



We are honored and blessed to have you worshipping with us today and we extend our warmest welcome. Our service is modeled after the New Testament pattern of worship. If you have questions or concerns please express them to us. We are all here to serve.

Please Pray for:



Health - Zandra, Ebony, Donna, Wanda and Peaches, Prince, Leola and Larry, Thom and Mary Elizabeth, Irma, TC, Robert, Darla's sister Rebecca, Levi Brass, Sylvia & Patrick, Carol's mother Loretta.

Surgery - Lenard, Lorena (knee) February 25th, Ricky Young (Lorena's Brother - knee) February 27th.

Also - The well being of Kevin Williams and family. Shannon's well being. The Pruett family as they mourn their loss. The family of Michael's friend John for their loss. Prince's family for loss of his cousin Evelyn.

Sunday PM Worship



5:00 PM Worship service today.

Movie Night

Friday February 15th 5:00 PM



Men's Training Class

Bible Study Saturday February 16th 9:00 AM
TOGETHER

God's Plan of Salvation

Hear	Romans 10:17
Believe	Mark 16:15-16
Repent	Luke 13:3-5
Confess	Matthew 10:32-33
Baptism	1Peter 3:21
Live Faithfully	Revelation 2:10

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 AM
Sunday AM Worship	11:00 AM
Sunday PM Worship	5:00 PM
Wednesday Class	7:00 PM



Today's Services

Singing
Opening Prayer
Singing
Preaching
Invitation Song
Communion Song
Communion
Offering
Announcements
Closing Song
Closing Prayer

Invite A Friend



Friendship Day February 17th

Lunch immediately following worship.

Gospel Meeting

February 25th - 27th 7:00 PM

25th	Vincent Hawkins Minister of The Figueroa Church Of Christ	26th	Stanley Harmon II Minister of The Hawthorne Church of Christ
-------------	--	-------------	---



The Difficult Art of Listening

by Rodney Nulph

Are you a good listener? Listening is a true learned discipline that many of us would have to admit we are still working on. I want to be a better listener! I want to truly learn this wonderful discipline, to really be able to help people and myself better. Listening well is more difficult than it may seem, whether in a counseling situation or in a conversation. You likely think you are better at it than you really are. If we can master its art, it becomes our most effective tool in solving problems, changing attitudes and motivating others! It is often so difficult to **really** listen to another person's feelings, hurts, disappointments, joys or concerns. Why? Usually, we are busy thinking of what we will say or how we will react to the other person's statement or question. The Good Book clearly states, "...let every man be swift to hear..." (James 1:19b). What are some practical ways I can be a better listener? How can I be "swift to hear"?

Firstly, **focus your attention**. If we are not focused on the conversation at hand, we can never be good listeners. We are often far too focused on our reaction, our answer or our feelings that we are distracted on what another is really saying. Learn to repeat back exactly what the other person has stated to make certain that you heard him or her correctly. Phrases like, "So are you saying" or "Did I understand you correctly?" will really help with your focus and attention to the other person's words. Also, work at "desensitizing" your triggers and temper. Far too often, some become instantly angry at another's words, so much so, that the rest of the conversation is not even heard. The wise man affirmed, "Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly" (Proverbs 14:29 ESV). "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city" (Proverbs 16:22). Oh, for the times this author should have heeded this divine advice! Better listeners focus their attention!

Secondly, **forego your answers**. We are often so quick to speak, before we really think the situation through completely. The Lord's half-brother clearly affirmed that every man should be, "...slow to speak..." (James 1:19b). "Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent" (Proverbs 17:28). "Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble" (Proverbs 21:23). While it is not always the easiest thing to do, keeping silent is often the best thing to do! You do not have to answer everything right away. If we learn to engage the mind before we engage the mouth, how much better would our lives be! Someone has correctly said that God gave us two ears and one mouth; therefore, we should listen at least twice as much as we speak! Better listeners forego their answers!

Thirdly, **feel for your associate**. Compassion, sympathy and empathy are invaluable traits to help us be better listeners. Seeing another's "point of view" will aid greatly in the art of listening better. When Jesus saw people, "He had compassion on them" (Matthew 9:36; 20:34). In other words, Jesus felt for others. Feeling for those with whom we are communicating helps bring a special element of love, concern and empathy into the equation. Even those with whom we disagree can be viewed through different eyes when we really feel for their situation and understand better why they may be saying the things they are saying. The words to a song of yesteryear speak to this end, "Walk a mile in my shoes, walk a mile in my shoes, Yeah before you abuse, criticize, and accuse, walk a mile in my shoes." Better listeners feel for their associate!

