



ARE YOU A FAKE CHRISTIAN?

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A Study in Jude | August 12, 2023

Sermon Link: <https://realfaith.com/sermons/are-you-a-fake-christian/>

Alright, you guys ready to get into a book of the Bible? Hey, we are in the New Testament book of Jude written by Jesus kid, brother. And here's the question today. Uh, are you a fake Christian? Don't raise your hand. 'cause if the answer is yes, you can fix it. In the next hour we're gonna talk about this and here's what I want to talk about. If I let go of the word of God, does it go north or south? What happens? It's gonna go south. The gravitational force and pull of our world is always down. It's never up. What's true physically is also true spiritually. If you don't work on your health, your health will decline. If you don't manage your house, it's going to fall apart. If you don't invest in your marriage, you will end up single. Everything in our world, unless you are working on it and fighting for it, goes into a decline and deterioration. This is where the myth of progressivism is a lie. And that lie is just wait. Things will get better. No things only get worse unless you're pushing against the spiritual gravitational forces at work. In our world, that's what we're talking about. And the theme of Jude is contending. It's a military athletic term about fighting gravity, pushing back, holding your ground and not surrendering. And the conflict is ultimately between two groups, those who are the real Christians and those who are the fake Christians. We will start with four signs of the real Christians in Jude verse three. And tonight, just so you know, we're gonna cover two verses and if you're new, you're like, how could a person do that? You're welcome. Alright, here we go. Jude three. He starts by talking about the true, real believers. 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. He says, here's why I wrote the book to teach you, to contend, to fight, to hold your ground, to resist the gravitational forces at work, spiritually, morally, culturally in our world, to cause everything to go toward decline and death. Contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Four things here. A true Christian has their identity in God's love for them four times. Here is the first occasion he's gonna call you. If you're a Christian, beloved saint's gonna tell you that you are stupid, you are foolish, you have failed, you are unlovable, you are unforgivable, you are irredeemable. And God says no. All of that is a lie. And you're beloved. You don't work for God's love. You work from God's love. You don't earn God's love. Jesus already did and he gave it as a gift to you. And it doesn't matter how far you've gone, his love has chased you. Every step of that journey, God loves you. That's our identity. Our identity is not in our sexuality, our gender. Uh, we may love our political party and or our nation or our family, but that doesn't define us. Those things might explain us, but they don't define us. Our relationship with God defines us. So for me, I am a Christian. I belong to Jesus Christ. I am beloved of God. Now my rules might change. I was single and a Christian and then I was married and a Christian and then a father and a Christian, and now a grandfather and a Christian. But my identity never changed. And what we're looking at now is a whole generation that is just broken because we're telling them there are infinite numbers of genders and identities and you need to try them all and pick one and they're breaking. And God says, here's your identity. I love you. I forgive you, I adopt you. I save you. I'm gonna hang out with you. That's the identity. Now your identity is life proof. Wherever you go, whatever you do, your identity is secure because it's not predicated on what you do but who he is. Number two, a true Christian is saved like everyone else. He talks about our common salvation. There are many ways to Jesus. You can read a book or have a grandma who prayed for you or show up at church or go to camp. There are many ways to

Jesus, but there's only way to eternal life. And his name is Jesus Christ. It's a common salvation. Every true Christian would say, I was a sinner. I apologized to Jesus, repented, he saved me. That's our story. There are not 17 doors into heaven. There's one. And it's through faith in Jesus Christ. In addition to our identity and common salvation, a true Christian holds to core essential doctrine. He calls it the faith Once for all delivered under the saints. Every Christian believes the same core doctrines about the person and work of Jesus Christ. And seminar day would tell you that Christianity is like a salad bar. I like that. I don't like that. I like that. I don't like that. Here's the truth. Christianity is a boxed lunch, right? God packs it up and says here, here you go. We're gonna talk about this in just a little bit, but there's one God, it's me. I wrote a book, you should read it. You're a sinner. Uh, Jesus is the Savior and you better receive him or your kindling. It's a boxed lunch. It's a boxed lunch. And number four, those who really believe in Jesus and belong to Jesus are willing to fight for Jesus. They're willing to even suffer or die or lose their job for Jesus Christ. That's the language of contend and that is Jesus Christ matters more to me than anyone. Jesus Christ matters more to me than everyone. Jesus Christ matters more to me than anything and everything. And I'm living for an audience of one and I'm willing to endure on the horizontal whatever is necessary so that I can be faithful to him. Who is vertical? Those are the true Christians. Then there are four marks that he gives of fake Christians in verse four for certain people. These are the other guys. People have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God in into sensuality and deny our only master. And Lord Jesus Christ, his language is strong because Jesus Christ is his big brother. He knows what Jesus said. He knows what Jesus did and it absolutely frustrates him that others would use and abuse the life and the teaching and the death and the resurrection of his brother. Four marks of a fake Christian. Number one, they are invaders. They like to get into the church and into ministries and into leadership. And what they ultimately want to do, they want to teach counterfeit false doctrines. We dealt with these people last week. They're the apostates. These are people who pretend to be on team Jesus, but they're on team Satan. And ultimately they're dangerous because they creep inside in your neighborhood. I'm assuming when you go to bed tonight, somewhere nearby, there will be a criminal. There's no problem unless they break into your house. Once the criminal is broken into your house. Now it is a crisis. These are people who break into God's house, the church, they love to be in leadership, they love to be noticed, they love to be in authority and they love to be loved. But hear me in this, they're very dangerous. And this kind of rebellious strategy started in heaven. Satan was with God and the angels he invaded and then he came down to the earth and he worked through Judas Garriott, who was one of Jesus 12 disciples who was also an invader. Let me tell you this, the greatest threat to the church is not those who are outside of the church, but those who are in the church but against Christ. Those are the greatest deceivers. Those are the greatest difficulties that God's people face. Number two, it says that they are unsaved. Not everybody goes to heaven. Not everybody dies and goes to a better place. It says that they were determined and destined for destruction. There is no salvation for them. They don't love Jesus. They didn't love Jesus. They don't love Jesus. They won't love Jesus. Their life is not going up. It is going down. In addition, let me just tell you this, just because someone says they're a Christian doesn't mean they are just because a website, a blog, a

