

The Twisting of Truth and What We Need to Contend For the Faith

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Preacher: Rev. Daniel Avitan

[0 : 00] The enemy that attacks from within attacks the hardest, inflicts the most damage. Fifth columns, friends that you rely upon, those that you confide in, that you invite to eat at your table, those you trust.

But betrayal from these people is a pain that is deeply painful. It is tragic.

And even more so when that trusted individual is a leader. There are not many things more tragic in the life of a church when leadership fails.

Whether it be a pastor, a priest, a minister, a youth group leader that engages in some kind of abuse or steals or teaches something antithetical to God and his word.

Deep pain happens. I have lived in Ottawa almost 18 years. And since coming here, I mean, almost from the beginning, I've been involved in Christian ministry.

[1 : 13] And if you've been in Ottawa for any amount of time, you would know that the church community is in a city of a million people, very tight. Everybody is maybe two degrees removed, three degrees removed from somebody in another church or in another denomination.

So, when things go awry or when abuses happen, the entire Christian community feels it. I know I have, and especially recently, in the past two, three years, it is a tragic, tragic thing.

A very painful thing. We begin our new Lenten sermon series in Jude. We're going to be in Jude for five weeks over six weeks.

We're going to spend five weeks in Jude, but it'll be over six weeks. And we're going to take a look at Jude, which is the smallest body of work in the New Testament. And it is the only one not written by an apostle.

It's very apostolic in its content. But Jude himself was not an apostle. However, this is not a book to overlook.

[2 : 24] Jude writes with intense authority. He writes with an edge, this Jude. And maybe that's just the way you have to write when you have 25 verses, when you're limited, when you have a short letter.

Jude, rather, he is addressing false teaching done by false teachers. He is seeing that there is a great problem within this church.

It's an unnamed church. And he wants to see it corrected before it blows up. So he doesn't sugarcoat anything.

This man is edgy. I like him. He also worries me, in a sense, when I read it, because I feel the edge, personally. Secondly, he wants to address this issue of bad leadership that is causing havoc in the church.

So on one hand, he is an edgy church leader himself. But on the other hand, he is soft and tenderhearted. He loves the church. He does not want to see the church fold.

[3 : 34] He doesn't want to see the church crumble. He doesn't want hurt to be sown through the church. He wants the church to thrive and for people to enjoy the goodness and beauty of gospel living.

Jude is a man with great resolve. He is courageous. He is rock solid in his convictions. So he writes this letter to encourage the church in the faith, that they would stand firm.

And a lot of letters in the New Testament are written to churches that are facing a lot of pressure from without. Pluralistic societies existed in the first century, in the early church.

It seems like it's a perennial problem in the church. But Jude's primary concern is the strife that is happening within. It is a deeply in-house letter.

And for those in leadership, like myself, and some of you also who are in leadership in the church or will be in the future, it's a giant gut check, this letter.

[4 : 43] So this morning we're going to look at Jude. We're going to look at the introduction that Ken read, verses 1 to 4. And in it we'll witness three things. The first is how Jude reminds God's people of who they are in Christ.

First thing he does. The second thing that Jude does is Jude encourages God's people in what they need from Christ. And then the third thing Jude addresses is how God's people ought to contend for the faith alongside or with Christ.

So Jude, again, reminds God's people who they are in Christ, encourages God's people in what they need from Christ, and helps God's people to know how they ought to contend for the faith with Christ.

So we'll look, point one, how Jude reminds the people who they are in Christ. And look with me, the second half of Jude, verse 1. And it says this, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ.

This is a standard, in a sense, address of how epistles work. There is a greeting to a specific group of people, those that are called, or the beloved in Christ.

[6 : 01] So Jude is not doing something new. However, Jude is going to get into some very, very intense issues that will take a lot of courage.

And what he is doing right off the bat is reminding God's people who they are. He is, in a sense, establishing, once again, reminding these people where their foundation is.

He is giving them confidence in the gospel afresh. They are called, they are loved in God the Father, and are kept in Jesus. And it's interesting, before we even get into those points, do you see the Trinitarian overtones in that opening sentence?

To those who are called, the calling of people into the faith is the work of the Holy Spirit. Beloved in God the Father, we are in right relationship with God the Father once again.

