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Defend the Faith  
 Text: Jude 1:3

Introduction

- A. A best defense is a good offense. If there was ever a time Christians needed a good offense and a good defense it is now. The Christian faith is under attack. Just yesterday in the The Parkersburg News, Faith section it was report that Representative Pete Stark, a California Democrat, won a \$1,000 prize from the Secular Coalition for being a high level elected public official who did not believe in God. He went on to say, "I look forward to working with the Secular Coalition to stop the promotion of narrow religious beliefs in science, marriage contracts, the military, and the provision of social services."
- B. As we think about our Christian faith it is not enough to say God will take care of it, or this will pass, or think it is someone else's problem. The Bible is clear the Lord needs our participation. If the church and Christianity are going to thrive in our community then we need to defend it. Notice what Jude 3-4 states.
- C. This text is basically saying there is hostility to the truth that exists in God's Word and this hostility will continue to exist throughout history. Christians are given a warning to vigorously fight for, defend, and be committed to the truth. The defense of the faith may well be a costly thing; but that defense is a duty which falls on every generation of the church." (Coffman).
- D. We must remember that just because "Mom and Dad" had spiritual blessings given to them that they can and will be lost unless we use every effort to maintain them" (Major). True the church and Christ's words with never fade away, but the church can be hurt and people can be miss lead, and lost if we do not continue in the faith. So there is a need especially today to defend the faith:

Body

- I. The need to defend the Bible.
  - A. Attacks by the media on Bible.
    - 1. One of the latest attacks on the Bible was the Discovery channels' documentary of the supposed finding of the Family Tomb of Jesus Christ, which denies His deity.
    - 2. This is one of many attacks on the Bible; not long ago in an issue of Harper's magazine in which the Bible is called *False Testament* and the subtitled says "Archeology Refutes Bible's Claim to History." The author, David Lazare, attempts to knock down what he calls several *pillars* of biblical history--attacking the idea that Abraham ever lived, that there ever was an Exodus from Egypt, and that David was ever a king. The problems here are, first of all, that Lazare has no expertise in what he is writing about. He is not an archeologist, and does not have training or experience in the history of the period he is discussing. His previous experience has been writing on urban problems and constitutional law. Those who do have expertise in this area realize that there is much indirect evidence to support the three areas listed

above, and that new discoveries are being made daily--some of which seem to support the biblical position. (Does God Exist?).

3. "In Feb. 18, 2004 Newsweek stated, "The Bible did not descend from heaven fully formed and edged in cover with gold; the gospels are the product of human hands and hearts." (Gospel Gleaner, 6 vol. 20 no. 2)
  4. The problem is that many people think that anything in a newspaper or news magazine is valid, and the result is that there is considerable damage done by such unprofessional writings as this. (*Biblical Archaeological Review*, May/June 2002, page 6).
  5. "No serious Bible student has ever said or written these types of things.
- B. Yet the media can get by with saying these things because of the Biblical ignorance in the church, America and our world. "We live in a population that knows virtually nothing of what the Bible teaches. Josh McDowell's latest book The Last Christian Generation shows that even "church going teens" know virtually nothing about what the Bible teaches, which I believe is a reflection of their parents. Those who classify themselves as "Born again Christians" even show incredible biblical ignorance.
1. *63% of them don't believe Jesus is the Son of the true God.*
  2. *65% believe that Satan and the Holy Spirit are not living entities.*
  3. *51% believe Jesus was not physically resurrected.*
  4. *58% believe all faiths teach equally valid truths.*
  5. Now is the time when we need to be people of The Book. The best way to defend the Bible is to use it, know it, study it, and live it.
- C. The Bible is all of what God has revealed to us to know about salvation and godliness. Notice the following Scriptures:
1. Paul, telling the Ephesian elders he had not shunned to proclaim "the whole counsel of God" - Ac 20:27.
  2. Peter, writing that God has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" - 2 Pe 1:3.
  3. -- If we have "all things", and if we have the "whole counsel of God", what else is there?
  4. The Scriptures, which is the faith delivered "once for all", contains all we need to become what God wants of us!- cf. 2 Ti 3:16-17.
  5. But when people suggest:
    - a. That God's revelation is invalid, incomplete, or it is still in progress.
    - b. Then our task is to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered"!
    - c. Jude believed that the foundational principles of the Christian faith were under attack.
    - d. Nothing but vigorous counter-contention would be sufficient.
  6. The use of such an expression therefore suggests:
    - a. The matter is serious; we are at war!
      - 1) Paul describes the nature of our warfare in 2 Co

10:3-6.

