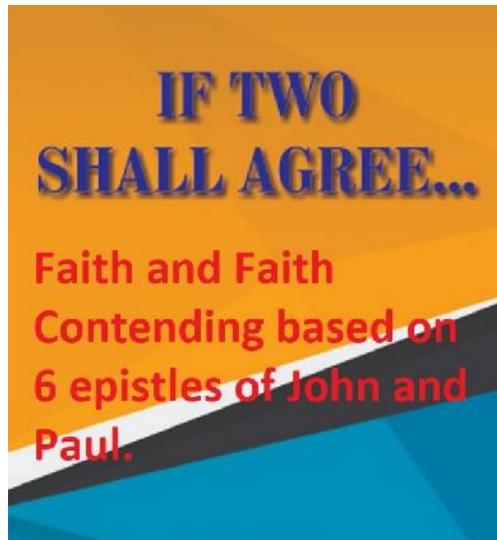


## **“IF TWO AGREE...”, Faith and Faith Contending centered around 6 epistles of John and Paul.**



### INTRODUCTION:

If we could only make a dint in the unsound doctrine around us flooding our churches and denominations? Preach the Word, Preach the Word, and Preach the Word of the common salvation; yes, but like Jude we find that we must pause to look about us at the world in which we live, and the condition of our churches and denominations to **CONTEND FOR THE FAITH** once for all delivered to the saints. Of course there are many, many that think, according to man’s wisdom, that an evolving and developing faith

apart from the authority of the word of God is good, like the Roman Vatican and many others that have placed other documents in authority over the Bible.

Not as well known, but come out of Sweden years ago and establishing in Chicago is the Evangelical Covenant Church. 3 tremendous Bible words, evangelism, covenant, and church; and yet looking at their own public profession of faith without shame, even with a pride in their achievement of solidarity and unity, they profess another faith than that of Jude. It is not to single out the ECC denomination because you have to somewhat appreciate their confessions of unsound doctrine for the sake of the unity of the body of their Church, as they are not different in contemporary practices and faith of Baptists, Methodist, and the Vatican – all are head over heels in love with the “will not endure sound doctrine” (II Timothy 4:3,4) of the Falling Away. Thinking themselves unique in that they are conquerors of “Church” stability and unity, and historically so, they are all victims of the “seducing spirits and doctrines of devils” of I Timothy 4:3,4.

The problem is that the present church members can not see how far in 2000 years they and their closed society have departed from the faith once for all delivered to the saints – goodness you reading and listening do not see the problem; so...so we will briefly cast our mental tents as Dr. Lee use to say on the official doctrinal summary of the EEC, not critically as they are no different today from other Christian groups, churches, church, or denomination, it is only the best of the worst public example of doctrine you can find, outside of the Vatican’s confessions of faith, that dramatically illustrates the falling away from sound doctrine.

Following, from <https://covchurch.org/who-we-are/beliefs/> , is their official statement of BELIEFS:

*“When new members join a Covenant church, they are asked two questions about belief: “Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and promise to follow him as Lord?” and “Do you accept the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct?” They are then asked if they intend to live as faithful followers of Christ and members of the church and denomination. That’s all. That is enough.*

*But on another level, of course, the answer is a good deal more complex. While the Covenant Church does not require adherence to any written creed, we take our theology very seriously, and our history as well. We are a Reformation church, a part of the Church universal, and an evangelical church. In that heritage, we share certain central beliefs, which draw us together in faith and fellowship and make possible a freedom among us on more widely ranging issues. We describe those central beliefs as “affirmations.” We hope that as you read these affirmations you will find yourself identifying with them in your own faith experience. If they raise questions for you or you would like to read further, we would encourage you to ask your pastor (if you are already in contact with a Covenant church) or any Covenant pastor for more suggestions.*

Several questions less obvious arrive here in misunderstandings of the 128 times the word church for a local church or the total body of Christ, and an attitude that the people exist for this Covenant Church, the opposite of Christ for Individuals, the epistles of John, for which this is an introduction; and of course, so many of the buzz words sound so good, just like in your church and churches above all have become extreme practitioners of good PR. Down to the nitty gritty of why they depart from the Bible on infant baptism and admit they do for the sake of “body unity”, and for the sake of both brevity and not to exalt bad doctrine over good doctrine, look at the summary below from GOT QUESTION online about what is the Evangelical Covenant Church:

*“Much of what the Evangelical Covenant Church believes is in accordance with the Bible, but the baptism of infants and the ordination of women pastors are problematic. Also, the ECC’s zeal for unity, though commendable in itself, is coupled with a commitment to be “non-doctrinaire,” and this can easily lead to the sacrifice of truth or the encroachment of error.” {*

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Evangelical-Covenant-Church.html>

1. Along the line in the series based on the agreements of the 6 Epistles, Jude must be considered on faith and faith contending, as an evidence of how brutal it can get when we see the faith once for all deliver, the Bible, being so obviously distorted and maligned. When read today and in response from the average church member, we might hear “That is not nice”, or “that is intolerant”, or rationalize that Jude has to be talking about nobody in our nation, church, or community.

## Jude New King James Version (NKJV)

1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, [a]sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: 2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; 7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. 8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. 14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. 17 But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: 18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. 19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

**20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And on some have compassion, making a distinction; 23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.**

**24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.**

2. Along the line in the series based on the agreements of the 6 epistles, we must also consider the real unity of the body, “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” based on what must be agreed upon in any doctrinal sound body of Christ, the 7 ONES.

**“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:1-6 NIV)**

Just as a preview of things to come in light of the unsound doctrine in the ECC, a short exegesis of the above words from God would be: (1) first of all there has to be a Christian life living worthy of the call to follow Christ; (2) the “spare no effort” or “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit” is a unity only the Holy Spirit can give to the body, meaning members must have a new birth and be led by the Spirit, also it acknowledges the reality that it may not always be possible, and we will look in the chapters below of what 7 specific churches went through in Christian efforts; (3) the bond of peace is really the 7 bonds of peace that bind a church together, the 7 ONES, and the major doctrines on which there can be no compromise.

3. Also along the line we will share parts of these chapters below from CFI, Christ for Individuals, the 5 books of the Apostle John, and which you might have seen on a SunGrist post as CFILES, for Christ for Individuals Little Epistles, the bottom third of the book, and by the way the very last of the NT books to be written.

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