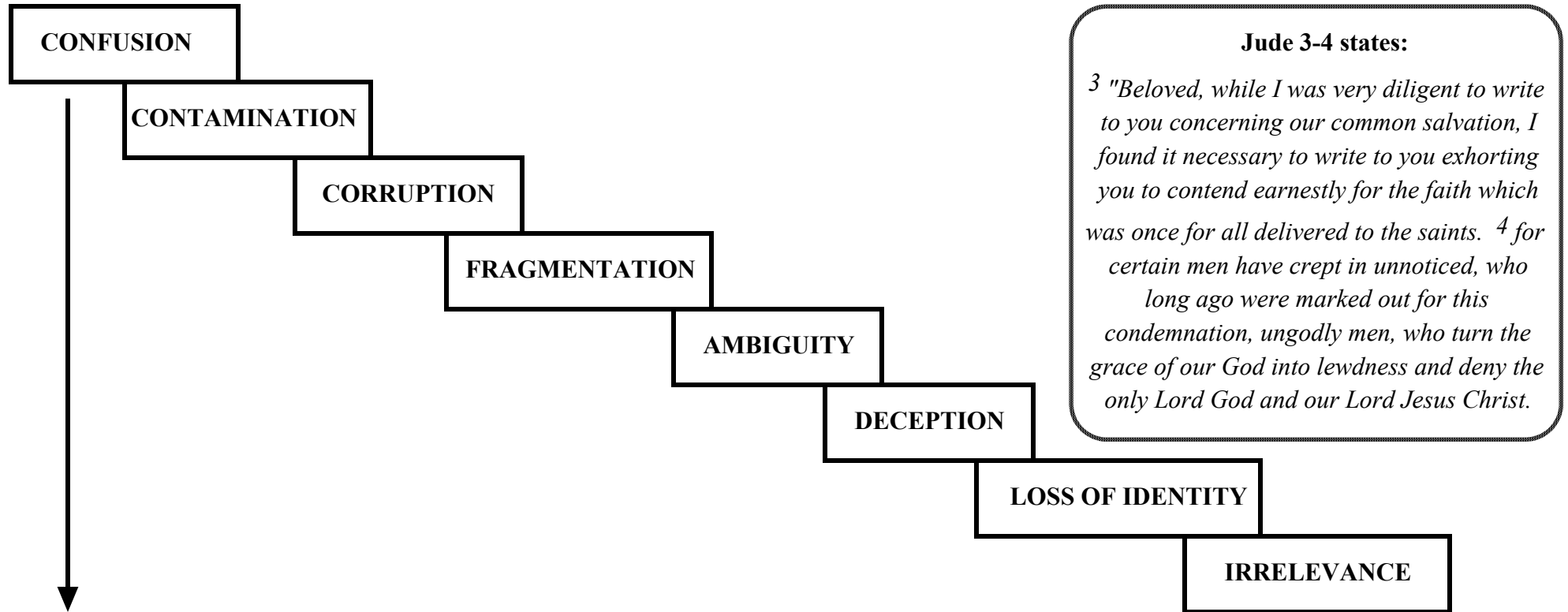


Failure to Earnestly Contend for the Christian Faith (Jude 3-4)

What are the *downward* steps if we fail to *earnestly contend* for the Christian Faith (Jude 3-4)? What are the intellectual & moral implications if we do not examine each & every theological claim being made in our contextual setting, particularly in our Christian homes, churches (members & leaders), & biblical, theological institutions?



If a false theological claim is made & remains, then confusion will be the result. If theological confusion remains, then corruption will set in & like mold on a wall, will begin to spread. Once the spread is significant, corruption will set in. Corruption eventually leads to fragmentation. Fragmentation leads to theological ambiguity. Ambiguity is the result of biblical doctrine & practices becoming so diluted that they are no longer recognizable; theological agnosticism can also set in (we can never really know what God said or we don't presently have enough information to know with any sense of determinancy). Ambiguity leads to deception. Deception occurs when what we originally rejected we now proclaim & what we originally believed we now scorn; our theological beliefs, values, & duties are turned upside down. When deception sets in, then we've lost our God-given identity. When we have lost our identity, then we become irrelevant for we are no longer representing God's interests. We have lost His authority, distinctiveness, purpose/vision, uniqueness, & unique witness to the world. At this stage we are no longer substantially recognizable from the ideas & practices of the secular world. Our explanatory power is gone. These 8 downward steps not only find historical justification in evangelical churches, denominations, & movements that have become liberal, but also in evangelical churches where the quest to be "relevant" to our contemporary culture (at the expense of faithfulness) has occurred.