

Personal Preparation For Contending For The Faith

by Gbile Akanni

Gbile Akanni emphasizes that personal, thorough preparation in the knowledge and internalization of biblical truth is essential for effectively contending for the Christian faith.

Duration: 1:39:06

Scripture: Jude 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 1:12-14, John 6:68, 2 Corinthians 8:12

Topics: "Contending For The Faith", "Biblical Knowledge", "Spiritual Preparation"

Description

In this teaching sermon, Gbile Akanni explores the critical importance of personal preparation for contending for the Christian faith. Drawing from the book of Jude and the apostle Paul's charge to Timothy, Akanni challenges believers, especially those in leadership, to deeply internalize and live by the truth of scripture. Through practical examples and biblical insights, he calls the church to be vigilant and well-equipped defenders of the gospel in an age of doctrinal challenges.

Transcript

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Telephone numbers 0703 03636 59 0703 76811 98 Email address lsmedia.livingseed.org Or visit our website at www.livingseed.org Let us sit back and listen as the servant of God brings forth the Word of Life. We ask that the Spirit of Truth will continuously permeate and dominate and overwhelm us. So that further, a definite encounter will begin to happen between us and yourself.

And that God, you have called us into ministry at a time like this. You have brought us into the leadership of the congregations and the denominations at our various levels. We ask right now, Lord, that you will speak to us.

You will cause your Word to mix with faith in our hearts. You grant us clear understanding on how to go in contending for the faith. Thank you.

In Jesus Christ's name we have prayed. Amen. As we continue to speak on the theme, contending for the faith, I will be focusing myself much more looking at the contenders for the faith.

And we started yesterday night by looking at the book of Jude. This morning I will still want you to go back to the text of Jude. And verse 1, verse 2, verse 3, until the end of that book.

Jude is a book that is written to call back to memory the things that we have learned or the things that we omitted in our learning or the things that we brushed over when we were building our foundations that is now showing forth as cracks either in our theology or in our ministerial practice. So this book itself, because it's a book that calls back to memory, calls back to remembrance, almost every verse that I will say, remember, remember, remember, remember. That's what made the book of Jude a very serious material.

A material that has been compiled in a very short form but that engages your memory and takes you back onto issues that you may have glossed over or that you may have omitted or jumped over or things that you may have thought was not going to cause problem for you in ministry. And suddenly you realize, and when you come to Jude, Jude said, did you not remember? Did you not remember this? Do you not remember that? He even said, do you remember that some angels that did not keep their estate? I said, where? When was that done? Then you quickly go back again to the book and saw how Satan fell, how they fought. And say, wow.

But how could Jude have been able to bring this kind of contention for the faith? That would be my beginning of study this morning. The personal preparations for contending for the faith. The personal preparation that contenders for the faith must make of their own lives.

You can contend for the faith if you are not prepared for it. And the first thing that ran through my mind as I looked at the book of Jude, very simple book, but with the repeated use of the word, remember, remember, remember. It meant then that Jude was a man who was versatile with the truth.

He was versatile with every issue that has happened in the developmental stages of the word of God or of the doctrine. He was versatile with all the various occurrences, situations, historical facts, and other things. He was very, very familiar.

He has studied what did God do when some people misbehave with the truth. How did God handle error? How did God handle those who misused the anointing? He was a man who had researched into the word of God to the point that he could talk about Enoch. He could talk about Lot.

He could discuss issues about Cain. He could handle matters that had to do with Balaam. He would not keep quiet about several issues that maybe even those of us that are standing on the platform today, we have not thought it was necessary to arm ourselves, to prepare ourselves with sufficient biblical knowledge of the faith so that we can be equipped enough to contend for it.

So I saw that Jude did not need to speak in many, many, many words. But each Bible verse was a pointer to a volume of knowledge that he has imbibed such that in summary form, he could take the story of Balaam that lasted maybe for several years, he could bring it in one sentence. He could take the life story of a man like Noah and bring it together and point at the issues.

He could look at the life of Enoch. He said Enoch was the preacher of righteousness. I quickly ran back, I said oh, so actually Enoch was preaching to his own generation.

And what was his message? Jude found out and he brought it out for us. So what is the first personal preparation for a contender, an effective, well-equipped contender for the faith? It is a personal, functional

knowledge of the truth. A personal, a functional and applicable knowledge of the truth.

You will not be able to contend for what you are unaware of. You will not be able to contend for the authentic faith when you are yourself, you don't know of it. You cannot stand to help us identify error.

You cannot identify a fake currency if you are not very, very conversant with the original, am I correct? The people that easily fall into error and they are swept away off their feet. When you study their lives very well, you will know that these are people that are excited and that with one little aspect of the truth that they grabbed. And most of the time they took it away out of its context.

And they do not understand the whole concept of God and how scripture, you know, follow upon scripture, another scripture, interpret another scripture. They do not understand all of that. They just take one scripture and they are running.

And so because they don't know sufficiently what is the peculiarity of the faith, the truth that God has committed to us, they can easily be swept off. But one of the things that I saw with Mr. Jude or Brother Jude was the fact that he had a thorough personal knowledge of the truth. And I was going to say to you, he did not just have mental knowledge of the truth.

He did not just have academic knowledge of the truth. He did not just have, you know, a research about the truth. He spoke from his heart because that truth that he has known was internalized.

