

## CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

**Text:** “I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3b)

The Greek word for contend earnestly is the compound word (epagonizomai / p.m.infin). This is the only time this compound word is used in the NT.

The Greek preposition (epi) intensifies the meaning of the verb (agonizomai). Agonizomai is used several times in NT. It is translated (contend, fight, strive against opposition, or agonize in a contest).

- Jude used epagonizomai to emphasize the need for spiritual advancing believers **to contend with feverous agony for the faith.**

NAS and KJ translated it – contend earnestly for the faith  
NIV and Amplified translated it – contend for faith

<b>This lesson will study <u>three aspects</u> of CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH.</b>
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### **1. The Greek word (agonizomai) was used by Paul because it was a popular word associated with the Greek Olympiad (1 Cor.9:24-27).**

(1 Cor.9:25) “And everyone who competes (agonizomai) in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath (stephanos/ crown), but we an imperishable.”

When you read the full context of Paul’s illustration, you see he explained it by negatives and positives.

(1 Cor.9:24) “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize?”

- **Positive:**
  - Race requires all to run (9:24)
  - Run for the prize (9:24)
  - Exercise strict training for the prize (9:25)
- **Negative:**
  - Do not compete for an imperishable prize (9:25)
  - Do not compete aimlessly (9:26)
  - Do not disqualify (according to the rules) from competing (9:27)

(2 Tim.2:5) “And also **if (ean)** anyone competes as an athlete (p.a.subj.3ps), he does not (ouk) win the prize (stephanoo / p.p.ind 3ps) [Crown] **unless (ean me)** he competes (pa.a.subj.3ps) according to the rules (nomimos) [lawfully] (Rom.8:4).”

This is a unique Greek sentence. It has two proteases (if) [3cc] but only one apodosis (then). This means fulfilling the conditions of the two proteases making the “winning of the crown prize a certainty.”

2. **Jude intensified the whole process of rigid training and strenuous competition by adding (epi) to agonizomai – to contend earnestly (giving all you have, 110%).**

(Col.3:17) “And whatever (tis ean) you do (poieo / p.a.subj. / 2pl) in word or in deed, (do) all (everything) in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

(1 Tim.6:12) “Fight (agonizomai / p.m.impv.2ps) the good fight (ton kalos agon / asm) of faith (tes pistis / gsf).”

(2 Tim.4:7-8) “I have fought (agonizomai/ perf.m.ind.1ps) the good fight (ton kalos agon), I have finished (teleo / perf.a.ind.1ps) the course, I have kept (tereo / perf.a.ind.1ps) the faith (tes pistis); in the future there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also all who have loved His appearing.” (Over 30 years)

It begins in spiritual gym of bible study for spiritual growth development (Heb.10:25; 5:13-14).

It requires self-discipline to concentrating under the ministry of indwelling Holy Spirit in order to understand and believe the truth of the word of God in order to understand the personal importance of the prize. (2 Tim.2:15; John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15; 1 John 2:26-27).

It requires readjusting personal struggles, priorities, and goals in life as the word of God teaches, reproves, corrects, and trains in righteousness (2 Tim.3:16-17; Heb.4:12).

(Phil.3:14) “I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

3. **Note those we are competing against are false teachers in Christianity (1 Thess.2:2).**

The **contest of the faith** is what the Church Age Believer (CAB) believes as the foundation of his walk by faith (Rom.10:17; 2 Cor.5:7). Especially when both used the Bible as the resource of their teaching (Acts 15:1, 5, 7-12; Acts 10-11; Gal.2:4-5, 16, and 21).

**Alexander:**

“Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.” (2 Tim.4:15; 4:14-18)

**Opponents:**

“For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out of this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (Jude 4-16)

“False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bring swift destruction upon themselves.” (2 Pet.2:1-3)

**You:**

“But you beloved” (17-25).

(Col.1:28-29) “And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose also I **labor (kopiao/ p.a.ind.1ps), striving (agonizomai/ p.m.ptc.nsm)** according to His power, which mightily works within me.”