And then we are kept for Jesus Christ. That is, we will be, in a sense, given the strength and resolve in Christ to make it to the final judgment.

[7 : 10] We have all three members of the Trinity at work in God's people in the second part of Jude, verse 1. One God, three persons.

And that's no mistake. To know the God that we are serving, the God that we bend our knee to, it is deeply foundational. So to speak of the Trinity often and always is a very important thing.

To understand that there is only one God, but in the Godhead, God the Holy Spirit is a part of salvation in this way, and God the Father in this way, and God the Son in that way.

We don't just pray to God the Father and see Jesus, you know, he's done his part on the cross, he can sit over there, or that the Holy Spirit merely calls us and excites saving faith in our hearts, but I can do without the Holy Spirit.

Or it's just Jesus only. Our emphasis is on Jesus only and everything else, God the Holy Spirit, God the Father, fades into the background.

[8 : 13] It's not like that. We are people who follow one God in three persons, and it's deeply important that that's a part of the foundation. So notice first, though, and we'll move on, the three things that Jude reminds us of in his letter.

The first is that we are called out of darkness, that we are called. Called into Christ's glorious light. This, of course, is a reference to salvation.

However, Jude seems to be alluding to something that stretches farther back than what Christ has done on the cross.

I mean, Christ on the cross is the culmination of salvation history, but who else do we read about in the Old Testament that was called? We see Abraham. Abraham was called.

He was a pagan polytheist that was from a part of Mesopotamia. He was not God's people initially, part of God's people initially.

[9 : 16] But what happens? God calls him out of Ur of the Chaldeans or the Chaldeans, this foreign land. He calls him out of polytheism. He calls him out of paganism, of a type of life that is very anti-gospel, anti-God.

And what Jude is trying to say by using this language that we are called by God, by Christ, is that we stand in this unbroken chain of God calling his people out of darkness, beginning with Abraham.

That in the New Testament, we don't have some kind of new religion that pops up in history 2,000 years ago, where it had maybe scant reference to centuries or millennia beforehand.

No. This is the culmination of one story that begins at creation, but that really begins, in a sense, with Abraham being called out of a distant land and given promises by God of blessing.

Jude is telling the church and telling us this morning that we stand in that blessing, that we are Abraham's children. We look to Abraham, in a sense, as the father of our faith.

[10:39] This faith, this being called, is the way that God has always brought close those who are far away so that they may be blessed and be a blessing. Before Jude even gets into the issues of the false teachers, he reminds the church that you have been called.

You have no business, in a sense, being a part of God's family, but you have been called by God in the same way that Abraham has and that the blessings and promises that Abraham didn't truly see, you get to live into as a Christian.

It's a beautiful reminder for them and for us today of who we are in Christ. Notice also that the Christians are beloved in the Father.

This has in mind that we are loved by God and loved in God. It's a bit of a double meaning, that the love of God, in a sense, it is the reality of those who are made right with God, whose sins are no more because of Christ, but it also speaks to God surrounding us and enveloping us in his love.

So in a sense, it's a bit of a double promise. That God, he calls us out, he saves us from the life that we lived and also the danger and the calamity outside the world, the flesh, and the devil, but it also speaks to God strengthening us from the inside, giving us spiritual power to do the things that he has called us to do.

[12:20] Trust and obey. We sang earlier a fantastic song, Impossible Without the Spirit's Help. Notice finally that the Christians in verse 1 are kept for Christ Jesus.

And Jude mentions this four times throughout his letter, so it's a bit of a big deal. It speaks to this ultimate future that we can look forward to when the dead in Christ will be raised from the grave. And it speaks to God's faithfulness to us, that the work he has begun, he will see to completion. That if God saves, he will save to the end.

In a sense, when he says Jude, when he says that we are kept for Jesus Christ, it gives us deep assurance of the degree and the strength of the salvation that God extends to us.

That if you are a part of his church, if you have faith in him, that God's grip on you is much stronger than your grip on him. I heard a wonderful illustration, and to be perfectly honest, I forget where I heard it from this week, but the idea that we hold on to God in the same way that, say, a three-year-old holds on to their dad their dad's hand as they go into a pool.

[13:42] And very quickly, as a two- or three- or four-year-old holds on to dad's hand as they go into a pool, their grip, in a sense, is less important than dad's grip on their hand.