That truth became his life. So he could speak, you know, continuously as if he is just writing a letter and he is drawing, you know, reference from here. He is making allusion to this.

He is speaking about that authoritatively because he has spent time to imbibe the truth. So permit me to ask, what is your own personal preparation for learning the truth? What is your own personal diligent preparation for studying the faith? If at this level being in the apex leadership already, if you cannot state categorically what are the distinctives of our faith, what is the peculiar substance of the faith? What is the pivot of our faith? What is the strength of our faith? How is our faith unique? What is the uniqueness of the faith? What is the supremacy of the faith that makes it second to none? What is the eternity of the faith that does not make it to fade away with time? That does not make our faith to be obsolete. That does not make our faith to be treated as a fashion that will come and go.

What is the eternity of the faith? What is the strength behind the faith that makes it authoritative? If you have not sat down to say, why did I believe in Jesus? Why could I say like brother Peter, to who else will I go? For I know you are the Christ, the son of the living God, and you are the one that has the words of eternal life. If a man at our level is in doubt of the peculiarities of the faith, how will he be prepared to contend for it? When the archbishop was speaking this morning, and our chairman, and they were alluding to so many, many, many, many ways in which the enemy is fighting our faith. All the kind of doctrines and ideas that some people are propounding, as if they can overthrow this faith.

What struck my heart was, yes, all these have been there over the years, since the days of the apostles. But how are they able to defeat all such? It was not because they were running after new, new doctrines. It was because they were fully and thoroughly prepared with the knowledge of the truth in their own lives, to such a point that they could stand and vouch, and actually commit their life to death for the preservation of the truth.

So permit me, as I look at these personal preparations, and I say the first preparation is your personal preparation to study, to learn, to know the truth of our faith in every conceivable manner. And to be not a novice when it comes to the interpretation of the doctrine of our faith. And not to be superficial, or to appeal to anything less than the authoritative scripture in the defense of the faith that God has given to us.

So my first challenge, as I look at the letter that Jude wrote, and as I look at his life and the way he had brought it on and on and on and on, and he said, I just want to put you in remembrance, I want you to remember this, I want you to remember this, I want you to remember that. It makes me to know that, yes, if I'm also going to be a contender for the faith, I cannot defend what I did not know. I cannot fight for what is not clear to me.

I cannot speak when colleagues that have oratorical powers, who can speak like orators, when they are talking and they are bringing out their theories, and they say in such a manner that everybody seems to be swept. If I did not know enough of the truth that God has shown me, how would I be able to contend? How would I be able to withstand it? Something happened to me some years ago, and I have not forgotten it because I was invited for a meeting. I was to do a revival meeting for a particular church for four days, and I asked the pastor when he was inviting me, I said, Pastor, do you really want the truth for your congregation? He said, yes, we want nothing but the truth.

I said, are you sure? I said, if you know that you don't really intend to have the truth, don't invite me because I will not be talking with double mouths. He said, we are ready, anything. I said, brother, are you sure? You want this congregation to know the Lord and to walk in the truth? He said, that's what he wants.

You want to prepare them for heaven? He said, yes, sir. All right, so I went. I started the meeting on a Thursday, and as the Word of God was coming, since he had given me the liberty that he wanted the people to know the truth, so I went into the Word of God, and as we were studying, we were getting the scriptures, people were repenting, those that he taught were saved.

He taught they were saved. They were his top leaders. But when we started to just look at, so what does it mean to be born again? And by the time we were looking at scriptures, the people that he taught were already big, they were collapsing on their seats, and they were coming to the altar, I thought I got this thing.

Ah, if I didn't come for this meeting, maybe this heart would have gone to hell, and people would be saying he went to heaven. And they were saying it so loudly for their pastor to hear. With tears, they were all weeping.

When we finished and we go back to the vestry, I'm asking, I say, should I continue tomorrow? He said, yes, sir. But on Sunday, the meeting had risen well. Now, on Sunday, I had got a surprise.

We were already sitting on the platform, and there's another man of God that has come. And I didn't know that this man of God had been invited specially to do something. You know the something.

And as I was watching, the introducing, they say we have evangelists, so and so, who is going to do something? He will tell us something. We have been listening to Black Belief for the past four days, and we need to hear another side. So I was wondering, what is the other side of the truth? Can I tell you that the truth has no other side? The truth is the truth anywhere you turn it.

Yes. So they want to hear another side. So this man came up.

Oh, he was running from here to here. He was moving. And what was he going to talk about? He was talking about money.

And he was looking for how to, you know, because the meeting had become so banal for the past four days. And as he was coming, everybody said, so what is the Bible? You could see that people are now saying we want to read Bible, we don't want story, we need Bible now. So this man was flying from one thing to another just to raise money.

He did all kind of things. And I sat there, I said, Lord Jesus, what do I do now? That was the day I knew that my duty, my responsibility, as long as I'm alive, is to contend for the word of God. I just knew that, ha, so I have a responsibility in my own generation not to keep quiet, not to look away.

Even I would lose friends, to lose friends, but to preserve the truth. While this man was flying and saying all kind of things, he would take a scripture like this and twist it, and everybody was yelling. I said, Lord, what do I do? He said, this is one of the real privilege I'm giving you to contend for the faith.

Ah, Lord, what do I do? He said, that's what you will do this morning. You are going to take the scripture from Genesis to Revelation and contend for the faith that charlatans are trying to destroy. Those who are coming as if they are selling sugar cane with the word of God.

