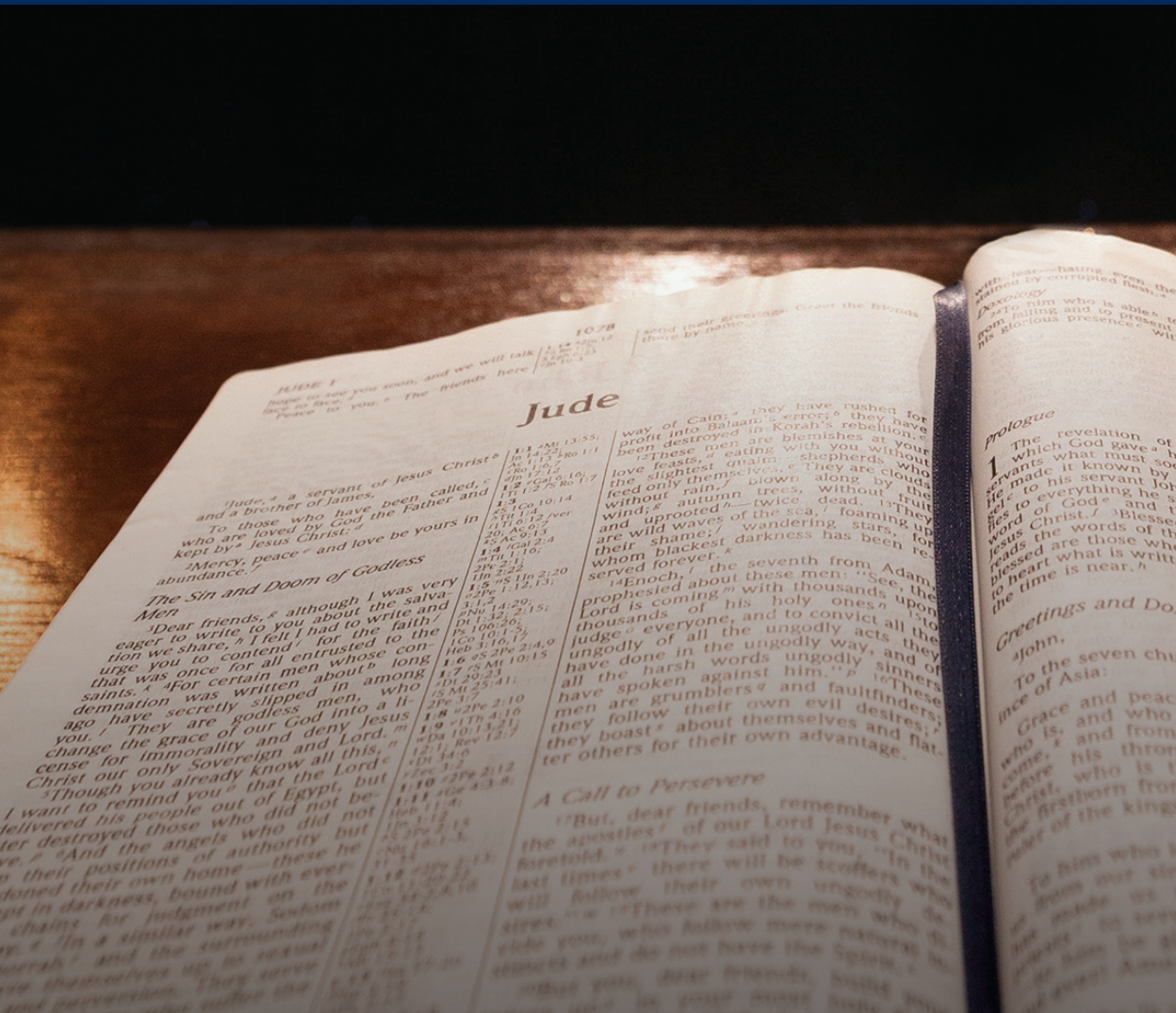


JUDE



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Preaching Jude

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Though by no means the smallest book in the Bible, the Epistle of Jude is an oft-neglected jewel of the New Testament. Its diminutive size is disproportionate to its theological content and pastoral help. Central to its message is the call “to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered” (Jude 4). Jude’s recipients were under attack because enemies of God slipped into their churches leading people astray. This reality of evil interlopers is still true for churches today, and the response to these attacks is the same today as it was for Jude’s readers: *contend for the faith*.