periodical, some platform uses the name Christ or Christian, doesn't mean that it is just because there's a denomination, church or network that says Christ, it may be anti-Christ. And Satan has got into the marketing business to trick God's people. Number three, they are sexual perverts. I'm, I'm not making that up. I'll just read two words here from this one verse. Pervert and sensuality, sexual perverts. True or false? We may hypothetically have some issues in our culture with sexual perversion. We do Like you, you write, you may be the only people wearing pants left. I mean that's where we are, that we live in a day when there are no bounds or guardrails for sexuality of any sort or kind, God intends the flames of passion to be contained within the heart of marriage. You take the flames out of the fireplace and it burns everything down. That's exactly what we're doing in Western culture. And what he's saying is that though times come and go, the tactics never change. People just want to do what they want to do with who they want to do it with. And there's always someone who shows up and says, I know the Greek text. I got more degrees than Fahrenheit. I'm educated beyond my intelligence. Let me give you a reason why you can take your pants off and put your Bible down. Number four, they deny Jesus Christ as Lord and master. These are people who love Jesus' Savior, but not Lord. I like Jesus to forgive me, but I don't want him to rule over me in this way. My life is a circus and I'm an elephant. And he walks around with a shovel and follows me, but he never tells me what to do or rules and governs over me. These are people who want God's forgiveness but not God's leadership. They want Jesus to be their savior but not their Lord. And what he says is they presume upon the grace of God and they deny the lordship of Jesus Christ. So it's the real Christians versus the fake Christians. And if the church is a body, then apostasy and fake Christians are like cancer, always trying to get in the body to corrupt it and kill it. That being said, what we're gonna talk about is how a true Christian can contend for the faith in a world that platforms and prefers those who are fake Christians. One, just note before we jump in, what we're talking about is contending Christians. Jude three, not contentious Christians. This is important. Contentious Christians are annoying. Okay? And that's not a spiritual gift, right? It's like you have the gift of service. I have the gift of annoying. That's not a gift. These are people who are critical in their spirit. They're not discerning, they're critical in their spirit. They listen to teachers and they're just waiting for one thing they can disagree with so that they can attack and criticize. They're not coming to learn or listen or grow, but to control, to attack and to malign. These are people that are never happy, contentious Christians are never happy. We wanna be a joy-filled, loving, happy spirit-filled place that takes God seriously but not ourselves. Amen. And what happens with contentious Christians, and I want you to know this, if you're a contentious Christian, if you're a contentious Christian, you are not fun, okay? You're just not fun. And if you are a Christian, we gotta be with you forever. So you gotta fix that, okay? You gotta fix that. And so what we're talking about is contending, and this is a military word where a commander gives an order to a soldier to go to the front line and fight and hold the line. This is like a word that's used in athletics where you're in an intense struggle against an opponent so that you're not defeated. What we're talking about is contending for the faith, not being contentious about the faith. Some translations will cause this word to be translated, thus struggle hard, defend, stand up solely, defend vigorously defend, fight strenuously, fight with everything you have and fight hard. The opposite of contending is called synchronizing. Everything God creates

satan, counterfeits. Synchronizing comes from an old word that means to combine or unite things that shouldn't be in our day. Words like tolerance, diversity, love, unity, and reconciliation will be used to bring truth in lies and God and Satan and lightened darkness together. And they are to be kept separate. So we want to contend to keep divided. What God says should be divided. And so lemme just say this as well. There are two ways or two things that I believe would be particularly helpful for you to learn to contend. The first is, I'm gonna teach you a new word. You ready? No. No. Sometimes to contend you just need to say no, right? Like, hey, my high school son thinks he's a girl. We're wondering if he can shower with your daughter at the high school after gym class. Answer. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Will you pray about it? No. Um, you know, hey, uh, we'd like to have our, you know, non heterosexual marriage at your church building. Can we rent it? No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Hey, would Pastor Marcus out? Could we bring in people from other religions to preach so that your people can learn about other gods that are actually demons in disguise? No. Hey, all the neighbors got a B I M sign. We got an extra one. Do you want it? No. Okay. So on the count of three, we're all just gonna practice how to contend for the faith. We're all gonna say no. 1, 2, 3. No, no. Okay, there you go. You did a good job. Take that home. Okay, next one. Because we are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are not. I have a personal relationship with Jesus. And if one of us is gonna be ashamed of the other, it should be him. Right? He should look at me and be like, I can't believe I'm with that guy. You know, if one of us is gonna be embarrassed of the other, I'm certainly not gonna be embarrassed or ashamed of Jesus. And if he's willing to hang out with me, I'm in. I wouldn't even hang out with me. So if he wants to hang out with me, that's a great idea. So what we're gonna talk about now is contending, it's the real Christians versus the fake Christians in contending. And I wanna talk about contending in seven arenas in our culture. The rest of the sermon is just an application of one word and one verse. Contend where to fight. These are the seven front lines of the battle. I'm gonna ask questions. Audience participation. Feel free to join in. Should a Christian contend for the family? Do God's people have any right to speak into marriage, parenting, children and legacy? Yeah, we do. God made us male and female. If that triggered you, welcome. God made us male and female and he made marriage for one man and one woman. And they have children that God says they are responsible for. Not the government, not the government, right? We were watching the news the other day and they came on and they're like, one of the political leaders said, uh, well these are our children. My wife's like, you didn't push you know, like you like you didn't like I I was there. You pushing. You aren't dilated. You did not involve yourself in this process. And so what we're seeing now is that continually, for those who are the fake Christians, they want to keep moving the line till there is no line. So you need to hold the line. The two things that are coming regarding family or polygamy and age of consent polygamy from 2003 to 2023, those in America who considered polygamy as morally acceptable according to Gallup, went from 7% to 23%. That's a percentage a year. Give it a little more time. And the majority of Americans will be pro polygamy. That's where we are. We see these crazy shows on television and there are states like Utah that have decriminalized it. And this is what happens. For those who know that what they're asking for is wrong, they won't make it legal, they'll just decriminalize it. Like drugs. Drugs aren't legal, but they're

