

# Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

## An Expositional Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

### Chapter 3- The Common Salvation **Jude 3**

#### 19. The Common Salvation- Part 11

---

WOSM Thursday 11/29/07; WPAS Thursday 05/15/08

Welcome again my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse study of the Epistle of **Jude** and today I want to continue to look at what Jude meant when he talked about the “**Common Salvation**”. So, let’s read **Jude 3** together:

**Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.**

Over the last several broadcasts, we have explored what Jude was talking about when he said that he wanted to write this Epistle to the Church concerning the “Common Salvation”. We have seen that what made the Salvation that the church of the first century had to be called “common” was the attributes that were declared in **The Book of the Acts 2:42**:

**They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.**

We have seen that all the Church had these four things common or alike among them and it was these four things that made the church strong and vibrant and alive. We explored together just what the Apostles Doctrine was and was not; we saw how important godly times of fellowship is among those who are saved; we saw that the Church is commanded to be faithful to keep the Communion Service and to keep it often; and we saw how important prayer was to the Church and how that prayer was about worshipping and loving and knowing God- not about us getting things that we want.

These four attributes; these four characteristics made the Church of Jesus different from anything else and from everything else that the world had seen. God moved in the early Church. The people had been saved and they had been born again and they were so grateful that Christ had washed their sins away and they were excited about serving the Lord with all their hearts and serving each other and excited about going to Heaven.

And there was an innocence in the Church in those days; a holy; childlike innocence among the believers that was precious and good and very sweet- but it was naive. The Church was filled with people who had been gloriously saved by Grace through Faith in Christ alone- they had no personal or intrinsic righteousness of their own; they had no plea; they knew they were lost sinners and that God had wondrously redeemed them by the miracle of the new birth. They were so happy to be saved. All they wanted to do was love Jesus and love each other and obey God and serve one another and go tell as many people as they could about how wonderful it was to be saved.

It was inconceivable to these early saints that anyone would ever come into their midst and not have the same passion for Jesus that they had. They couldn't imagine why anyone would want to teach anything that wasn't from God. They never dreamed that false teachers and liars and men of wicked hearts would try to tear up this beautiful thing that God had built. They didn't know that just ahead of them were problems and struggles and decisions and conflicts and battles over things as major as the fall of the Roman empire and as minute as a single letter. Yet God used both the major and the seemingly minor events that were ahead of them to shape and mold the Church into a City that God had set on a hill.

Almost immediately after Jesus ascended into Heaven and the Apostles were indued with Power from on in the Upper Room- God the Holy Ghost moved upon the Apostles and they began to write down inspired letters or Epistles to the various Churches and in those Letters, the Holy Spirit taught and guided and explained and expounded and taught what Salvation was; and how to be saved and how to set up the Church and about all the issues of life and godliness. These 21 Epistles gave us the correct interpretation of what the Old Testament and the Gospels taught, and they were the final, full and completed revelation of God to Man.

According to pages 16 & 17 of *The Chronological Charts of the New Testament* by Wayne House and published by Zondervan, the Apostle James wrote the first Epistle around A.D. 40 only some 13 years after the Resurrection. Paul wrote **Galatians** in A.D. 49, just 22 years after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Book was sent to the Church in Galatia, but was widely used in the churches at Ephesus, Thyatira, Philadelphia, Smyrna, Jerusalem, Antioch, Pergamos, and as far away as India and what is now Great Britain. The Letter to the Galatians was so widely circulated and so widely respected and so widely used in the early church, that passages from Galatians were quoted by other Church leaders over 14,000 times in the first ten years of the Church's life.

Over the next six years, this Book was quickly followed by **1 and 2 Thessalonians; 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans**. John Mark wrote the first Gospel account that bears his name in the late 50's or early 60's. The year of A.D. 60, was a prolific year for the Church. The Holy Spirit came heavily upon the Apostle Paul and he wrote **Philemon, Colossians** and **Ephesians** in quick succession that year. The Greek physician, Dr. **Luke**, wrote his Gospel account, as he was commissioned by Paul to do so, the very same year. Luke also wrote the diary of the Church which is called **The Book of the Acts of the Apostles**, which he wrote the next year. Also in A.D. 61, Paul wrote his letter to the Church at **Philippi**. In A.D. 62, Paul wrote his first letter to his son in the faith, **Timothy**, and to his other son in the faith, **Titus**, instructing them on how to be godly Pastors. In A.D. 63, the Apostle **Peter** wrote his first Epistle, and Paul wrote his second letter to **Timothy**. The very next year, **Peter** wrote his second letter to the Church.

Around the same time that Peter and Paul and Luke were being moved upon by the Holy Ghost to pen down those things that God breathed, the transformed tax collector, **Matthew**, or Levi, as Peter called him, wrote the Gospel account that bears his name to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. And either the Apostle Apollos, or maybe Luke, or Barnabas, or Priscilla and Aquila, or even Paul could have written **Hebrews** in the late A.D. 60's. And **Jude**, who wrote the Epistle that we are now studying, finished his letter around this same time.