So, right there, you notice an unprepared message now. I said, Lord. So, when they handed over to me, you know, in such places, the man felt he was an hero when he finished.

Normally, he would sit down for one minute and then they would move out. You know, that's the kind of misbehaviors on the pulpit. They came to dish out.

They don't listen to anybody. So, I first of all, technically, did something. As I came out, I said, oh, praise the Lord.

I went and shook hands with him. I said, thank God, you have done something this morning. So, you know, I did that deliberately so that I can sit down.

It's a contention. So, he sat down. I said, brother, thank God for many issues you raised this morning, but we need to ask questions as I will open the scripture.

I said, concerning that which our brother was saying, let's look at what the Bible says about such a matter. So, we started going. Occasionally, just to put him on the spot, I said, brother, but how did you read your Bible that you said the kind of thing that came out of your mouth this morning? What is your biblical authority for this in the light of this scripture, in the light of that scripture, in the light of that scripture? I heard you saying that even those who don't have money, they should go and borrow to come and give.

I said, how did you position that in the word of God in the light of 2 Corinthians? They say it is not acceptable. Not according to what a man does not have. It's only acceptable according to what a man has and which he's willing to give freely.

I let you say this. Let us turn to this scripture. And in the next 2 hours, he was on the spot, sweating.

I was turning to my pastor friend, I said, but you told me you want the truth in this place. He said, yes, sir, yes, sir, yes, sir. I said, so why did you bring this kind? What do you want to achieve? The congregation were, they were like this.

Hey. Contending for the faith, sir. It's not passive.

So when the bishop said this morning, it's not like you're watching a movie. It's not that you have been entertained with some war stories. It's a battle to which God has enlisted me on you.

But you need to be very, very versatily prepared in the truth before you can contend for it. So as I look at Jude, and I see him say, remember this, remember that, remember this. I will say, ah, which section of the Bible as, as Jude not studied to such a point that they are on his fingertips.

Contenders for the faith, must engage in personal, functional, and applicable study of the truth to the extent that they have internalized it, that it has become their lives. It has become what they live by. It is not just that they consult the Bible to go and say something.

They have eaten the Bible. They have imbibed the truth, and they have not only imbibed it in their head, but it has become their life. They live in it so that their life itself is contending for that faith.

And if there's anyone else who ought to be so prepared, who else but you, that God is lifting up to the heights, you that God is bringing to the top leadership, who should I be? The canon of the word of God. You see, each time when I meet, I go to the Anglican Communion, and they are introducing people. I have continuously felt that this liturgy was very carefully arranged.

I realize that in the hierarchies, when they are promoting people, the most serious is when you become a canon. I suddenly discover that all others are appointments. You can be lifted to be this, to be that, to be that, but you ought to have been a canon.

And a canon is a man who has canonized the truth. That's what it means. Archbishop, please, I'm doubling to your territory, but we expect that such men, the word of God, have become their lives.

They have become men and women that could dispense the truth correctly. So, Paul was saying to Timothy, and I want you to see what he was charging Timothy with in preparation to be able to contend for the faith. Please go with me, look at what he was saying to Timothy.

Now, in 2 Timothy chapter 1, chapter 1, in verse 12 and verse 13 and verse 14, for the which cause I also suffer this things. Nevertheless, I'm not ashamed for I know whom I have believed. And I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.

Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us. Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

And that good thing which was committed unto you, do what? Keep by the Holy Spirit, by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us. You cannot contend for the faith when you have lost your grant on the truth. You cannot contend for the faith when you are no longer having a firm standing on the truth, the word of God.

So he was saying, hold fast the form of sound words which you have heard of me. And that good thing which has been committed to your hand, keep it by the Holy Ghost. Then you come to chapter 2, after all that he had to say.

In verse 14. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about wealth to no profit but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show yourself how? Approved unto

God.

And you know the word study in King James. When you go to other versions, they did not use the word study in terms of read. They used the word study in terms of being studious, being diligent, being hard working, being concentratedly deliberate, in pursuit that you as a man, as a servant of God, you are doing all your best.

You are engaging all your strengths. You are bringing to bear all your faculties to present yourself to God as a man approved of God. A man that God can put his signature on and say this man is my own.

Sometimes you know you worked hard when you were a junior clergy to win the recommendation of our leaders. Sometimes you did so much just waiting to be preferred or to be elevated. But as soon as you got into the position, something tells you fine, you have arrived now.

You can now eat and drink and make merry for the time for you to enjoy has come. Not knowing that when God lifts a man up to a position of spiritual responsibility, the office of a bishop is a noble task. It's an office for hard work and hard work not just in dealing with administrative papers.

It is in the labor in the doctrine. Labor to preserve the truth and to present the truth in his awesome complete form. No one can discredit.

When we rise in the spiritual leadership of our denomination, I don't think what God is bringing you up for is to do what an HND older who went to do accounts can do. There is no, let me tell you, I don't know, I don't know whether I'm wrong. There is no complication in any church account.

Except you have added some sophisticated things. Church account is income and expenditure only. Am I right? There are no debentures accounts.

There are no stock accounts. We don't have all such simple income expenditure. This came in, that go out.

This was spent on this. This was brought in here. That's all.

