“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.

The kingdom of heaven refers to God’s general rule, His will for and His work with mankind, especially His chosen people, the Jews. It represents His purpose, message, principles, laws, and activities relating to mankind—all of which had been associated with some form of **violence** since John began preaching.

- *biazo* (from which **suffers violence** comes) Greek = it would carry the idea of being oppressed or treated violently, which would indicate that **violence** is brought on **the kingdom of heaven** by those outside of it.
- The Pharisees and scribes had attacked John verbally, and Herod had attacked him physically. The kingdom was being violently denied and rejected; and because it was being rejected in its spiritual dimension, the kingdom would not come in its earthly, millennial dimension.
- Soon the enemies of the kingdom would kill not only **John** but even Jesus Himself. They would destroy both the herald and the King.
- Also carries the active idea of applying force or of entering forcibly—in which case the translation would be, “The kingdom of heaven is vigorously pressing itself forward, and people are forcefully entering it.” With its focus in John the Baptist, the kingdom moved relentlessly through the godless, sin-darkened human system that opposed it.
- The first of those two interpretations is negative and the second is positive; but both are true. The negative is illustrated by the persecution of John. The positive is the many people that John’s preaching led to the Lord.
 - “He will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” Luke 1:16-17.