The slope going into the deep end, or at least the deeper part of the shallow end, it's too much for a young child to endure, dad needs to hold on to that hand.

And likewise, God, his grip on us is far stronger than our grip on him. And praise God for that. This is what is being reminded, this is what Jude is reminding us this morning, his church back then, but also us this morning.

This is very important because the church is corrupt, Jude tells us. It's unorthodox, it's abusive, it's greedy, it's given to sensuality, that's a catch-all term of all sorts of different sexual immorality and debauchery.

And it's in light of that that we could easily, easily be swayed or discouraged and let go, in a sense, of Christ. But he does not let go of us.

[14:58] Jude reminds us of that. So, before addressing the issue at hand, Jude has reminded his people who they are in Christ. He has reminded his people not in a way that's just kind of like a hype speech, an inspirational speech before a big championship game or a battle between two opposing sides on the battlefield, but it's a reminder that they are loved by God and that he alone fights their battles.

It is he who strengthens their weak knees and it is he who will provide what is needed for them to endure and to thrive in the midst of such great trouble. Jude is clear to this church and to us here this morning, we are people that are precious to God.

And that's not a sentimental preciousness, so to speak. It is a preciousness to God that is backed with truth that we can rely on eight days a week, all the time.

He has saved us from sin and death and has made eternal promises a blessing to us that go to the end of the age but begin right now.

He reminds us that God will not leave those he has called that he will not forsake those he loves.

We need to be reminded of this often.

[16:26] This is one of the things that Israel, we see in us as well, that they have to constantly be reminded. I've said this in the past, but the most common exhortation to Israel in the Old Testament is remember.

And why is that the case? Because we're prone to forget. Jude is reminding us of who we are in Christ. The second point, and this is in verse two, that Jude encourages God's people in what they need from Christ.

So look with me at verse two. May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Mercy, love, and peace in abundance.

The church is reminded that they have been shown mercy by God, especially when it comes to the final judgment. No longer are we sons of wrath, we are sons of God.

And when I say sons, sons and daughters, but I say sons specifically because what God gives us is firstborn son status. If you don't like being called a son, if you're female, the church is called the bride of Christ, so it kind of goes both ways.

[17:41] Firstborn status as a son is who we are. And this is because of the mercy of God. This mercy is to be imitated, especially, and this is critical for the rest of the letter, to those who are courting or just full-on into apostasy and heresy.

If God will accept the heartfelt contrition and repentance of those that are penitent, should not we? And more than that, such mercy leads to repentance that God accepts.

What is the point of seeking mercy to a cold and unmerciful tyrant? The fact that mercy is even extended to us speaks to God's character.

And this is interesting because during our communion liturgy, we pray this prayer called the prayer of humble access. Now, we pray an adaptation of that, which I don't know if I'm, we've adopted it from our sending church and our sending church is fantastic, but I actually kind of love the original from the 1662 book of common prayer.

notice, notice that this is a prayer called the prayer of humble access, that we come to God because of the mercies he's extended to us. Listen to how mercy is described in this prayer, specifically how it connects to God.

[19:06] This is what it says. You might know it. It has a bit of a cadence to it. We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much to gather up the crumbs under thy table. I'm not going to read the whole thing, but this is the last line and I think the most important line. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.

It's his very character. It's who he is. In the same way that you could say God is love, you could say God is mercy. This is who he is. Mercy, mercy, mercy.

Mercy. Friends, our God delights in showing mercy at salvation and then throughout our sinful lives as we stumble towards eternity.

So we ought to in the same way show mercy to others. Not easy. Almost impossible. How do you show mercy to somebody who has hurt you but who has then sought forgiveness and who has truly been penitent we look to Christ for that.

[20:18] We receive mercy so that we then can show mercy. And what follows mercy? It's peace. This is the second thing that Jude says.

May mercy and peace be multiplied to you. So peace is critical for the health of our souls. We must receive the peace of God so that we can be at peace with God.

God. So interesting that so much of our connection to God is God making the connection with us. Him taking the initiative.

Him reaching down. Him doing the things that we can't do. And God continues to give peace not just at salvation but as he holds us fast amid calamity and peril.

this does not imply zen calm. This is not a few deep breaths type of peace. It's great. It's wonderful. But it is a peace that is connected to an assurance that God is stronger and greater than storms and calamities.

