



A Renewed Mind Part 3: Contending for the Faith

August 16, 2020

A quick review

Messages during the month of August come with the heading, “A Renewed Mind”.

- We have learned
 - The believer is called to the mind of Christ: to be transformed by the renewing of their minds
 - An essential part of this renewal is learning and becoming grounded in the essential doctrines, or teachings of the Bible.
 - Last week, we reviewed “Basic” Christian Doctrine
 - Who is God?
 - Who is Jesus Christ?
 - Who is the Holy Spirit?
 - What is the Bible?
 - How is man saved?
 - What is the Church?
 - What happens at the end of things?

If you missed last week’s message, make the time to listen along with the notes on our website. <https://bit.ly/basicdoctrine>

1 Peter 3:8-15

Jude 3-4

Understanding the context

1 Peter 3:8-15 (KJV) 8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? 14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

1. Peter is right in the middle of encouraging men and women to have conduct becoming a follower of Christ, even during persecution (starts at 1 Peter 3:8)
 - a. v8 - Unified, displaying compassion, loving, humble, & courteous
 - b. v9 - Not repaying evil for evil, or insult for insult. Instead show love when evil is committed against you. We should do these things because God has called us to do and we will inherit His blessing.
 - c. v10 - 12 Peter refers to Psalm 34:12-16 and reminds the readers that those who want to enjoy life and see happy days, you will:
 - i. Keep your tongue from speaking evil and telling lies
 - ii. Turn away from evil and do good

- iii. Search for peace and work to maintain it
 - iv. God watches over those who do right and hears their prayers, in contrast He does the opposite for those who do evil.
- 2. Peter then asks the question... “Who will bring harm to you if you are doing these things?” (1 Peter 3:13)
 - a. This isn’t to say Christians will never suffer.
 - i. **John 16:33 (KJV) 33** *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*
 - ii. **1 Thessalonians 5:18 (KJV) 18** *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*
 - iii. **1 Peter 2:20 (KJV) 20** *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*
 - b. I believe the point Peter is making is akin to what Jesus said in:
 - i. **Matthew 10:28 (KJV) 28** *Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*
- 3. He tells the reader that even if you do suffer for the cause of Christ, you are blessed! (1 Peter 3:14a)
 - a. This echos the words of Jesus from His sermon on the mount
 - i. **Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV) 10** *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*
- 4. In the same breath, he tells them to not be fearful or intimidated by those that might bring harm (1 Peter 3:14b) (Peter refers to Isaiah 8:12)
 - a. **Isaiah 8:12 (KJV) 12** *Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; **neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.***
- 5. Peter’s exhortation to the readers was: Even in the midst of persecution, reverence Christ by fearing Him instead of man. Peter was not original with this encouragement, but referred to the LORD’s encouragement to Isaiah found in Isaiah 8:13
 - a. **Isaiah 8:13 (KJV) 13** *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.*
- 6. V15
 - a. In essence, Peter encourages his readers to “**honor the Lord as Holy**” or “**reverence the Lord**” in their hearts.
 - i. Christ is not “just” another person that has existed in the corridors of history. He is set apart from all others. He is God the Son and the Son of God. He should sit in the most honored place in our lives.
 - ii. William McDonald said it like this: “**To reverence the Lord means to make Him the Sovereign of our lives. All we do and say should be in His will, for His pleasure, and for His glory. The lordship of Christ**

should dominate every area of our lives - our possessions, our occupation, our library, our marriage, our spare time - nothing can be excluded.