After the Apostle John was arrested and after he survived the attempt by the Romans to boil him in oil- he was banished to the deserted island of Patmos, just off the coast of Greece to die. Not only did John *not* die there- it was on this island that the Spirit of the Lord came upon John on the Lord's Day and God gave him the Vision and the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which is now the last Book of the New Testament. While he was on that island, God told John that he would, "**prophesy again to many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. (The Revelation 10:11)**". Somehow, God brought John off that island and he made his way to Ephesus and as an old man in his nineties, John penned down his Gospel account, his three Epistles, and **The Book of the Revelation** right at the end of the first century.

So we can see that, although it took the Church several hundred years to *compile* all of the inspired Scriptures into one Book that today make up the New Testament, all of these Books were written and were being circulated very soon after the events themselves had occurred. In just over 50 years, from A.D. 49 to the end of the first century, all 27 Books of the New Testament were finished and were in wide circulation among the believers and churches.

This is a very significant but overlooked fact that we need to know, because it is widely thought today that these New Testament Books were not even written until hundreds of years had transpired and that simply is not true. With the exception of those Books that John wrote, the complete New Testament was written; and was in wide circulation; and the Doctrine that these Books contained was being taught in all the churches while all of the Apostles of the Lord were still alive.

This historical fact can give us much assurance today as to the reliability and trustworthiness of the New Testament. No one could write anything that was not verified and accepted by those men who had actually walked and talked with Jesus. No Doctrine could be added or taken away from the writings of the Apostles without them knowing about it.

As the original Apostles of the Lord began to die and be martyred- other books began to be written and to be circulated among Asia Minor and in Israel that did not have apostolic authority. These new books created strange, new doctrines that none of the legitimate Books discussed and some of these new books clearly contradicted or

repudiated existing and established Doctrine that had been clearly laid out by those men whom Jesus had handpicked to start the Church.

As more and more books began to be circulated throughout the region, off base teachings and ungodly doctrines began to come forth that created great confusion among the believers. This caused the Church to see the need to assemble the real and true and inspired Books and thus they would “receive” or “accept” from God the “rule” or the “measure” or the “canon” of Holy Scripture which would be all of those Books which God had breathed, and which were not the invention of human reasoning or thought. This canon of Holy Scripture was added to the already accepted Old Testament writings which were beyond debate or reproach.

It is very important for us to understand that the Church did not *create* the Word. No, the Word created the Church. The Word of God came first- not the Church. Some teach today that since the Church created the canon of holy Scripture, then the Church or the leaders of the Church have the right and the authority to change the Scriptures; ignore them; add to them; or take away from them. This reasoning is dangerously faulty and ungodly- because no one in the Church of the first century thought like that.

Great care was taken to maintain the belief that it was God’s holy Word which established the Church- not the other way around. Those whom God used to assemble the Books into one manuscript never said that they “created” the Canon of Scripture. No, they said that they “received” the canon from God and thus they were unanimously acknowledging that the Church did not hold authority over the Holy Scriptures, but that the Holy Scriptures held complete authority over the Church of God.

It is also important to know that when the Bible tells us in The Book of the Acts of the Apostles that the Church remained steadfast in the Apostle’s Doctrine- that all of this doctrine; all church doctrine; all of that which the Apostles taught the Church was in these writings and we have them today. So we should understand today that, while it is true that some ancient writings have been questioned over the centuries by some people; that while it is true that some Christian writings have been accepted and then rejected; that while it is true that some small controversies exist over some obscure writings- we

must understand that all major Apostolic Doctrine; all major events of Jesus' life- including His fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, His Virgin birth, His Deity; His sinless life, His death, burial and resurrection and the promise of His return; and areas like Baptism, Communion, Prayer, and holiness and every single issue that articulates the firm, unshakeable confession of the Christian Church that Salvation is by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone was never challenged by anyone prior to the formal collection of the New Testament and that unlike the modern church- those who lived prior to the formation of the canon of Holy Scripture were unanimous in their understanding of how a person can go to Heaven.

By the way that some portray this time in history today- you would think that this effort by the Church in receiving from God the canon or the rule of Holy Scripture was a time of mass confusion and we are told today that secret conspiracies abounded by some in the Church to hide the knowledge that women were Apostles, or that Jesus was married and had a child, or that holy and godly men were thrown out of the Church because they knew too much.

Beloved, these stories are utter nonsense. They are fiction and fables, and they are blasphemous lies that are designed by satan to cast doubt into your mind about the trustworthiness and reliability of sacred and holy and inspired Scripture.

The 27 Books that we have today in our New Testament are the very same books that the Church received as the canon or the rule of Holy Scripture. Each one of these Books separately and all of them collectively are holy and inspired by God and are both inerrant and infallible in their original manuscripts. They are totally reliable and completely trustworthy and they- along with the 39 inspired Old Testament Books- make up what we call today- the Holy Bible.

And all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for Doctrine; for Reproof, for Correction; and for Instruction in Righteousness and these God breathed words have the power to make those who will study them to become fully equipped and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The 66 Books of the Holy Bible contain everything that we need today for life and for godliness. That is because these writings did not come from the mind or the heart of Man- but they came from the Mind and the Heart of Almighty God.

May God help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America  
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 [www.covenantofpeace.net](http://www.covenantofpeace.net)

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse- by- verse Journey through the **Epistle of Jude**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.