And I hope you know that this overheads of our income are also limited. Tithes, offering. Except you dabble into something else that is not part of your ordination.

I don't know why your account should be so difficult to sort out. So I did not think God would have spent so many years anointing you only for you to be lifted, to become office administrator. I don't think that's why you are called.

I don't think that's why you are ordained. And I don't think that's why God promoted you. God was leading you to a place where you become a custodian of the mysteries of the kingdom.

Paul was saying to the first Corinthians, I mean, in his first epistle to Corinthians, he said, consider us as stewards of the mysteries of God. I found that the word of God, the word of God, the oracles, is a great treasure that God does not want to give to swine and dogs. One of the things that has become so much a burden to my heart is that I realize that it takes a great trust for God to allow a man to handle his word.

I tremble when I found how meticulous God is in releasing the mysteries of the kingdom. I even realize that not everybody is allowed to look into it. He said, to you, it is given to understand the mysteries of the

kingdom, but to them, everything is what is done in parables.

Why is God ordaining us, bringing us to a position of spiritual leadership? The first thing and is the most primary issue is the oracles, the word of God, the mysteries of the kingdom. I'll be telling you something quickly. Why that is critical and why God needs contenders for it.

I'll be telling you, that the quantity and the quality of the word of God that is being released to your denomination is what determines the spirituality of that denomination. Are you hearing me? When the Bible said in the days of Eli, the word of God became scarce. They are not talking about scarcity of Bible.

Did you hear me, sir? It is not the scarcity of Bible. It is not the scarcity of the tablets. It was that when people came to the sanctuary, the word of the Lord did not come out.

The word of the Lord became scarce. But when we say the word of God became scarce, did it mean that salmon became scarce? Talk to me, please. No! Was Eli not saying something every year? Were his children not preaching? But they would talk and talk and talk and talk and talk and the Bible still said the word of the Lord was scarce.

You hardly find it. And may I tell you that the word of the Lord is not equal to noise. It's not equal to oh God, please follow me.

Read it now so that I can be able to use Biblical language to express what we need to talk about here. Verse 14. Of these things put them in remembrance.

Churching them before the Lord that they strive not about what? About words. About words to no profit. Sometimes you may think that the word of God is words.

Sometimes, even as a preacher, you may mistakenly think that the word of God is is is is highly arranged English language or Greek or Hebrew words. The word of God is not words. Even though it is expressed in words.

Did you understand? Huh? Brother Paul was saying we speak of the wisdom of God but in words found for us by the Holy Ghost which means the word of God the oracles to which God wants you to be a custodian. To which God wants you to be the dispenser of. To which God wants you to labor for.

To to preserve it and to keep it for the next generation to meet it intact. It's not about words. Hacking about words.

Analyzing empty words and bringing brilliance. Intellectualism to be speaking about words and confusing people. No.

Sir and mothers in the Lord here can I ask you what are you preparing to lay hold of the mysteries of the oracles? I'm trusting that why you people are now leaders of our denominations. The word of God. The living word of God.

We no longer discuss that you as a bishop one of the things you will be laboring on is not just to sit in the administrative office but that you are going to call your clergy all those around you and say look my first labor is to become the expositor of the doctrines of the word of God so that you can go and disseminate it where you are my representative. I don't know whether the Anglican bishops will not be annoyed with me if I remind them that every parish in the Anglican Communion you know there is always one seat that the

local vicars don't sit on it. Whose seat is that? What does that say? What does that say? That every parish in the diocese there is a bishop's seat that the bishop actually is the pastor.

The current vicar that he only sent is his delegate. If it were possible the bishop should have been in every service. Am I right? So how will you bishop ask people to go and represent you and you have not put something in their mouth? When last did you call them aside and say show me your sermon notes what have you been preaching? What have you been saying? Of course they can't say more than what they know.

Am I correct? So whose duty is it to increase the quantity of God's word in the diocese or in the conference or in the DCC? Whose duty is that? Yours. Yours. Yours.

If we are going to contend for the faith it calls for a very deliberate preparation in the truth. So Paul was charging this brother he said look let me tell you do not preoccupy yourself and do not let the people be occupied with striving about words to no profit but to what? To the subverting of the hearers. Brothers and sisters if to say that whatever people say on the pulpit can just go without affecting the hearers I would have said no problem.

Let anybody be saying whatever they like. But the word of God now says when people only go on the pulpit to talk about empty words and they keep saying that Sunday after Sunday what are they doing to the hearers? They are subverting them. Please did you have any simpler version? What is the meaning of the word? Eh? To ruin.

To destroy. To ruin the faith of people. So when our Father in the Lord this morning said what is at stake in contending for the faith? Is the fact that souls of men are at stake.

All those empty words that I see being preached on the television being recanted Sunday after Sunday all those empty psychology that our friends and colleagues are bringing all those repetitive psychology that motivational speakers are pronouncing every week what it does is that it does what? It subverts it ruins it destroys it reduces the potential of the hearers. The church is growing weaker even though you think it is expanding. Ah! That somebody stands up and says Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Shout Hallelujah somebody! Yes! Yes! Oh! Say Yeah! And they say that for 40 minutes.

You will think that the people are excited and they are blessed. No, that's not what the Bible says. What did the Bible say? They have been subverted.

They have been ruined. They have been destroyed. They have been rendered more impotent than when they came.