[21 : 25] That God will hold us fast. in the next section Jude will describe some of the problems that the church is facing and it is very concerning.

I thank God that our church has not experienced any of this. I mean to be perfectly honest if the church without God's provision and strength your pastor would likely quit if half of these things happened in our church.

Jude is going to describe some awful things and yet he is going to also say that peace is to be multiplied.

Their faith is likely to be shaken but he prays that God's people would enjoy God's peace in this situation. This peace does not allow the believers to falter but to see the end.

Finally we see love mercy peace and love. Love is given in abundance as well but in this case it has a specific focus. It is a love that has an animating power that helps us to walk in obedience and faithfulness.

[22 : 39] As we receive God's love in redemption he continues to give that love in abundance and it invigorates us to live lives that are pleasing and acceptable to God.

So what does Jude do? He encourages the church to look to Christ for mercy, peace, and love. They're to animate and equip us as we contend for the faith. Imagine if it was omitted my first point the second part of verse 1 and in verse 2 and we just the letter Jude a servant of Jesus Christ boom right into verse 3.

No reminder of who we are no encouragement in a sense to be equipped by God and it went directly into 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.

I mean in many ways we would crumble under the pressure. It would be very difficult. I'm supposed to do this by myself? There's certain people that have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality.

[24 : 02] I'm tapping out to find somebody else I can't do this. But you see when verse 1 and verse 2 are put before verse 3 and 4 we realize that it is not in our strength that we are to contend.

It is not for our glory that we are to contend but it is God and God alone who gives the strength for his glory for his renown and all of a sudden we see the immovable all powerful completely holy immutable God and then we look at the problems great as they are in front of us and we see who we serve and there is no comparison.

We are on the right side we are with the right warrior we have the right strength we have the right courage because it is all in Christ. So let's look finally then at our third point how Jude reminds God's people how they ought to contend for the faith with Christ.

so I'll read verse 3 and 4 again 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 for certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God with sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

There's a lot at stake here. The faith that is the Christian church rooted and sustained in the life death and resurrection of Christ is being actively attacked not from without but from a virus within.

[26 : 00] There's parasites that are eating away at the life and the health of the church. It's not from without it's not be it's not an attack from Roman authorities it's not rival pagan religions it is from within false teachers that are in the church.

This is not a disagreement by the way about a secondary issue. There's a lot of secondary issues even tertiary issues things that are different from denomination or church to church that don't not matter they matter but they don't touch on the core of who God is and what God has done.

This is talking about core issues. They are attacking Jude says the common salvation. Now common does not mean ordinary or unexceptional but the shared and widespread unifying single message of salvation.

salvation. There's no other salvations. One church can't see Christ as fully man fully God and the other church over here sees Christ as an actor wearing a mask.

It's just God who takes the identity of Christ but then sometimes he wears a mask like God the Father and sometimes a mask like God the Holy Spirit or maybe Jesus isn't really man but only spirit or maybe he's just man and not spirit but he's a very holy man.

[27 : 31] No. There's a common salvation that is rooted in the person of Christ fully man fully God and in his once for all salvation that he won on the cross his sacrifice at Golgotha that when he died and rose again he defeated death.

This is the common salvation. This is at its core the nature of God. The salvation is exclusively found in Christ because only Christ could achieve a salvation for people whose predicament was so dire.

Our redemption was so impossible to achieve unless God himself achieved it. That's why that's why it's one faith because there's only one Savior and only one God.

God. That's why we must not reduce the salvation to an understanding and a sense of conversion alone but understand it to be more robust and rich.

So Jude here and we'll see this over the weeks to come Jude has in mind salvation from condemnation that there's salvation from judgment from punishment from conviction from destruction that this salvation that is offered to us by Christ is completely completely it envelops us there's no area of our life it does not touch no part of us that needs redeeming that it does not redeem.

[29 : 06] This is the faith that's worth defending and contending for. Notice that this contending isn't for just the clergy but it's for all Christians does not mean if you're again kind of feeling like I do not feel like contending for the faith I'm somebody who's a behind the scenes person.

Okay understand that God has made you in a certain way everybody is not going to contend for the faith in the same type of way but nevertheless contending for the faith is for all Christians. For all Christians whether you are laity or clergy because there is only one kind of Christian those that are saved by Christ I am no more holy than you sitting in these orange chairs at Holy Redeemer I have a different role in the church but I am the same sinner in a sense that is saved by Christ as you are we are all called to contend for the faith and how do we contend for the faith?