decriminalized. So everybody's a fentanyl zombie. The results are the same. They've decriminalized it in Utah. In addition, the American Psychological Association now has a committee on consensual non-monogamy pushing for polygamy laws. It's just, it's amazing to me. They're like, if we say, you know, dirty people, that won't work. So let's call it the committee on consensual non-monogamy, which is another word for dirty people. Uh, in addition, the goal now is going to be pushing the line of pedophilia and age of consent. Here's why. Because our world doesn't like any limitations and it's horrifying. And here's what we see now in California, you knew it was gonna be California State Bill 148 allows pedophiles to not register as sex offenders if two conditions are met. Number one, if the victim was 14 years or older, and if the offender was no more than 10 years older than the victim. So if a 24 year old guy gets a 14 year old girl, then the judge can say, we're not going to register them as a sex offender because we don't think they did anything wrong. They're not gonna get flagged on background checks then for babysitting kids working in a church nursery, teaching at a school. Should Christians contend for education? And how we educate our children, all God's people said yes, yes, yes, yes. The United States of America, for the first half of our heritage, nearly all education was private and Christian. Often in the church in the last roughly half of our nation's history, education has been public, which means government. It was founded by Thomas Dewey and Horace Mann. Two founders of the Humanist Manifesto, antichrist. And let me just say this. If I wanted to have a totalitarian government that overtook all the freedoms and brainwashed the next generation, I would try to separate children from God and children from parents. I would have them with my teachers more than anyone else. I would indoctrinate them with government education so that they grew up to be good sheeple who did what the political leaders told them. I know that's not possible, but I'm just saying hypothetically, if I were to take over the world, I would start by having government schools that train people to be gutter government stooges. That's what I would do. Now that being said, of the first 123 universities and colleges in America, nearly all of them were founded bore by and for Christians, we are people of literacy and Bible translation and education. And here's what the Bible says. The government is not held primarily responsible in the sight of God for the education of a children of children. Rather, the parents are just read the book of Proverbs over and over. It's a mother and a father training their children. Ephesians six, four, the apostle Paul says, fathers, don't frustrate your children. Bring them up in the Lord. And the word there in the original Greek is pida, which means the full total development and discipleship of a child into a functioning adult. Mom and dad will stand before God and give an account for the education of the child. Right? And I know that everybody's like, I know a good public school or I know some Christians who are trying to help in the government school. I do too. You know, I, I know drunk drivers who make it home. There's all kinds of miraculous things that happen, but the odds aren't good. The odds aren't good. Now, if you're not offended, I'll get to you. It just takes time to get everybody, okay? This is why I would encourage you to be proponents of school choice. In the state of Arizona, we have one of the leading freedoms in our nation. Here's a crazy idea. Parents can decide what school's best for their kid. Crazy. Lemme tell you this. Parents love their kids. Parents know their kids, and parents know what's best for their kids. And so we need to contend for this freedom. And what we're seeing now is this is also leading to other kinds of

schools. And if you don't contend for curriculum, for school choice for education of children, others are, there's a new school that's just opening it made the news this week. It's part of the one in 10 Health and Wellness Center. It's a new queer based learning center for those ages 14 and over in, uh, the Phoenix Valley. They have queer history, not American history. Uh, in addition, they have a monthly program that has pronouns support hormones 1 0 1, gender affirming surgeries 1 0 1 and how to bind and tuck genitalia safely. It's a school curriculum in our town. Should Christians contend for the media? Yes, the news. The news, yes. I'll tell you why. Because someone is going to tell the story and depending upon their bias, they're gonna get it right or wrong. If we're talking about contending, there's usually two sides to the issue. Now, this is interesting. There was a, a survey that was put out of those who are in the media. I've got all this in my sermon notes@realfaith.com. 78% of those are in the media, are liberal and democrat and wrong. Okay? So, so in this, and what you find statistically in the media, those who are in the media are more likely to be female, single, unmarried, educated, feminist, progressive liberal in bright blue dots like New York or LA or Washington, DC for them and their echo chamber, they don't think like married people, they don't think like conservative people. They don't think like parents and they don't think like Christians. And I've got a degree from the Edward r Murrow School of Communication at the time was one of the top five communication and journalism programs in the United States of America. And one of the things that I was taught was, you need to be objective and neutral. And I remember raising my hand in class as a brand new Christian. I said, explain that. They said, when you tell the story, you need to be objective. I said, but you're not objective when you choose which story is newsworthy. It's not just telling the story but choosing the story. There are lots of things that I think are newsworthy that non-Christians don't. And there are lots of things that non-Christians think are newsworthy that I don't. It's not only the choosing of a story, but the telling of the story that is prejudged determined and biased by your own perspective. None of us is objective and neutral. And so yes, Christians should contend in the media, get upstream, create alternative news outlets, try to combat fake news with true news because we know that Satan is still the father of lies. And sometimes his kids go to college and then they get jobs on the air. Next, should Christians contend for entertainment and, and the stories that are told to our children and the narratives that dominate our culture. 'cause see, what we're being told today is, Hey Christians, Jesus is in your heart, not in your life. He, he's lord over your heart. He's not Lord, over our world. Your faith should be private, not public. Get back in the closet. Contending is a public thing. And so yes, we should contend for entertainment. And and I've hit this before. Let me hit it, uh, briefly. For 65 years, the Disney Corporation, the primary storytelling mechanism to help create an ideology that lives in young children, which is what happens through storytelling. It was based on four keys. These are safety, courtesy, show and efficiency. In 2020, they added a fifth key inclusion. Suddenly Disney decided our fifth key is now to have sexual spiritual moral diversity. That means we are now seeking to educate, indoctrinate an entire generation of children. And there's a certain percentage of people that are just like, no, no, no, we don't, we don't want our kids to see that. We don't want our kids to hear that because children are vulnerable first. They think that grownups know what they're talking about. Okay? The way you know, you're a grownup, you don't believe that anymore. How many of you, you, you thought adults were really smart