My prayer this morning is that God will show you why you have to stand up. Why you have to see the danger in which we are in. Why you have to deal with issues that we must not postpone till tomorrow in contending for the faith.

But you can't contend for this faith unless you will yourself dedicate diligently every strength that you have to find the truth to imbibe it to honor it until it becomes you. Praise the Lord. Do you understand to this point? He said striving about words does not profit the people.

It subverts them. Let me read on. Study to show yourself approved to God a workman that needed not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth.

If you were to read that for me is anybody having amplified Bible and you want to help me read verse 15 very quickly as I go from there. Amplified Bible in our meeting today. Is anyone? Did you see? Study.

Be eager. Do your utmost. Excuse me.

What is the meaning of utmost? Your highest. Please. The word utmost is not equal to the word almost.

I hope you know almost. What is the meaning of almost? I almost got it but you didn't get it. He almost made it.

He didn't make it. That's what they are saying. God was not talking about almost.

God was not talking about attempts that don't yield results. God is saying do your utmost. Your highest.

Your best to win God's approval. Yes, sir. Present yourself to God approved tested by trial.

A workman who has no cause to be ashamed. A workman that has no cause to be ashamed. Correctly analyzing.

Correctly analyzing and acting accurately dividing. Accurately dividing. Rightly handling.

Rightly handling. And skillfully teaching. Ah, did you see what the word of God so when you talk about that.

Where does a man of God of your caliber where does he have time to waste? Where does a man of God like you have the time to be struggling positions? The fact that I see you in ordinary squabbles already shows me you don't know why you are in your office. Do you know that when the apostles when they realized that the business of sharing bread was denying them of their basic reason for ordination. Did you hear me? They called the people they said it is not reasonable for us.

It's not correct. It's a misuse of our opportunity. It's a misplacement of the anointing on our head.

Let us look for men, honest men that will help us serve this table. Why we devote ourselves to what? To prayer and the ministry of the word of God. That was why if you read the Acts chapter 6, the result of that decision, the Bible said and the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem.

I was touched that the result was that the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied because the top leaders, they devoted themselves. I'm really touched, brothers, that our own leadership in our own generation, they are leaders. If I go to the office of senior leaders, what do I find? I just find that they are busy doing what? Dealing with issues.

Something that does not involve you, that if you have taught the word of God, it will have handled all those issues. Is it not because the word of God is becoming scarce, that they are not doing what doing? They are not doing what they should be They what be doing. They are not doing what They are not what they should be doing.

They are be doing. Is it sees the heart of me. Do you know that without you doing anything like that, you just stood up and teach the Word of God.

That man cannot sit down. He would be melted. Sometime when you stand and said, and you just turn to the Bible and say, DOW AT THE MAN! The man will just suddenly see your finger pointing at him and say, AH! This man of God has found me out.

I'm actually the one. I'm the one. I'm the one.

He can't sleep because the Word of God has arrested him. But when the Word of God has reduced, when the ministry of the Word of God and the ministry of prayer, which was the exclusive ordination of top leaders. I'm not saying others will not read their Bible, they should.

I'm not saying others will not try to do whatever they should. We should train them to do all of that. But who is the one that will resource these brothers and equip them and train them such that when one is preaching there, you don't, there's no problem.

You listen to him and say, now meet me in the office. Let us discuss. And he comes in, said, last Sunday I was privileged to listen to you and I was really blessed.

You turned the Bible to to George's chapter 5. That was wonderful. Then the young man relaxed because the Lord Bishop or the venerable is discussing the message he preached. And I said, thank God this point came out.

That point came out. This point came out. But I saw how you quickly veered and went to Isaiah 30.

How did Isaiah 30 link with where you are? You're just about to step into the pivot of that passage. Why did you move? Tell me what happened to you. If the young man would be sincere, say, you know as I was preaching, I saw one, one, one big man that just, I saw him and I thought that I need to send a word of encouragement to him.

That's why I went to Isaiah 30. He said, you see now, you're a man pleaser. Servant of God, no fear faces on me.

Next time, stay with your text. Preach what God has given you to do. If you are afraid of his eyes, close your eyes as you are making the truth.

Are you understanding what I'm saying now? That level of contending for the truth and for the faith and for the preaching of it is dying out. And as many souls have been subverted because of what they are told. Brother, skillfully, skillfully, skillfully, we don't just teach the word of God anyhow.

We correctly analyze. Brother, please read it again so that I finish with that scripture. Study and be eager and do your utmost to preach yourself to God, to present yourself to God, approved, tested by trial.

Yes. A woke man who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing, rightly handling and skillfully teaching the word of truth. Go to verse 16.

But avoid all empty, vain, useless, idle talk. Did you hear that? Avoid what? Profane, vain, useless, empty babblings. Yes sir.

For it will lead people into more and more ungodliness. This is what I'm telling you. Each time the word of God is not correctly preached, you did not leave the people how you make them.

You only make the people to increase more and more. In what? Ungodliness. You see, what I see in our churches, in the church in Nigeria now, pains my heart.

The reason is because more and more, you see people that profess Christ, but they are the most ungodly people you can meet. Am I communicating? If you go to market and you want to buy something, may God deliver you from falling to the hand of the man that made you. I say, oh God, brother, praise the Lord.

We thank God for you. It was wonderful. Please come, come, come, come, come, come, come.

What do you need? I just want to buy this cable. I wonder, ah, it's okay, okay. This cable, because you are the one.