The word used here is very much an aggressive type of contending and again that doesn't mean you have to be aggressive but it means you have to be active in contending for the faith whenever the faith is misconstrued whenever it's perverted whenever there's a grave error that leads to other things that are called salvific or looked to for salvation that certainly are not Christ that is when we push back that's when we ask questions when we when we do not go along and we resist things that are not of Christ orthodoxy matters it just does it does I mean there's different expressions of the faith in different contexts in different parts of the world in different traditions but orthodoxy does not change the core of our faith cannot change and that is what

Jude is calling us to contend for this is why we are serious about confessing and declaring the creed together every week but notice that the creed confessing it is not enough if it was enough the Anglican Church of Canada or the Presbyterian Church of Canada or the United Church of Canada they would be rock solid robust in their orthodoxy but they have not they've drifted into teachings that do not resemble the gospel of Christ they departed from the very faith that Jude is commending us to contend for our faith it is a beautiful thing but it can be uncomfortable and there are pressures to adjust things to lean into nuance a bit more to explain things away or to talk about yeah that was it's a tough saying in the Bible but it's cultural and yes there's a place to talk about cultural specifics or there is nuance in

God's word but are we talking about such things because there's an embarrassment and I will say first thing I had a conversation with somebody on Friday you believe in three gods no not really and then I'm stumbling over my words and eventually the guy was very gracious I was able to explain something but my first gut reaction was yeah I don't know how to explain this this is really hard and it's kind of embarrassing and it seems like a contradiction and I don't want to be a dummy in front of anybody how about doctrines around human sexuality how about doctrines around gender roles how about different doctrines around exclusivity which ultimately means that our Mormon friends or our Muslim friends or our atheistic friends are not just wrong but they are deeply deeply in error it's a hard conversation to have but this is what our faith proclaims and the pressures from without can cause us to make compromises within and Jude is saying contend see we have often times our default is it is to bolster our own reputation and contend for our own reputation and our own glory but not

[33 : 54] Christ's when it should be the opposite what do I mean the apostle Paul in Philippians he's addressing some issue where there are people proclaiming the gospel because they are envious of him and they are jealous of him and he goes I don't care as they're preaching the gospel

what do I care if I look stupid in this as long as Christ is glorified as long as the gospel is going out as long as people are and the idea is that they're preaching the orthodox gospel he's like what do I care but if you go to Galatians the apostle Peter is screwing around with the gospel he is adding to the gospel and Paul he is risking his own reputation in standing in the church and he confronts Peter for the glory of Christ because in the end the apostle Paul is about Christ's glory over his own and if I'm honest it's the reverse nine times out of ten and if you're like me it's probably something similar

Jude is saying be about God's glory contend for orthodoxy stand for truth even if you might be called a dummy even if you look stupid even if you offend not because you're rough or brash but because gently and mercifully and with kindness you state the truth I stand on the shoulders as a minister in the Anglican Network of Canada that is our denomination I stand on the shoulders of George Sinclair and David Short and David Crawley just a few names Ray David Glenn men and women as well who left the Anglican Church of Canada almost 15 years ago because they spent almost two decades trying to call the church back to orthodoxy contending for the faith and they ultimately had to leave the church

I asked George recently he's the minister downtown he mentored me and really is a huge part of this church the life of this church I asked him like what was the fallout from that he said people had nervous breakdowns like a lot of people had nervous breakdowns it was tough we're flesh and blood like you have the world kind of collapsing in their world collapsing in on them okay we're going to stand for the truth we're going to contend but it was really really difficult people lost parts of their pensions their names were dragged through the mud a lot of people still meet in schools and community centers after leaving gorgeous beautiful stained glass historic buildings that that burns it does but is it worth it I think so our church our church is around because of people contending for the faith but how does the need for contending how does that even happen how do these perversions come about in the church much like all issues they come slowly and unnoticed the whole frog in a pot of boiling water small compromises that mount fear and cowardice that masks itself as niceness and mercy look again at verse four for certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only master and lord Jesus

