

Highlighting Our Heritage

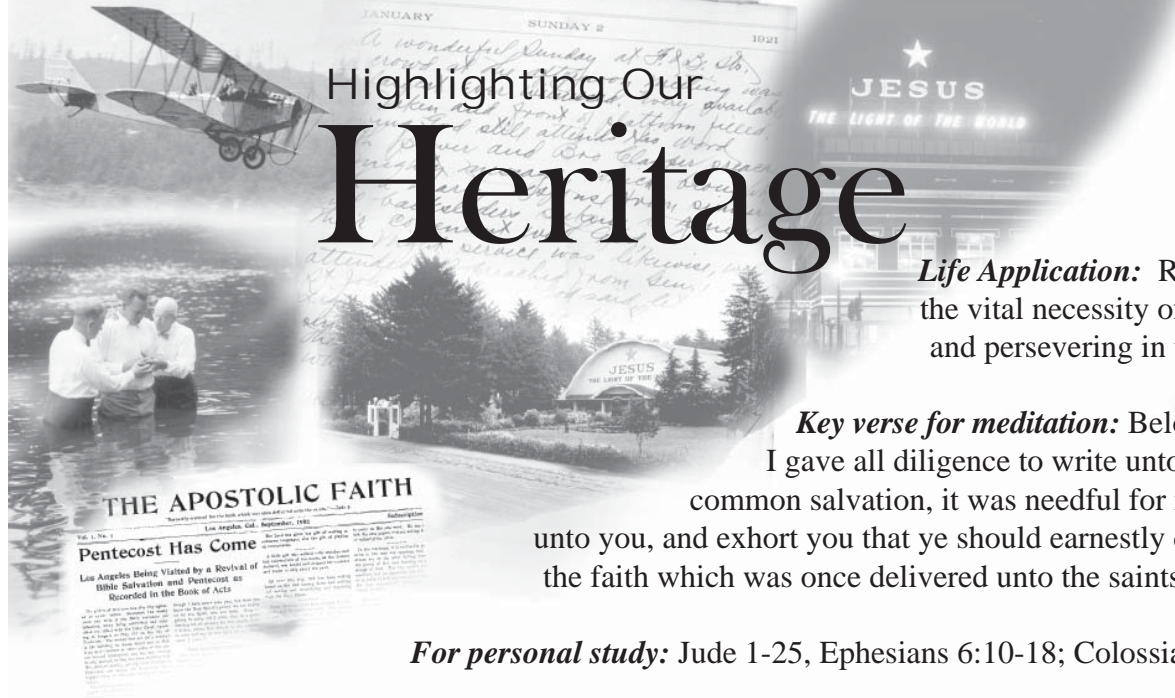
WEEK 1

Our Motto

Life Application: Recognizing the vital necessity of defending and persevering in the Gospel.

Key verse for meditation: 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. — Jude 3

For personal study: Jude 1-25, Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 1:21-23



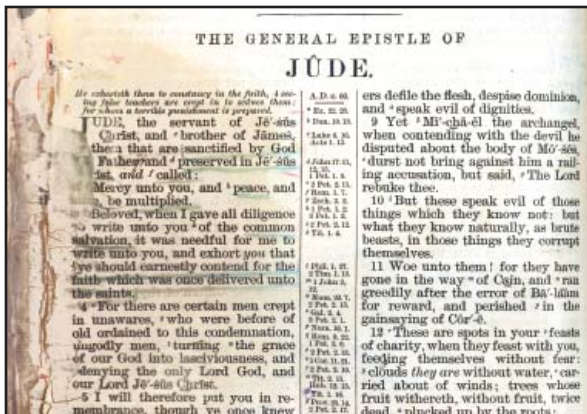
Living by Jude 3

SEVERE PERSECUTION was a common occurrence in the early days of the Apostolic Faith, so pioneers of the work had many opportunities to earnestly contend for the faith. Portland's *Evening Telegram* published articles mocking the meetings and bringing absurd accusations. Many attended the services out of a sense of curiosity. False rumors were circulated, which only drew more people to attend.