This is the original. And normally it is sold for 2,000, but because of you, you are my brother. It is 1.8. Just give the boy 1.8, just for you.

And he said the boy, just take 1.8 from him because he is one of my brothers. And then he shakes hands with you. You will thank him very well, Abbie, that he has really, really treated you.

He gave you original. He gave you the cheapest price. If you move out of that shop and you go to two shops after, someone who does not know you at all, with whom you can be yourself and bargain, you get that same thing for 1,500.

Why have we produced Christian brothers? Who tell lies and hypocrisy? Is it not because we told them that their offering is more important than their soul? Is it not because all you told them week after week is steps on to breakthrough? No steps to heaven. Every time the truth of the word of God was not taught, you only increase more and more what? Ungodliness. Can you imagine how many, you know it is not easy for us to talk, but if we want to talk practically among ourselves, among ourselves, we want to face the reality.

It is not Islam that has faced our problem. It is that our own men, our own boys, they have denied the faith. They are not standing well.

If we were opening the mouth to discuss immorality, how, how many of our pastors cannot take their stand? But what was it that makes a man of God to be bold to come on the pulpit after he has, he just rose on top of a woman that is not his wife and he can say hallelujah. What gave him that boldness? It is because we have made the word of God to look like drama. We have made it to appear as if it is just one thing to say.

There was no fear of God again that if you open your mouth there, God could strike you down. There is nothing that gave us that kind of fear anymore. So as to perfect holiness in the fear of God, there is nothing more.

Because those who are to labor in the truth, those who are to increase the word of God in the land, those who are to multiply the truth, thank you sir, our father in the Lord said this morning, the gospel is complete, amen, is comprehensive, is total, is perfect. We cannot alter it, we cannot revise and edit it. There is no new edition of the gospel.

Are we together? And it does not matter what pressure people are putting us under to change the message. We have no right to change it. We have only been mandated to preach it and to guard it and to

preserve it and possibly to die for it.

That's where the contention comes. I will be hated as long as I will not allow the truth to be short measured. I will not be appreciated as long as when I stand among my colleague preachers, when they have blue hair, blue hair, blue hair, blue hair and they said nothing but highly decorated.

If I have the chance and I was given the microphone to take the people back to the Bible, I'm not attacking them. I'm only preaching the truth. Every time you preach the truth, anything that is untrue will shake.

Am I right? Anytime you bring the truth, what is not authentic will begin to shiver. You say, Rabbi Lee, and you're attacking us. How? How? How? Did I ever mention your name here? Say no.

Say for what you are preaching, he's making us to appear before the people as if we are liars. I say, I hope you are not. Sir, I want to ask you this morning, are you making personal preparation such that the word of God recommends? Now he said, avoid strong, profane and vain babblings.

There are too many babblings, empty talks, uncoordinated noise that have been, I don't know, and you know people are very brilliant, particularly the younger generation of preachers now. They are very brilliant. They are not brilliant in the spirit, but they are very brilliant in their head.

They have words. When they put symmetry together like this, if they want to preach, if letter P is what they want to use to begin every point they are going to reach, are you understanding? They will put all the P's, P's, P's, P's, so that even if you, even if they are saying nothing, the symmetry of the P's is enough to impress you. Am I right? And if they want to start with W, everything has to start with W. And by the time they pack W this, W that, what, when, where, wow, when they put all of that together, you say, ah, then you end with wow.

You know, very brilliant, but saying nothing. Engaging the heart of man onto emptiness. The Bible calls them the right names.

These are clouds without water. They raise the hope of people. He shall be well with you.

Tell somebody, I have made it. Only for the people to go home and discover that they have not made anything. So my brothers, if we are going to contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, we have no right to change it, we have no right to reduce it, and we have no right to edit it.

We only have the mandate to preach it, to preserve it, to guard it, to study it, to rightly and correctly analyze it, to teach it in words found for us by the Holy Ghost. I'm confronting you as Apex leaders because if there's any group of people whom God is depending upon to contend for the faith in this generation, you are the one. The reason why it has to be you is that if it's a young man under your hand that is standing up to teach the truth, to contend for the Word of God, for which you are not the first to stand and defend, you know the problem now.

It will appear as if he's attacking your authority, and you are likely to do what? To quench him. You are likely to stand up and use your authority, you just put it on the ground and say BAM! This boy cannot preach here again. Why is he speaking so boldly when I'm sitting down? If I did not emphasize a particular Bible verse, what right I see to be speaking about it? When leaders have left their own position, they quench the fire of others.

And I know God did not raise you to be a fire extinguisher. You are supposed to kindle fires, am I right? You are supposed to raise younger men and set them ablaze for God and see them burning. But you are still there to regulate that fire so that it does not become strange fire.

You know enough that when the young man is dashing out of tangents, you can call him to order and say yes brother what you started saying is correct, but where you went is an extrapolation. We don't extrapolate the Word of God like that, come back here. This is the center of the Word of God.

And because all that he knew, he got it from you, will he not sit down? Eh? He will. But if we become lazy in laboring in the doctrine, in releasing the Word of God, in increasing the quality and the quantity of the truth, we are, the only thing we are doing, we are quenching the fire. There is no other way to put it.