- b. Peter instructs the readers to ***“always be ready”*** to answer everyone who asks about the hope you possess.
 - i. Why would someone bringing persecution ask about their hope?
 1. Because they were sanctified - ***set apart***.
 2. There should be noticeable differences in how the believer responds to persecution and hardship and those outside of the Christian faith. Peter’s words in the previous verses describe those differences. Unified, loving, compassionate, humble & courteous (v8).
- c. Instead of the KJV’s phrase “to give an answer”, I believe the phrase “to give a defense” (Found in the ESV, CSB, & NASB) is a better translation. The Greek word here ***“apologia”***, is literally ***“a speech made in defense”***.
 - i. During the time when Peter wrote this letter, when a person was accused of something, their defense was called their ***“apologia”***.
 1. Are you able to justify your beliefs?
- d. Peter told the readers about this hope earlier in 1 Peter 1:3-4
 - i. ***1 Peter 1:3-4 (KJV) 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,***
 - ii. In the Christian sense, hope is the joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation.
 - iii. Paul described those outside of Christ as people without hope.
 1. ***Ephesians 2:12 (KJV) 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world***
 2. ***1 Thessalonians 4:13 (KJV) 13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.***
- e. Rather than being combative, prideful, and bawdy, our speech should be laced with humility and honor.
 - i. Meekness is not only about outward behavior.
 1. Meekness is firstly about our posture towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary).
 2. In the face of men, even of evil men, out of a sense that these, with the insults and injuries which they may inflict, are permitted and employed by Him for the chastening and purifying of His elect" (Vine’s Expository Dictionary).
 - ii. Salvation is of the Lord! A person’s repentance and trusting is not based on your eloquence or disposition. Only God can choose and draw.

Contending For The Faith

Jude 3-4 (KJV) Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Jude was a submitted servant of Christ.
 - a. He wanted to write a letter regarding the doctrine of salvation, but was moved to encourage the saints to contend for the faith due to false teachers.
 - i. Are you willing to surrender your plans to follow the lead of the Lord?
2. In the Greek, our English word contend has the root **agōnizomai**. This word means to fight; engage in conflict; to strive as in a contest for a prize, straining every nerve to attain to the object.
3. Jude gives the reason for his call to contend for the faith. These false teachers were attacking the foundations of the faith and needed to be refuted.
 - a. The false teachers “crept in unawares”, or came in stealthily.
 - b. The false teachers were “ungodly” or irreverent of the truths of God.
 - c. The false teachers promoted fleshly unbridled lust and shamelessness.
 - d. The false teachers denied the deity of Christ.

Let's take a very broad look at some areas we should be aware of:

Cults

According to the “Popular Encyclopedia of Apologetics”, a cult is: A religious group that derives from a parent religion (such as Christianity), but in fact departs from that parent religion by denying (explicitly or implicitly) one or more of the essential doctrines of that religion. For example:

1. Jehovah's Witnesses deny the doctrine of the Trinity and argue that Jesus is not eternal deity.
2. Mormon's deny the eternal deity of Jesus and argue that human beings can one day become gods.

In my experience, adherents to both these groups are adamant in declaring they are “christian”.

Hebrew Israelites

While they are very loosely organized, there are some common beliefs amongst the different sects.

1. African-Americans, Natives, Carribeans and afro-latins are the Jews of the Bible
2. All the laws of God must be followed to ensure salvation
3. KJV is the only authoritative version of the scriptures
4. Only Israel (African Americans and minorities) will be saved
5. The Americanized Jesus is white and a “false” Messiah

Any interaction with a Hebrew Israelite will certainly include quoting **Deuteronomy 28:68**
68 And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

While the following list isn't necessary, it can be helpful to answer these questions before engaging with a Hebrew Israelite. (Copied from the Jude 3 Project)

1. Do you know how and why Christ has fulfilled the law?
2. Do you know how we received and translated the Bible?
3. Do you know the history of the Jewish People?
4. Do you know God's redemptive plan to save all people and nations?
5. Are you competent enough to have a discussion about the Hebrew language?
6. Do you have an accurate account of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade?
7. Have you consulted the best commentaries on Deuteronomy?

Paganism

Paganism is a term to describe a broad range of beliefs that have certain common elements, such as polytheism, pantheism, animism, mysticism, nature worship, the promotion of sensuality, reincarnation, and necromancy. African spirituality and ancestor worship are included in this group.

Kemeticism

Kemeticism is a worldview growing in popularity that draws from the history, philosophy, and spirituality of ancient Egypt. There are two broad variations of Kemeticism. Kemetic spiritualists and Kemetic non-spiritualists.