Sometimes antagonists resorted to violent means to disrupt the meetings. A pioneer of early days recalled, "One night someone threw that familiar missile of a mob—a rotten egg—at the platform. It missed the folks on the

platform but struck the organ. The raw egg ran down between the keys into the interior of the organ and was hard to clean up, but it did not stop the service, nor hinder it in any way." The first Apostolic Faith paper printed in Portland reported: "Persecutions were terrible. They would throw snowballs, bottles, tin cans, and rotten eggs. Every window in the Mission front was broken out and the glass in doors and transoms. It was a regular battlefield. They had to board up the windows."

One time, law enforcement officials attended a service. Because of the stories being circulated about the work, they determined to investigate the happenings at the Apostolic Faith Mission. After looking over the organization and observing what was going on there, they began to talk to Florence Crawford. They informed her that they had the papers with them to arrest her. Calmly she said, "You will never do it." She knew she was in God's will and that nothing was taking place in violation of the laws of God or man. She had an assurance that God had His hand over the work that He had called her to do. In time, Portland city officials recognized the high standard of Christian living maintained by Apostolic Faith people. They also noted the life-transforming effects the meetings were having on people previously considered beyond help, and their attitude changed to one of respect.



Jude 3 is a well-worn page in Florence Crawford's Bible.

At one early camp meeting, a group of vandals attempted to cut down the large tent where services were held. They had succeeded in cutting twenty-two ropes and were in the process of cutting one of the main guy ropes when Florence Crawford, accompanied by a young woman, stepped forward and began to sing an old Gospel hymn. Ashamed, the troublemakers skulked away in the darkness. God's hand was clearly over the group—if the tent had fallen it could have caused a serious fire, because gasoline torches provided illumination inside, and sawdust and straw carpeted the ground. In spite of the disturbance, the Spirit of God worked unhindered, and one man even received the baptism of the Holy Spirit while the commotion was going on!

Historical Context: In the early days of the Azusa revival, leaders took the final portion of Bible verse Jude 3 for a motto, and it was featured on the publications that carried abroad the news of the Pentecostal outpouring. When Florence Crawford came to Portland, she kept the verse on the papers; it has appeared on every paper since our founding. It is also inscribed on the cornerstone of the headquarters church along with the words, “Founded 1906” and “Built 1983.”

A Closer Look . . .



- 1.** How does the word persevere relate to contending for the faith?
- 2.** What are some ways we might be called upon to contend for the faith in our day?
- 3.** Why do you suppose Jude specified that these early believers were to contend for the faith “which was once delivered unto the saints?”

Challenge: Using a Bible dictionary, look up definitions and the original meanings of the following words: *earnestly*, *contend*, *faith*, *once*, and *delivered*. Using these definitions, write a summary of what you think Jude was saying in Jude 3.

A Personal Example

“It was a dark hour in my life. My husband was drinking himself to death. It was in depression days, and we did not even have sufficient food to eat. However, that did not bother me as much as our unhappy home and the fact that I could not seem to find Jesus.

“One night we were given an Apostolic Faith paper. I was not going to read it because I had read so many things without getting any encouragement.

“A short time later I was ironing when suddenly I heard a Voice from Heaven. Whether audible or not, I don't know, but it touched my heart. The Voice said: ‘Read that paper.’ With trembling hands, I picked it up, but I couldn't see for the tears. Then one line stood out before me: ‘Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.’ In that instant, my eyes were opened to my self-righteousness, and I saw myself a lost soul.

“The Lord spoke to me so kindly, and down in my soul I said, ‘Jesus, forgive me and I will serve You the rest of my life.’ In a moment of time, my soul was changed! I was saved. I didn't know what to call it, but I knew I had wonderful peace in my heart—and such joy!” — Alice Snyder