and then you became an adult and you're like, they're not smart at all. You think that they know what they're talking about. And so you tend to trust them. And there are parents that are saying no and they're saying, we're going to more closely guard the gate of education and information as well as entertainment that comes to our children. Should Christians contend in the realm of business? Yes. Yes. And so what we are seeing now in our day is corporate woke where there is an anti-God agenda. This is from, um, the World Economic Forum. And previously up until recent years, capitalism had, um, shareholders, these are people who invest in the company and the goal of the company is to generate a financial profit. Recently, this is what was discussed at the World Economic Forum. They added something called stakeholders. These are those who are part of the company, not for the profit, but for the social justice and cultural change. And this is dominated by some massive companies that hold a tremendous amount of wealth, likely including your personal retirement. BlackRock, Vanguard Group and State Street. They own 20% of every Fortune 500 company and they're the largest shareholder in Disney at 15%. And what they have decided is we're going to take a percentage of our business and we're going to use it to push a cultural agenda that is not for God, it's against God. It's not for family, it's against family. It's not for religious freedom, it's against religious freedom. And let me say this, if you're a business owner or leader, your business is under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Your business needs to conduct itself according to the principles of your king and his word. And those prophets should be invested in the kingdom of God. Churches, Bible teaching missions, Bible translation. Because business on the other side of the fight is investing heavily in an anti-God agenda. This is why you're like, why does, why do businesses keep asking me to opt in? Why is it that I need to, if I'm in a book like an overnight rental of a home, I need to click on my view on sexuality and gender inclusion. Like, because everything has become political and political agendas have swallowed everything whole, including business. Should Christians contend for government? I dunno if, you know, we may have an election coming, depends on how things play out. But when it comes to politics, there are certain people like, we can't talk about that It's political. If it's biblical, we have to talk about it. And the truth is, in the Bible there are numerous examples of spirit-filled godly leaders that God called into the political arena, Joseph in Egypt, Nehemiah, Daniel, uh, and the kings of Israel, including David. And what happens occasionally is not only are God's people seeking to get upstream, have just laws and policies and religious freedom and protect those who are unborn young and vulnerable. But in addition, there are times that God's people practice civil disobedience because there is government and there is God. And government does not have the innate authority. It has derivative authority. It is given from God. That's what Romans 13 says. And that means that we are endowed by our creator with rights because above our government is our God. And civil disobedience is where God's people say, I can't do something if it is wrong and the government commands it. So when the, the government commands you to do something that God forbid civil disobedience is I appeal to higher authority. No, I I will not let the state take custody of my child because they're in a difficult season following trauma. No, I'm not going to close the church down because somebody on television said that it was a crisis. I'll let adults make their own decisions. There are certain times as well where God's people practice civil disobedience for this reason that the government forbids you to do something that God

commands. And in certain nations, Canada being one, they don't have the kind of religious liberty that we do. Uh, in most churches, denominations, I would've been fired a long time ago for any one of my sermons. Very, very glad for that. And today there is an encroaching and approaching where there is a culture that wants to not only deplatform, but ultimately destroy those who proclaim the word of God. It just comes to mind. The, the youngest generation among us says that it should be a crime. 40% say it should be a crime to not address someone by their proper gender pronoun that they determine and not God determines. We're looking at a day when if you do what God says, you get in trouble. And so we see this with the Hebrew midwives in Egypt. We see this when Rahab hid God's people. We see this when Joseph, a slave who is required to obey his master's wife didn't sleep with her because that would offend his God. We see this when Daniel's friends wouldn't bow down to the pagan statue of, of the demonic counterfeit God who was ruling as their political leader. We see this when Obadiah in the days of Elijah hid the prophets from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. We see this when Paul, the Apostles spend some time in prison for starting riots and getting in trouble. We see this with Jesus' own when they fled to Egypt because the government was going to murder the children and they wanted their son, the son of God to live. We see this when Jesus is executed by the political authorities. And we see this when the first Christians are jailed and beaten for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yes, Christians need to be involved politically and our, our nation is founded not on freedom from religion but freedom of religion. And that is to protect the church so that the church can serve as the conscience of the state. That being said, should a Christian contend in the arena of religion, we're just in Jude three doing a lot of application contend. Now, as we get into this, I'm gonna hit a lot of issues very quickly. Some of you're gonna have very specific questions. This is a QR code for a, a book that I co-authored called Doctrine. I did a revision at the 10 year anniversary or anniversary a year or two ago. It's about 500 pages, it's around a thousand footnotes. It answers tons of questions and I want to give it to you for free 'cause I can't hit everything in the sermon, but I'm gonna try. So if you want to just grab your phone, grab the QR code. This is a free resource for you. But I wanna talk about contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints in the realm of that which is religious and spiritual. So first we'll start with Jesus versus the atheist. Atheism is this, there is no God. Awe, no theos God. There is no God. Statistically 4% of Americans now identify as atheists. And Jesus Christ is the only founder of any major world religion who declared himself to be God. So atheists are like, there is no God. Jesus is like howdy. Yes. He declares himself to be God. I'll prove it to you with one verse. And this is why Jesus was sentenced to death and executed by the governmental and religious authorities. John 10 30 through 33, Jesus answered I and the Father one. So then those who are present picked up stones. That is to execute him, to stone him. But he said to them, I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me? We are not stoning you for any of these, but for blasphemy because you a mere man. What claim to be God? Jesus says he is God. Jesus is the only founder of any major world religion who says he is God. If you're gonna contend, sometimes you're gonna contend against the atheist. Other times you will contend against the agnostics. Jesus versus the agnostics is this. Agnosticism says, we can't know. Awe means no. And gnosis is knowledge. They mean we have no knowledge of whether or not a God exists. He may, he may not. We