Christ Jude says that people have crept into the church unnoticed which would imply that people were not contending for the faith and that's not to say that we ought to have a hyper fundamentalist group of people that are splitting hairs that are getting into outrageously long discussions about minutia of doctrine that some theologian 600 years ago gone to some kind of fight with three other people that believed in it like ridiculous things no but it means contending for orthodoxy I mean I'm going to say that a lot contending for the truth is an exceptionally strong command here to contend because the teachers that have crept in are exceptionally strong they're deceptive and we also can see that this is a bit of a perennial problem in the church so it's not just we are living in a tough time right now although in some ways we are but it's no different from any other generation every generation must contend our temptation is is to pretend like we are in the good days and I've said this actually a number of times and I believe it's true but this type of thinking if it's clung to or celebrated too much maybe this is a bit of a problem

I have said that we are in like a honeymoon a sweet spot with our church like when when will this shoe drop I don't think it will I think it's a beautiful thing but that kind of mentality as wonderful as it is as as beautiful as these two and a half years have been it can cause us to be blind to the slow introduction of false teaching into the church we must be on guard we must contend there are always difficult truths and falsehoods that come into the church it was the same in 2024 as it was in 1807 by the way that's when the abolition of the slave trade happened happened in 1662 the restoration in a sense after the civil war 1517 with Martin Luther 1384 is the year when John Wycliffe was was martyred because he stood for the truth the 11th century the 6th century 5th on and on all the way to the beginning there's always difficulties perennial problems in the church that we need to contend for the faith is always at risk it has always been the case throughout the entire [40 : 33] Bible so it's not simply that Jude here is talking about listen there's something that has happened in this church it's new to the life of God's people no Jude will give and we'll see this in the weeks to come nine different examples from the Old Testament or the Hebrew Bible of opposition to God's salvation these false teachers in the church that is why there is a reference to long ago it says this in verse 4 it's to say in a sense that the issue of false teaching has always been and will

always be always at its core this false teaching it says at the bottom of verse 4 is this denial of Jesus as sovereign and Lord that somehow we are in charge and God is not the throne of our hearts the throne of the church in a sense is no longer Christ but is our own it always has to do with the sovereignty and lordship of God and it's so interesting that throughout the Old Testament and we'll touch on this in a couple weeks because Jude references Sodom and Gomorrah but whenever there is a false doctrine or when orthodoxy is abandoned or when this false teaching comes in there always seems to be sexual permissiveness sensuality debauchery that mixes itself into false worship throughout the church's history into the

Old Testament even I mean we see it in some ways even with Noah after the flood false worship has an interesting relationship with sexual immorality we'll touch on that in weeks to come so what are we to do well I'll go back to verse 1 and 2 we are to remind ourselves and each other of who we are in Christ and we are to feed on Christ what he has done for us in his word at the table remembering that he has extended to us mercy peace and love we must contend for the faith in light of that we must cling to God's word and remember that as we are a part of the Protestant Reformation we are a church that has a great history a great tradition but we also embrace the very idea that we are a reformed church always reforming the reformers they would say *ecclesia semper reformanda* the church that is always reforming always going back to the source to the scriptures always remembering reminding ourselves of the gospel of the truth of who God is of what he has done who Jesus is what the incarnation is to feed on that truth it's also very important when we consider all of this that we do not think of ourselves as somehow prone or not prone to dangers and falsehoods coming in to our church or to our own lives into my life

I would say pray for me pray that I would be a faithful minister please I mean I don't just say that pray that I mean I know the darkness of my heart God knows it even more than I do but pray for me pray for each other as well have gut checks ask yourselves am I walking in the truth of Christ if yes Lord help me to endure and to maintain if not I confess my sins I throw myself at your mercy I want to receive your peace why because it's an expression of your love so friends do not depart from the gospel as you contend for the faith feed on the gospel cling to the gospel treasure the gospel and let's do that together amen let us pray father thank you for these edgy words but also incredibly important and pertinent words for us today this church

February 11th here in Kanata lord would you please remind us of in a sense the precipice that we stand upon that without you things go awry things go downhill things get really messy and chaotic and havoc and calamity become the flavors of the church but lord we don't want that we want to contend for the faith by your strength remind us who we are equip us with you and lord we pray that that everything that you have asked us to do by your spirit you will help us to do that lord we love you help us to love you more we pray all of these things in christ's name amen