Imagine how many marriages could be saved, congregations be unified, people be united and wars never started if only we were better listeners! What kind of listener are you? Someone has astutely pointed out that the word "listen" has the same letters as the word silent! Listen patiently, lovingly and carefully, and enjoy all that you have been missing! "Let every man be swift to hear..."

The Faith Once Delivered

by T. Pierce Brown

After reading the Bible for almost 65 years, I continue to be amazed and thrilled with the unsearchable riches one may find in one verse or even one word. In Jude 3, there are at least seven different words or expressions that deserve extended comments, although our limited ability and limited space prevent us from doing justice to them.

Even the expression, "beloved" with all its implications needs emphasis. We may be so callused as to feel that it would seem effeminate or a mark of affectation to use it. Or, we may use it lightly, disregarding its real significance. I heard a clerk say to a foreign customer, "Y'all come back, honey." He immediately drew back because he did not understand why she used what he understood as a term of endearment. There is little doubt that when Jude, Peter or Paul said, "beloved," they were expressing a kind of loving concern that is sadly lacking in much of our communication to and about our brethren. Even when we feel the need to rebuke a brother, it should be done in the gentlest, kindest terms possible, and not in a sarcastic, bitter, harsh and unloving manner. One does not need to be soft and "mealy mouthed" or indifferent to false doctrine and ungodly living in order to r.

When Jude said, "it was needful for me to write" the ASV says, "I was constrained." The words "diligence" and "constrained" in the same context suggest urgency, carefulness and a haste to get a thing done that was important. The sense of urgency and importance is made even more emphatic by the words "earnestly" and "contend."

The reason for the urgent need to so strongly exhort them to contend earnestly is that there were false and ungodly teachers that had crept in and were attempting to lead persons astray. Paul had said in Acts 20:29, "I know that after my departure grievous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock." It has been happening with regularity ever since, and the same admonition that Jude made is still valid. There are a few things about this earnest contention that we should notice.

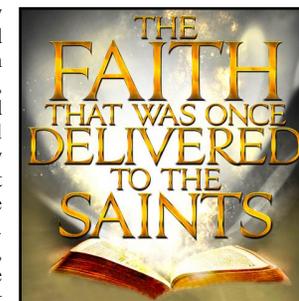
First, it is for "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." It is not for our opinions, feelings or suppositions. It is the system of salvation that involves our proper acceptance of the grace of God by an obedient faith. That system is today, and will be throughout all time, just what it was then. It was

delivered once for all. The curse of God rests upon those who would change it. Some were turning the grace of God into a permissiveness that would even allow lasciviousness. Sadly, some that claim to be preachers of the Gospel are teaching that since we are under grace, we have no law. Thus, one may continue in some sin, such as adultery, and God's grace will automatically cover it.

Second, this earnest contention is from a Greek word used only here in the New Testament, "epagonizomai," and should be distinguished from much of the contention we may hear or do. It is composed of the preposition "epi" and "agonizomai," which is about the strongest form of a word that means to work very hard to get the job done. Our word "agonize" comes from this verb. It is translated by such words as "strive" and "fight," but we need to understand that the contention and

striving and fighting are not the same words that are condemned in such passages as 2 Timothy 2:24 when Paul says, "The servant of the Lord must not strive." The kind of contentions Paul condemned in 1 Corinthians 1:11 and the kind of fighting James rebuked in James 4:1 are from different words and relate to a different kind of thing. We can perhaps understand the difference if we consider our normal use of the word "strive." If a farmer is out plowing his field or working hard doing legitimate tasks to make a living, he is striving in the proper sense. If he were striving with his neighbor about where the property line should be, a different word would be used. When Paul reports that there was fighting within and fears without, he uses a different word than when he says, "Fight the good fight of faith."

So, **we must contend earnestly for the faith without being contentious**. We must fight the good fight of the faith without having the warfare within which the Bible condemns. We must strive to uphold the Gospel without having the strife and wrangling in which we sometimes engage. Not only does Jude 3 provide some valuable truths for us today, but there are many other places in the Bible where an intensive study of the original word would reveal a different meaning than what we may assume it means. For example, to abstain from the appearance of evil does not mean to abstain from everything that seems (appears to be) evil. It means that when evil appears (is there), abstain from it.



THE ART OF LISTENING