2) And again in Ep 6:10-13.

- b. This is not a time to be unprepared; we must arm ourselves with the knowledge of God's Word!
- c. -- We must therefore contend with vigor, even to the point of death.
- d. The best way to defend the Bible is to use it, know it, study it, live it, and be committed to in all areas of life. If you don't use it you will lose it.

## II. The need to defend the church.

A. The belief in God is becoming a major battle that Christians must face today. A few years ago we could discuss the Bible with almost everyone and with a minimal amount of effort we converted people. But today we are dealing with a society that by and large does not even believe in the God of the Bible, including many denominations.

1. *Christianity Today*, August 2003, page 17, reports that in recent surveys only 38% of Americans asked had attended a church or synagogue during the past seven days.
2. Obviously, nonattendance does not equate to atheism directly, but there is certainly a link. In the *Gospel Herald*, June 2003, page 4, is a statistic that shows that Canadians that expressed "no religion" when asked their religious affiliation has grown by 43.9%, or 4.8 million people.
3. By these statistics Atheism and nonparticipation in life of the church go hand and hand.
4. Not only does Atheism and nonparticipation attack the church but rebellion in the church, hurts the church. Such as the following:
  - a. Charles led prayer at his church last Sunday. Several people commented on how meaningful it had been for them. He has been a deacon for several years. For the past seven months, he has been having an affair with a woman at his office.
  - b. Marie taught her Sunday School class of junior high girls that same day. Later in the week, she will deposit an insurance settlement of just over \$13,000 for a phony neck injury she claimed after a minor traffic accident several months ago.
  - c. Stories like these can be multiplied. They reveal a frightening "spiritual separation of Biblical teaching and actions" that permits people to sing, pray, and teach one world-view on Sunday and live a contradictory one for the balance of the week. Religion is a neat compartment of life reserved for Sunday. Money and relationships, professional life and business ethics, integrity and virtue -- these have nothing to do with church.
  - d. By doing this Christians are defeating Christ's very purpose for dying and setting up the faith.
5. Another problem as report by Martin Zender in his recent book *How to Quit Church without Quitting God* says "People are looking for

comfort and answers...They have serious questions as to where their dead daughter is or how the world is going to end. Churches offer musical productions and food, but they are not answering life and death questions from the Bible." So people are left to wonder and search for answers in other religions.

- a. This is only compounded by looking at all the splinter groups, divisions, and functions people have come up with as counterfeits of Christ's church, no wonder people in the U.S. are rebel and mock the church.
  - b. We have not in general given them worthy models of a Christ center life and church.
  - c. When this happens people will reject everything about Christianity, because in their minds it does not work, so they turn to Atheism and other false religions.
- B. The time is right to be the true church of the Bible, the church of Christ! Jesus is clear that He built his church and His church can stand strong today!
1. Matt. 16:18 Christ build his church.
  2. Acts 20:28 Christ brought it with his own blood.
  3. Eph. 4:12 tells us that it is his body.
  4. The Bible tells the identification marks of the church.
    - a. It is to teach the Gospel Mark 16:15-16
    - b. It is made up of those who have obeyed the Gospel 2 Ths. 1:7-9.
    - c. It is people who wear His name Rom. 16:16.
    - d. It is organized with elders, deacons, evangelists, and teachers. 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 2 Tim. 4:2-5; and Eph. 4:11,
    - e. It's worship is in spirit and truth John 4:24 on each Sunday by having:
      - 1) Singing (Acts 2:47; Heb. 13:15)
      - 2) Praying (Acts 2:42)
      - 3) Fellowship (Acts 2:42)
      - 4) Studying God's Word. (Acts 2:42)
      - 5) Giving (Acts 2:45; 1 Cor. 16:1-2)
      - 6) Taking of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week. (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7)
- C. How do we defend the attacks on the church?
1. Follow the Bible in all area regarding the church and Christian life.
  2. Get involved, use your gift, work it. Rom.12:1-8
  3. Attend it's services. Heb. 10:24-25
  4. Attend it's Bible studies. Acts 17:11
  5. Support it. With time, participation, money, and all your energy Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:17
  6. Our best defense is our offense, to participate in the life of church and fulfill the teachings of the Bible. To be committed with all out might.