He said, he was telling Timothy again, he said, they will increase unto more ungodliness, verse 17, and their word. We do what? We eat as does a cancer, of whom is eminence and filetus. You know what is making me to cry this morning and you see me doing so, is that if I don't preach the truth as to stop the mouth of these gainsayers, the words they are speaking, they are cancerous.

They are cancerous. Every time they speak, they are releasing fresh cancer cells into the system of God's people. Have you heard in recent times that young men, preachers, they are talking about grace.

Grace that has no responsibility to deal with sin. Grace that says because God is gracious, there is nothing, nothing you can do, even if you are living in sin, grace has covered you. And they are going everywhere, they are going to campuses, they are grabbing all those people who are laden with sin and who have not been decided to repent and they are giving them an assurance.

They are saying that sin is not a problem, it's just your guilt. If we take away guilt from your mind, even if you sin 30 times in a day, it doesn't matter. It's because you have a weak conscience, that's why you are feeling bad.

Who will stop their mouths? If we will not teach the truth and make it plain and increase it in our churches, increase it in the fellowships, increase it on the campuses, how will their mouth be stopped? But you see the trouble. These boys, they are great researchers. Every time I see false teachers, they are great researchers.

I wish those who have the truth are more mobilized to push for the truth like those who have error. Brothers, I'm telling you, I'm praying as I will stop on this, I'm praying that you will take responsibility. Your position, even to tell you the truth, your position that God has brought you into is a demand.

It's a demand on your life. And the first demand is not this administrative thing you are running up and down with. The first demand is that you will devote yourself to the Word of God.

This thing containing for the faith, I want to tell you, it is not because it's Nigeria. It's all over the world. And one day I was asked for a meeting among the white people about several countries of Europe gathered and these are senior pastors and all of them, they gathered for a meeting and they asked if I would like to come and bring two slots.

Another man came from U.S. with ministry. Another man, so we were there. I'm praying.

I'm praying for myself. I want to die contending for the faith. As far as I'm concerned, there's no need for me to be alive.

And I see the faith of our fathers bastardized. This man arrived all the way from the U.S. He came with books. That's the day I also resolved I must write.

People with error, they are quick in writing foolishness. He came with books. And he was standing up and this, you know, one of the things that made me to be very disturbed was when he said, you know, these books, they are taking them to Africa.

And that African pastors are ignorant. So they are trying to educate them. They will gather them for one week and teach them.

And after one week, they will ordain them. So our ordination is so cheap, that one week. But when he started, if he was preaching correctly, I would have gone to say thank you very much.

But it is not one week that makes a man of God. I would have told him that. But he did something else that really disturbed me.

So he started. He said, yes, there are some age-long reformed theology that has made some of you people incapacitated. And I need to release you here today.

Say, for example, the doctrine that you say people must be born again, born again. The Bible say when God created man, man is good. Tell everybody by yourself, say you are good.

Ah. You know, this is how I open my mouth. I say, ah.

I was expecting all these senior white pastors to stand up and say no, to call him by his name and say no. They all kept quiet. They are all laughing.

Ah. Something was running in my heart. My head was burning.

Scriptures was running. Jesus said no man is good except God. If man was good, it is needless for Jesus to die.

If righteousness were to come by the law, then Jesus Christ died in vain. Ah. I did not allow him to finish.

I raised my hand and said, answer. Because we call people by their first name. I call him by his first name.

I said, excuse me. In the light of what you are saying, where do you put Ezekiel chapter three? Ezekiel chapter 33? Where do you put Romans? All have sinned and they have come short of the glory of God. But the gift of God in Christ Jesus is salvation.

Where do you put John 3, 3? Where do you put this? Do you know what he did? He decided to be a sinnaker. It's like Billy, you have been brainwashed. You are one of the people that we need to help to come out of your confusion.

It was confrontational. But he's white, I'm the only black man in the whole of that meeting. I said, Hans, it doesn't matter whether I'm brainwashed or not.

We are talking of the Bible. When I did that, suddenly all the people that were quiet, all the white guys that were keeping quiet as if they believed in what he was saying, they said, yes, Billy, you are correct. I said, why didn't you talk? Now, that made me to again understand that it is my responsibility to defend the truth that I know.

And it's as if when a man like me stands, there are many others who are subjected to oppression, who will find their liberty and they will rise. So, he couldn't preach again because he did not expect that kind of destabilization. Then the organizers of the meeting stood up.

They said, Hans, you have insulted us here. You insulted a man of God that we highly respected who came all the way from Africa to minister to us. This man is a man of integrity and he has been teaching us the world of life and you insulted him like that? Brother, we think you are wrong for doing that kind of thing.

Even if you don't like what he says, why do you get to abuse him? I said, no, no, no, no, no. Please don't talk about abuse. He has not abused me.

He only said I was brainwashed. That's not an abuse. That is his evaluation.

Me, I know I am outwashed by the blood of the lamb and by the word of God. There's no problem about that. If you reduce this thing to a matter of personal quarrel, you will have lost the issue.

The issue is not about me. The issue is that he is doing damage to the word of God. That moment, they banned him from speaking.

I took the rest of the slots. We went back to scriptures. When the meeting finished, I traveled.

They called me back. They said, we need to apologize to you. We have met and we have decided that such a man is not worthy of our platform.

He will never speak here again. That was the end of his message in that part of the country. Who will stop the mouth of Gensaius? All the books that people were rushing around, nobody went there again.