Spiritualist - also draw from the spiritual practices of ancient Kemet

Non-Spiritualist - don't necessarily subscribe to the spiritual elements.

Basic Tenets

1. Non-Spiritualist - Kemet tinged atheism
 - a. The gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt represent a scientific reality.
2. Spiritualist - Kemet tinged pantheism (all is god and god is all)
3. Spiritualist - elevated view of man. Man is one and the same as god (consistent pantheism).
4. Concept of maat - the goddess of righteousness, and goodness. Orders all things that are good.
5. The notion of right and wrong is looked at as chaos and order
6. Works based system of salvation (how one would enter the after life) (42 laws of Maat)

Critiques of Christianity

1. Christianity was stolen from Egypt
 - a. Generally speaking, they make correlations between Jesus and Horus

- i. Horus born on December 25th
- ii. Christian Trinity is stolen

Primary sources prove these supposed parallels false

What is the draw?

It appeals to those who feel lack in their connection with history. In essence, they state that this worldview is native to descendants of slaves and should be practiced. They claim Christianity is a rip off of ancient Kemet created by Europeans.

Atheism

Atheists believe there is no God or gods either beyond or in the world. This is in distinction from theists, who believe God exists beyond and in the world, and pantheists, who believe God is the world. Atheists claim that nothing exists except the universe or cosmos.

Ray Comfort said:

“Amazingly, it is human nature to assume that our believing or not believing something makes it true. Some people may not believe in the law of gravity, and may feel they have “evidence” to back up their belief. However, gravity exists whether they believe in it or not. The truth is, God is knowable. Jesus testified, “And this is life eternal, that they might know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3). We not only have the testimony of Scripture to tell us this, but we have the testimony of multitudes of Christians who know the Lord personally. It is more truthful to say, “I don’t want to know God.” Sinful man runs from Him as did Adam in the Garden of Eden.”

There are a few questions I ask you to consider after listening to this message:

1. If called upon today, are you able to give a defense for your beliefs?
2. We learned that Jude was willing to change his plans to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Are you willing to do the same?
3. Would you agree that the issue of false teachers is prevalent today?
4. We briefly looked at some false teaching attacking the essentials of our faith. Are there areas where your homes are open to attack?
 - a. Did your family enjoy the Disney + show “Black is King”. If so, did you notice the Yoruba religion symbolism?
5. Parents; who is teaching your child and what are they teaching? Is it possible that someone with a different worldview could be seeding false teaching to bear fruit at a later stage in your child's life?

May God raise us up to be faithful witnesses to the faith passed down to us. Our families, neighbors, and co-workers need to see a difference in our conduct, and hear the message that saves. For His glory and our good. Amen

Here are a few recommended sources to assist you with defending the faith, and assisting others by pulling them out of the flames of false teaching

Helpful Resources

Books

- [*The School of Biblical Evangelism by Kirk Cameron & Ray Comfort*](#)
- [*The Popular Encyclopedia of Apologetics by Ed Hindson & Ergun Caner*](#)
- [*Expository Apologetics: Answering Objections with the Power of the Word by Voddie Baucham Jr.*](#)
- [*Barack Obama vs The Black Hebrew Israelites: Introduction to the History & Beliefs of 1West Hebrew Israelism*](#)
- [*The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust Modern Translations? by James White*](#)

Videos

- ***The first two parts of a three part debate between Dr. Vince Bantu (Christianity) & Bro. Jabara Osaze (Kemetic Priest)***
 - [*Pt 1, Is Christianity The White Man's Religion*](#)
 - [*Pt 2, Is Christianity a Copy of Ancient Egyptian/Kemetic Religion?*](#)
- [*How To Answer The Fool - \(A film on presuppositional apologetics\)*](#)
- [*Why I Choose to Believe the Bible - Voddie Baucham Jr.*](#)

Pamphlets

- [*Christianity, Cults & Religions by Paul Carden*](#)
- [*Why Trust the Bible? by Timothy Paul Jones*](#)