### III. The need to defend prayer.

- A. "There is an a group called The Jesus Seminar who is trying to redefine what

is in the Bible is valid and what is not. Recently a public statement has been released of the beliefs of Robert W. Funk, the director of the Westar Institute that assembled the 30 scholars for the Jesus Seminar. Twenty-one statements are made in what Funk has called his theses of religious convictions. The first statement is "There is no personal god out there external to human beings and the material world." He also states that Jesus did not rise from the dead, prayer is meaningless, Jesus will not return, the 10 Commandments do not have any fixed standard of right and wrong, and that the virgin birth is an insult to intelligence. "--Reference: *Pulpit Helps*, February 2001, page 35.

1. The one thing that comes out of this statement is that prayer is under attack. But not just by groups like the Jesus Seminar, at times the government, Media, Hollywood, and other.

B. But it was under attack in Daniel's day. Daniel 6:1-11.

C. How do we defend prayer?

1. We pray, we use and do it.
2. Daniel prayed 3 times a day. Dan. 6:10.
3. Paul said pray continually. Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thes. 5:17.
4. Col. 4:1 "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;"
5. Acts 5:12 pray together as a church even during terrible times.
6. Remember: "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).
7. The best way to defend prayer is to use it, do it, be committed to it, and participate in it daily.
8. Pray with your family, pray before you go to bed, before go to work, at meal times, and all the time in-between

IV. The need to defend marriage.

A. Attacks on marriage.

1. In May, 2001, the U.S. Census data was made public. During the past 10 years there has been a major attack on marriage or maybe a disregard for it:
  - a. Households headed by unmarried partners grew by just over 71%.
  - b. Single mother household heads grew by 25% and single fathers by 62%.
  - c. Nuclear families (those with fathers and mothers) fell to less than 25% of all households.
  - d. Unmarried women gave birth to 33% of all babies (compared to 3.8% in 1940).
2. Other studies show people living together have been growing since the 1960 by 1,000% and marriage is becoming obsolete.
3. John Leo describes how the media, the courts, and society in general are working to eliminate marriage in America. If you do not marry, then living together is logical and data shows it is growing. People who lived together in the 1970s married within three years in 67% of

the cases. In the 2000s that number has dropped to 50%, and one of four women living with a man say they do not ever intend to marry him.

4. The gay and polygamy activists the groups are promoting marriage of the same sex as well as polygamy and group marriage. The ACLU is now getting involved in attempts to bring polygamy and group marriages to court.
5. We can see by these studies that more and more we live in a culture that shuns responsibility and commitment and is attacking the very core of where commitment is learned, in the family and marriage.

B. God designs for marriage.

1. One man and one woman for life Gen. 2:24 and Mat. 19:1-12.
2. That any man or woman who live together outside of marriage is sin.
  - a. 1 Cor. 6:9-11
  - b. Gal.5:19-21
  - c. Eph. 5:3-5

C. How to defend marriage?

1. Honor it Heb. 13:4 and Eph.5:22-33, be faithful, stay pure for your future mate, and respect others marriage.
2. Work on your marriage, show your children that it works, that is the best and only way God designed for two people to live together and raise children.
3. Love your spouse. Pr. 5:18-20; Pr. 18:22, Ecc. 9:9

Conclusion

- A. It is possible for spiritual blessings once given to be lost unless we use every effort to maintain them" (Major).
- B. The studies that I have quoted today show that the majority of so-called Christians believe in Christ but they do not reflect Christ like attitudes or actions. The challenge then is to be committed to the character of Christ and defending it in all of our life. Meaning if we are not Christ's in the office, on the golf course, on the lake, among friends, with our families, and in every other setting of ordinary life, we will not magically become his by sitting on a church pew.
- C. Sunday's sermon and Bible lesson must be committed to Monday's walk. Otherwise it is the sort of irreverent make-believe that justifies the world's harshest censure of Christians.
- D. To defend against the attacks of the Bible, Church, Prayer, Marriage, and the whole the Christian life we must honor, be committed to the whole of Christianity by putting Christ first and putting His teachings as great importance in our life, use them as God intended, and participate in them. We defend the faith the best by being committed to it and making Christianity our life style.
- E. Today are you defending your faith? If you were going to be arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you or not? Each one of us will have to give account on the Day of Judgment how we lived or did not live the Christian life. Are you ready for the Lord's return? If not let us help you get ready by coming forward as we stand and sing.

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