don't know. We can't know. We won't know. This is the fastest growing category of spirituality in the West. They are called the nuns. And now three in 10 Americans, especially younger generations, identify as nuns. And let me say this, Jesus Christ is God in the flesh on the earth. We have all the knowledge we need. Every Christmas you get a Christmas card, it talks about Jesus, it calls him a manual, which is God with us. The agnostics are like, we don't know. Jesus is like, I'm right here, walking around, preaching, teaching, doing miracles. And when you kill me, I'll come back and prove the point. I am who I said I am. I'm God. In addition, what we're seeing today, especially with younger emerging generations, is an increased contending in Jesus versus the occults. The occults are demonic spiritual practices forbidden by the Bible. These are everything. God creates Satan counterfeits and the occult is a counterfeit of being spirit-filled. Instead it's being demon filled. This would include wca, witchcraft, the new age, new spirituality, psychics, channeling, astrology, clairvoyance, divination, the Freemasons which are occult and an occult. Oracles tar cards, Ouija boards, native American shamanism spells, sorcery spirit guides, ORs, palm reading and paganism. If you're like, what does this look like? Go to Sedona or wait for Halloween. Either way, that's what it is. So what we're seeing today is an explosion in the occult technology and social media is allowing people to gather around what was previously outlier pagan practices now becoming mainstream. So I'll show it to you. This is a, this is a clip this week from TikTok. One of the most popular hashtags is witch talk. It's how to cast spells and how to, um, consult the dead and, and how to communicate with demons. It's teaching largely young girls how to be witches. And what's interesting, witch talk has 21 billion views. Here's what's curious. Do you know how many people there are on planet Earth? 8 billion. 21 billion clicks just on one social media platform to learn how to do witchcraft. That being said, now we're gonna deal with Jesus versus the world religions. I'm gonna hit them very, very quickly, but I'm gonna look at four things. I'm gonna look at their founder, their writing, their view of God and their view of Jesus. Number one, we're gonna start with Jesus Christ and Christianity. Our founder is Jesus Christ. Our writing is the 66 books of the Old and New Testament. God wrote a book, if you want a word from God, open the word of God. We believe the whole thing. And we believe that when you read the Bible, the Holy Spirit reads you. And it's the only book when you read it, the author will sit down and meet with you and he loves you and he wants to speak to you through his word. That's what we believe our view of God is. Trinity, probably not a shock. You're at Trinity Church. One God, three persons, father, son, and Spirit. All Christians and major creeds since the beginning of the church have always agreed that there is one God and three persons, father, son and spirit, co-equal, co-eternal, sharing all the divine attributes. And Jesus Christ we're about Jesus fully God, fully man, born of a virgin, lived without sin, died on the cross in our place for our sins. Rose from the dead to forgive our sins conquered Satan sin, death hell. The wrath of God verified his resurrection, ascended into heaven. His ruling and reigning is king of kings and Lord of lords. And he's coming again to judge the living in the dead. Amen. That's our team. Let me talk about Jesus versus Islam because this is the fastest growing religion and the second largest religion in the world. Their founder is Muhammad. He is said to be the greatest man who has ever lived and to be the final and greatest messenger sent by their God. Allah, they will refer to their God as Allah. Their writings are the Quran that they say was revealed to Muhammad by