So the question is this. What we are talking about here is not that we are local. We are talking about taking responsibility to contend for the truth, for the word that God has given to us.

I don't want you to think that anything that is white is white. Don't be intimidated by color. Don't be intimidated by high sounding English.

Don't be intimidated by highly, high qualification. All of those things, they are nothing when we talk about the authority of the word of God. Would you like to say, Lord, count on me.

I want to prepare myself to labor in the doctrine, to labor in the word of God. These people are so very, the words they speak is like cancerous cells. Once it enters to the bloodstream or into the internal organ, it's difficult to deal with.

How can you be sitting down and all our youth, they are hearing nonsense. Our father in the Lord, Reverend Upu said, everything is now online. And as he was talking like that, I said, if they are online, we must go online.

We must contend for the faith even online. We must put the truth straight forward. So that those that are hungry for the word of God, at least they will have the other way to look and don't allow them to be swallowed by imineos and filetus.

I don't know what they will be. This imineos, whose word does spread like cancer. When the Bible said it spread like cancer.

And that it destroys the people of God from inside. I felt that even if you will not do anything, these are men concerning the truth they have heard. They have seen that the resurrection has passed already and overthrew the faith of some.

Every time we don't contend for the faith, men's lives are overthrown. Men are subverted. You can keep reading and reading and reading, go to titles, go to all the scriptures, you just find that every time we do not contend for the truth, we subvert the heart of our hearers.

This morning, personal preparation. When I have more space, I will still come back. I will not be talking about the personal preparation of our own character.

You can't contend for the faith when you are character deficient. It doesn't matter how much of the truth you know how to preach. If it does not reflect in your character, you are already defeated.

Am I communicating? Because the faith has to deal with life, every character deforms the truth. So if me and you are going to prepare ourselves as contenders, and I am trusting God that the next paper that we will be taking will be helping us to deal with the definitions and all of the things that we need to deal with. But this morning, just asking you to pray with me, I will ask you to pray and say, Lord, prepare me a sanctuary, a vessel that can carry your oracles.

Make me a man you can entrust with the truth. Make me a man that you can rely upon to disseminate the undiluted word of God in my own generation. And in the church where God has made you leaders and overseer, that you will be able to increase the word of God.

Between the rank and file of our people, the junior clergy and the entire church populace, that the word of God will increase. As I'm talking now, I found that God's word is becoming more and more scarce. Don't think that the Pentecostal charismatic churches are better.

In fact, they are more ignorant. But you see, because of their own charisma of noise, of activity, of everything, it makes it look as if they are bold and they have the truth. But if you go in, you just discover that no, no, this is garbage that has been garnished.

I want you to beg God for me and for yourself today, Lord, make me a contender for this faith. Prepare me. That preparation requires that you are going to go to God and say, Lord, what is it in my life that you cannot approve? What is it in my character that is defeating the word of God? What is this laziness that will not let me dig deep into the truth as to make it available to men and women who come all the way through? If the word of God reduces in our congregations, righteousness and godliness will reduce.

If our faith is not preached, men will perish. If the biblical faith is not taught, error will multiply. And error will only lead men to the dungeon of darkness.

Would you like to say, Lord, I want to dedicate, I want to devote myself to this matter? Some want to ask authentic questions. Was I raised to be this busy? Is this what God preserved my life for 20 years and the ministry to become? Lord, I'm here. Do something deliberate with me.

Make me a voice for you in my generation. Would you like to see me in prayer? Lord, prepare me. We're going to take a moment of prayer before the prayer session will be coming.

Just rise in prayer with me and say, Lord, prepare me. Make me a sanctuary for you. Tell my story.

Take me deeper than where I am now. Thank you, Father. Spirit of God, breathe upon us.

Breathe upon us, Lord. If to say you have some other people who will contend for the faith at a time like this and not us, would have said it doesn't matter. But you have put us in the exalted positions.

You have brought us to a place where we are the one to interpret the word of God. We are the ones to teach and preach. We are the ones that appoint even the teachers in our seminaries.

We are the ones that recommend men to go and take position in our teaching theological schools. How can we correct error if we don't know it? Lord, please walk in this meeting this morning. Holy Spirit, please do something in our hearts.

Lord, undertake for us. Undertake for us. Thank you.

Thank you. Can you in one word make a commitment to God this morning? We will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. Some say, but I don't sit over at local church now.

Which is the best thing? So that you may sit with the pastors. So that you may create space for the preachers to speak the truth. And you may be taught on how to stand the truth.

Lord, help me. Lord, prepare me. A sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you. One more time. Lord, prepare me.

A sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true. With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary. Sanctuary for you, Lord.

Father, this morning we ask you to please walk in our hearts. Please, Lord, set us on fire. Lord, I pray this morning, create inside of us a particular hunger to contain for the truth, the common salvation that has been handed over to us.

Lord, I pray that this meeting will raise men who radically stand up to go and labor for you. The revival of the church depends on whether the faith is being properly taught. It's the same word of God that they use to defeat Satan.

Lord, please come back to us. Several of us, we need to make this decision, but we're asking that as this meeting runs on, you will not allow us to leave here without that deep commitment and say, now I know why you have made me a bishop. Now I know why I'm a DC chairman.

Lord, help me to do the right thing. Thank you for hearing our prayer. In Jesus Christ's name, we have prayed.

Amen.

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