This contending for the faith, unfortunately, has not always been a priority in many churches, particularly among Baptists. Oftentimes the desire for unity has trumped the need for correct doctrine, thus allowing false teaching not only to exist in churches but also allowing it to continue to grow. In varying degrees, the history of Christianity has had periods of massive correction, such as the early ecumenical councils and the Reformation, since churches did not heed the call to contend for the faith. In Baptist history this has been true as well. Examples are found in groups like the Caffeynites (anti-trinitarians) in the early eighteenth-century England, the “New Theology” Spurgeon identified late in the nineteenth century, and the inerrancy controversy of Southern Baptists at the close of the twentieth century. Each of these controversies occurred because “certain people have crept [into our churches] unnoticed” (Jude 4). In each of these events, and many more like them, the response was to seek truth even if it meant breaking unity with others. Contending for the faith means to seek right belief, based on the Bible, no matter the consequences. The message of Jude is practical and important for a church in any age, but especially in our own.

The particular theme of this issue is preaching Jude. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary annually hosts an Expository Preaching Workshop that addresses the major concerns of text-driven preaching. In the Spring of 2015 that workshop focused in on the book of Jude. The articles that follow are adaptations of those presentations. They are helpful to students of the Bible and especially preachers in a myriad of ways, but let me mention two. First, those who are preparing to preach part, or all, of Jude will find these articles of great worth. From making decisions on how to approach the book to tackling some of its difficult statements, the articles address the major concerns a preacher faces when tackling Jude. Second, as most of the articles are written from the preaching faculty at Southwestern newly established School of Preaching, they present important facets of preaching that can

be applied universally to most texts of the Bible. For those who are new to preaching or those that have been preaching for quite awhile these articles are beneficial for the craft of preaching.

The first article by Jerry Vines, "Preaching Through Jude," presents a method for approaching any book of the Bible and utilizes Jude as a model. David Allen's "Contending for the Faith" considers Jude 3–4 in particular addressing the What, Who, Why, and How of contending for the faith. Allen also includes a select bibliography of works on Jude that we have placed towards the end of the issue. Paige Patterson walks through the book of Jude paying special attention to verse 6, illustrating all the while the way in which text-driven preaching addresses the variety of concerns in a text. In "The Benefit of Baseline Exposition," Matthew McKellar addresses the primary concern of text-driven preaching by defining and illustrating *baseline exposition*, which he defines as "emphasizing what the text emphasizes." Vern Charette follows with "Keeping Your People Glued to Jude" that addresses how illustrations are to be used in a sermon and how a preacher should derive them from the given text itself. Steven W. Smith tackles the task of preaching problematic passage in his article, "Difficult Passages in Jude," wherein he tackles not only these texts in Jude, but provides helpful insights on tackling any difficult passage.

In addition to the articles on Jude this issue also includes an article co-authored by Thomas Ascol and Thomas Nettles entitled *Who is the True Revisionist? A Response to Steve W. Lemke*. In Volume 57.2 of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* Steve W. Lemke wrote an article entitled, *History or Revisionist History?* This work questioned the historical accuracy a two-fold thesis "(1) that the overwhelming majority of Baptists were five-point Calvinists from the time of the founding of the Southern Baptist Convention until the early twentieth century . . . and (2) that the Baptist confessions before the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* were overwhelmingly five-point Calvinist confessions."¹ Ascol and Nettles in their article have responded to Lemke's claims furthering the discussion on this important theological issue. It is recommended that the reader carefully consider Lemke's article before reading the response in order to gain a fuller view of the conversation.

Finally, the *Journal* has historically included engaging book reviews in the variety of fields the faculty of Southwestern Seminary represents. As always these reviews are located toward the end of the issue. The compiling and editing of these reviews is a job in and of itself and we are indebted to previous Book Review Editors. In this issue, however, we are pleased to announce our new Book Review Editor, Dr. Joshua E. Williams, Associate Professor of Old Testament. He is a careful thinker, writer, and above all concerned with engaging churches on the Bible.

¹Steve W. Lemke, "History or Revisionist History? How Calvinistic Were the Overwhelming Majority of Baptists and Their Confessions in the South until the Twentieth Century?" *SWJT* (2015): 227–54.