the angel Gabriel. You'll notice an interesting series of parallels between Islam, the second largest and fastest growing religion in the world. And Mormonism, which is the second largest cult that I'll get to in a moment. One individual leader was visited by an angel who gave them revelation for a new book that contradicted God's book. In addition, when it comes to Islam, their view of God is that his name is Allah and he is the only God. Furthermore, they do not believe in the Trinity. And for them, they do not believe that attributing anything like fatherhood or sonship to God is acceptable. In fact, for them, categorically that would be the worst sin of all. They call it shirk. So if you say, God is my father and Jesus is the son of God, you'll have an explosion among devout Muslims because you're not allowed to refer to God in those personal terms. And Jesus is not God. He's not the son of God. He did not die on the cross. He did not raise from the dead. And furthermore, he is a far lesser prophet than Muhammad. Number three, Jesus versus Hinduism. What's interesting now we're talking about contending. What's curious. In our day, we've got a Republican candidate who's a Hindu, which is different. Previously, if you wanted to be the President, you had to pretend you were a Christian. And I say pretend 'cause that's usually what happened. But today we actually have a Hindu who's running for president and could make an office of some sort or kind. Their founder is unknown. It's, it's a, it's a series of ideas and religions and gods and goddesses. There's no singular founder. Furthermore, there is a plurality, not just of founders, but gods and writings. So they will believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita as well as other writings, their God is called Brahman. He is called the absolute. And Brahman is not a person. He is an impersonal force. It's like the force in Star Wars. It's this energy that works through everyone and everything as a collective and combined whole. That's why Hinduism statistically, historically, has been more pantheistic or panentheistic where they won't distinguish between the creator and the created. Instead, it's all collapsed into one in violation of Romans one. And furthermore, uh, Brahman is the universal spirit that manifests in multiple gods goddesses, religions, spiritualities and ideologies. Jesus is not well first and they don't believe in the trinity. And Jesus is not God at best. He's a teacher, a guru or an avatar which is an incarnation of Vishnu. He did not live without sin. He did not die on the cross. He did not rise from the dead. And he's not coming again to judge the living and the dead. It's a different Jesus. That brings me to point number four, Jesus versus Buddhism. Um, this is getting more popular in the West and many younger generations are gravitating toward Buddhism for this reason. It doesn't even believe in God. It's just a philosophy. So there's no one that rules over you or saves you. Uh, the founder of Buddhism is of course the Buddha, which means the enlightened one. His writings are many, the Mahayana, which means the great story, the Jataka tales, the Tantras, they do not believe in a personal singular God. And they actually don't believe in a God. Buddhism is a philosophy more than a religious commitment. Their view of Jesus. At most, he's an enlightened teacher, a guru or a shaman, but by no means God. And then number five, Jesus versus Judaism. And what's interesting is Jesus was devout Jew. Those who write the Bible or devout Jews, the first Christians are devout Jews. But today there are some Orthodox Jews that deny Jesus who is the fulfillment of biblical Judaism. They would say that their founder is Abraham and Moses. And they would believe in the first 39 books of the Bible, the Old Testament, not the 27 of the new. They believe there is one God, but they do not believe in the

Trinity, one God and three persons. Furthermore, they do not believe that Jesus Christ is God and the fulfillment of prophecy. Now, many Jews do know and love Jesus, but some who are Orthodox do not. And Paul says that the God of this world has blinded them. They can't see that everything God promised was fulfilled in the person, in the work of Jesus. And the result is as well that some would say that all the things that Christians believe about Jesus were just myth, legend, fable and folklore added after his life many years later. And that he was a, a good rabbi and teacher. But, but we've made a lot of myths about him. That being said, and I wanna talk about Jesus versus the cults we've dealt with atheism, agnosticism, the world religions, the seven arenas for battle. Let's bring it closer to home. Here's a cult. Cult comes from the Latin word worship. And a cult is different than a world religion. In this, a world religion doesn't claim to be Christian and doesn't come from Christians. A cult comes from Christians and still claims to be Christian. That's the difference. That's the deception. God's people have always dealt with cults. In the Old Testament, you'll hear about Baal Astra, OSH, Milam and Molech. These are cults that surround God's people and want to do syncretism and and they don't want God's people to contend, but they want God's people to compromise. Just because, here's the big idea, friends Jesus plus anything destroys everything. Furthermore, in the New Testament, there are cults that are surrounding the New Testament. And the New Testament writes against them. You'll see the worship of Artemis. You'll see emperor worship where they're worshipping the Roman government and governor and also a group called agnostics. Now let me read a scripture and then tell you a story. Two Corinthians 11, three through four. Here's the problem with a cult. It has another Jesus, not the real Jesus, but a counterfeit. Paul says this, I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived deep, that's Satan. He's talking here about deception and spiritual warfare by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ, the real Christ for someone. And proclaims what another Jesus. This is the problem with cults. They have another Jesus, Then the one we proclaimed. Or if you receive a different spirit, that's not the Holy Spirit, but a deceiving, demonic spirit. Or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough. What he's saying is you're compromising, not contending, you're stigmatizing. Not fighting goes on to say this comes from false prophets, deceitful workmen disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder for even Satan, Satan will present another. Jesus disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants also disguised themselves as servants of righteousness. Lemme tell you a story. Um, I started in ministry working with college students, punk rock kids, homeless kids, uh, abuse, trauma, sex trafficking, addiction, the occult witchcraft just complete, just devastating brokenness. And, and, and a lot of kids got saved. We, um, in my life under my, I've seen over 10,000 people get baptized and many of them young, single urban, broken, traumatized people that have had a lot of demonic activity. And there was one guy, I was a young pastor, he was in my twenties, and he would come up and talk to me after the sermon. And he had the craziest ideas about Jesus. And he was obsessed about reading the Bible. And he told me all the things he was seeing and all that God was revealing to him. And, and, and, and it was crazy. So I said, let's just sit down. Lemme just talk to you and see what's going on. He seemed like a sincere guy, but an oppressed and broken and troubled guy. And so he was telling me a story and we were talking. And then as he was telling me a little bit of his life story, his countenance

changed, his posture changed, his voice changed, his personality changed. And it got very aggressive and very combative and very arrogant. And I just asked, I said, who are you? And his voice changed. Hair stood up on my arm, said, uh, I'm the one who's been teaching him. I asked, I said, what's your name? It said, Jesus. I said, uh, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus, the son of God, Jesus born of Mary Jesus who died on the cross and rose from the dead. And he cackled. It was haunting. He said, no, not that Jesus. It was a demon who took the name Jesus and deceived a guy who was confused in troubled, I rebuked him in Jesus' name. I said, the Lord rebuke you. All our authority is delegated. I prayed for the Holy Spirit to come into the conversation. The man came back present and I told him what had happened. He received Jesus. He became a Christian. We baptized him and he got delivered. And, and, And this is why we contend because people have an enemy and he's taken them captive and he's haunting them and he's breaking them and he's lying to them and he's traumatizing them and we love them. And we want Jesus to set them free so they can live the best life, the blessed life with our God. That being said, let me hit the cults real quickly. I've got three minutes left. Um, which means we're gonna go over. So first, um, Jesus verse the Mormons, and here we are in a state that has a high concentration of Mormons, also called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They've done some marketing to reposition themselves as a Christian denomination, it's deception. Their founder is Joseph Smith. The writings are the Book of Mormon, the doctrine of covenants, the Pearl of great price, plus their prophets. Every generation has a prophet or prophets. And they would say the King James version of the Bible exclusively when rightly interpreted. And if you say, wait, that's not what the Bible says. They say, oh, you have the wrong interpretation. And it's a works oriented religion, not a grace based religion. It's about what you do for God, not what God does for you. They don't believe in the Trinity. And in fact, what they believe is not that God became a man in Jesus Christ, but a man became God. This is the first deception that Satan gave in the garden. You can become like God. And so their belief is that those worthy men become Gods and get their own planet. And this explains Jesus. He's not God the creator, become a man. He is a man who then made himself into godhood status. They believe furthermore, that Jesus was born when God, the Father, who is a man, had actual intimate sexual relations with Mary, impregnated her. They gave birth to Jesus who became a God. And he had a brother named Lucifer. They're not Christians. Now, let me say this. In the Mormon church, there are some dear sweet people. There are some nice neighbors and there are some confused Christians. They're like, what? They were talking about Jesus. They were, that is another Jesus you've been deceived and lied to. You're in a cult. It's not Christian. What you are in has left Jesus. And so you need to leave it so you can be with Jesus. Right? Number two, the Jehovah's Witnesses, they've been at your house. They're, if you don't know who these are, that's that's their group. That's how you know who they are. They're come knock on your door. It's also called the Watch Tower Bible and Track Society, their founder, Charles Thas Russell and later Joseph Rutherford. Their writings all come from the Watchtower publications, including the New World Translation of the Bible, which is garbage. It takes out every reference to Jesus as eternally God. Furthermore, they do not believe in the Trinity and they do not believe, uh, that Jesus Christ is God. They believe Jesus is not crate created. He is actually the Archangel Michael. And he became more of a divine status. But much like Mormonism, he's a created being that

worked to a higher level of consciousness and rule. Uh, furthermore, they would say that Jesus returned spiritually, not physically in 1914. So we're not waiting for a second coming. And that you're saved not by his works, but by your works and not by his grace, but by your performance. So you have to legalistically, obey all of the prescriptions of this cult. Number three, Jesus versus the United Pentecostal Church. The founder is debated, but I would submit it as perhaps a man named John Shep. This is an offshoot of the Assemblies of God and Pentecostalism. And what he says is, I got a divine revelation and a prayer meeting. God revealed something to me that Christians have missed for 2000 years. If every Christian missed it for 2000 years, you're wrong. Just write that down. 'cause the same Holy Spirit has been working through God's children four thousands of years. And if you have something that no one has heard of, you're a cult leader. Nonetheless, they do not believe in the Trinity. And instead they don't believe that there is one God in three persons. But something called modalism sabellianism Arianism. If you're a nerd, look it up. It's that one God pretends to be the Father, pretends to be the Son, pretends to be the spirit like an actor or an actress changing roles in the midst of a play. And it's deceptive. Furthermore, um, they would say that, um, Jesus is not ultimately, um, the God that we worship. And so for them, you're saved by legalistic works, speaking in tongues and being baptized in Jesus' name. Jesus said, be baptized in the name of the Father Son, holy Spirit. The United Pentecostal Church is a cult. They will only baptize you in Jesus' name. And they'll say Jesus. But it's a, it's a different Jesus. Number four, Christian science move quick. I heard a comedian a few years ago and he, he said, uh, he said, Christian, science reminds me of grape nuts. You ever eaten the breakfast cereal, grape nuts? You open the box, you're like, there's no grapes and there's no nuts. Christian Science, you're like, there's no Christians, there's no science. Anyways, um, you would think that Christian science is Christian 'cause it says, Christian founder is Mary Baker. Eddie. Their writings are many. Science and health with the key to the scriptures, miscellaneous writings of hers, the manual of the Mother, church and other books by Mrs. Eddie, including the Christian Science Journal, Christian Science Sentinel, and their other official publications. They would say that the Bible is less authoritative and less trustworthy. And so they would want you to put all of her teaching and writing over the scripture. Anytime they're putting a book over the Bible, you know that there is a problem. God wants to speak to you directly, not through someone because there's only one mediator between man and God. That's the man Christ Jesus. Not somebody who else, who wrote a book for them. God is not a person, but an impersonal force. The principle of life and all that exists in spirit and God is an illusion. Let me close with the last one and then we'll have some fun. Uh, Jesus versus a Course in Miracles. We're talking about contending. What's interesting on this point today, we have a democratic presidential candidate that is a devotee of a course in miracles. If they win or elected to a cabinet, here's what they will be bringing. The founder is the Jewish psychologist Helen Shukman. She has written 1200 pages in three volumes. Here's what makes it curious. She says, and I quote, I was guided to write these 1200 pages by a spirit named Jesus. That's what she says. That's Jesus. Another Jesus for them. Uh, God is not a person but a force. And Jesus is not a God, but someone with a higher level of consciousness connected to the world force that is work in all people and things. So lemme ask you this. Two questions. Can we work with people who don't know Jesus? We can work with them.

Okay. We can't, okay, we can work with them. Okay? You're like, dang it, I gotta no, quit my job. No. Okay, here we go. Okay. Let's say that they're like, Hey, we have different religions, but we believe in religious freedom. Can we work together for religious freedom? Yeah. They're like, Hey, we're pro-life. Can we work with you for pro-life causes? Yeah. Hey, um, we wanna have school choice for parents and we'd send our kids to different schools than you. But how do if we work together so we can have freedom of school choice, can we work with these people? Totally. Can we worship with these people? No. No, no. We can't. It's like, Hey, hey Pastor Mark, can I bring in the Buddhist monks and teach your people how to chant? No. Can we read a book other than the Bible? No, no, no. We don't worship with you. We can work with you, but we can't worship with you. That being said, what we're gonna do now is a fun exercise. At least fun for me. And if it goes bad, I won't do it tomorrow. So you guys tell me how this goes here, what we're gonna do now, you guys wanna do a game show? Let's end with this. Let's have a little fun. Okay? So the guys are gonna bring it out. So I have talked, lemme go up front. Um, so here's the game show. Okay? The game show is, it's gonna be called the closed hand, open hand Game show. And so the question is, well, okay, we're talking about different religions and cults and ideologies. What about Christians? The Christian, can you be a Christian and disagree on some things? Yeah. So I like to say there are closed handed issues that Christians agree on, and then there's open-handed issues that you can disagree on. You can love Jesus, believe the Bible. And we can get along, we can dialogue, debate, discuss, but we don't need to divide. So we're gonna do it as a little game show. I will be your host. I'm Vanna White. Okay? I'm the host, don't judge. That's how I identify. This is a safe space, okay? And if she had some hard weekends in Vegas, this could be the outcome. So that's just where we find ourselves. Okay? So that being said, what I'm going to do in our little game show, I'm gonna ask you questions. You ready? And I'm gonna ask closed handed or open-handed, and then you're going to make noise and vote. Are you ready? Okay. First one. Okay, so open hand, closed hand. Okay, first one. Jesus. Resurrection. Open hand. Closed hand. Closed hand. Closed hand. Okay, good. Okay. Closed. Okay. Worship style. Open hand. Open hand or closed Hand. Closed hand. I hate to say it, but it is open hand. If I see a hand bell choir, I throw open my mouth, but it is an open hand. Okay. Um, how about, um, how about, oh, this is a good one. Marriage between one man and one woman only. Open hand or closed head Closed. That was very unanimous. Okay. How about the age of the earth? Open. Open hand or closed hand? Open. Hand open. And somebody like closed. We love you. You're a little dogmatic. Okay, so can we put it in the open hand? How old is it? Old enough? Works great. How about this one? Uh, Jesus is fully God and fully man. Open hand Closed. Hand Closed. Closed hand. Okay, how about this one? The timing of Jesus' return. When is the rapture? Who is the antichrist? What is six? Six? Six? Open hand. Open hand. Closed hand. Open hand. Open hand. And if you don't think so, you scare us. Okay. Um, how about this one? Bible translations. Open hand. Closed hand. There are garbage translations, like the new revised standard version and the, um, the Watchtowers translation. But, but, but does generally all the other Bible translations. Open hand or closed hand. Open hand. Open hand. Yeah. Okay. Uh, how about this one? Jesus. Death on the cross. Open hand. Closed hand. Closed hand. Okay. You're Christians. Alright, how about this one? The Bible is God's true word. Closed hand. Very unanimous. How? How about this?

People are sinners close. So judgy and so helpful. Yes. That is closed hand. Oh, this. Okay, now. Okay. Alcohol. Open hand. Closed hand. Some of you're like two hands. You, you, you need to cut back. You need to cut back. Christians shoot. It's okay for some Christians to drink. Uh, closed hand or open hand? Open hand. How, how you, some of you're like, I'm going to happy hour. Okay. How about this one? How about this one? Speaking in tongues. Open hand. Open hand or closed hands. Open hands. Yeah. A daba Do open hand. Okay. Jesus is the only savior. Open hand. Closed hand. Closed hand. Alright. Alright. Jesus. Lived a sinless life. Open hand. Closed hand. Closed hand. You guys are doing so good. Uh, loving other Christians. Closed hand. I hate to say it. I Mean, 'cause if you're one of those people, like I don't drink and the earth is 6,000 years old and speaking in tongues is demonic and I like him. We love you because we have to. It's in the closed hand. How about this? There are only two genders. Closed hand, open hand, closed hand. Okay. How about we believe in angels and demons? Closed hand open hand Closed. Closed hand. How about, oh, this one will be fun. Noah's Flood. Was it local or universal? Open hand or closed hand. Woo. Divided. Lemme say this, it was big enough. It caught everybody. So it may have been global, it may have been local. We know it wasn't a jello flood, but it did get all the sinners. So we'll just say open hand. Okay, last two. Um, last two And the, and then we're gonna, we're gonna tell you what's coming up here at the church. Uh, the last two. Um, bud Light. Um, good. Shh. Okay. Okay. Okay. So all who think, uh, open hand, make noise. Open hand, closed hand. Oh, okay. So just to be clear, we're open-handed on alcohol, but we're closed handed on Bud Light. Just to be clear. I agree with that. Okay, last one. Pastor Mark's sense of humor. Open hand, close, closed hand. We'll leave it in the open hand. Um, I'm funny and some of you're wrong if you disagree. Okay. Alright. I love you. Thanks for letting me teach. Lemme pray for you. Okay, Father, God, thank you that we could take you seriously, but not ourselves. God, thank you that there are closed handed issues that we all agree on and there's open-handed issues we can learn and discuss and debate and dialogue. God, when all is said and done, I pray we'd get Jesus Christ right. I pray we wouldn't have another Jesus. We just have the real Jesus. Jesus we love you. You are our Lord. You rule over all of our life. You rule over all of our culture. And Lord Jesus, your word speaks to everyone about everything. Give us tender hearts and give us clear minds so that we can contend when we need to contend and we can love and flex when we need to. God thanks that we've had fun. We believe that heaven is gonna be a fun place. And so thanks that we got to practice a little bit. In Jesus' name, amen.