

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

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude** Chapter 3- The Common Salvation **Jude 3** 20. The Common Salvation- Part 12

WOSM Friday 11/30/07; WPAS Friday 05/16/08

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 on the last broadcast- we saw how God gave us the Scriptures and how they are God breathed or inspired. We saw that the Scriptures are completely trustworthy and reliable and all 66 Books of the Holy working together are the rule or the measurement of Christianity is.

Now I have been faithful to go over all of this very slowly and very deliberately with you so as to make a point. Once all of this was done- once the Christian Church had these four attributes in place and functioning- the Christian Church was established on the earth. It was set up; it was formally brought about as a living and breathing organism on the earth.

And we must understand, beloved, that this establishing of Christianity was accomplished by the supernatural Power of God working in and by and through the Apostles. And it was done one time. Once Christianity was established- once the Church was set up- it didn't need to ever be established again. Now this is very important so listen real closely.

You and I must know that Christianity was not established through the building of buildings- but Christianity was established through the Words that God gave to the Apostles- it was the revelation of God given to the Apostles which they wrote down and which are preserved for us today in Scripture which established Christianity.

You see every aspect of Christianity; from what it means to be saved; to how God converts the human soul; to what is sin; to how to organize and run the Church; to even what the qualifications are for those in leadership in the Church were all penned down for us by the Apostles as God the Holy Ghost moved upon them.

So, the establishing of Christianity; the creation of the Faith was accomplished by the careful and precise articulation of inspired and inerrant Doctrine that God the Holy Ghost gave to the Apostles.

Stop and think about it. When you want to know how to be saved- what do you do? You turn to Scripture and read what God revealed to

Paul or to Peter or to John about how a man is saved. When you want to know how to organize a Church or how to have a godly marriage or how to raise your children- what do you do? You turn to what God spoke through one or more of the 40 writers of the 66 Books of both the Old and New Testaments.

Now I know that I am going to anger some of you by saying this- but it must be said anyway. What was the job of the New Testament Apostles? Why did God ordained and choose and empower these men? Did God choose them so that they could become famous and rich and travel around on leer jets and wear silk suites and have bodyguards? Is that why God chose Paul and John and Peter and the rest? No, it isn't. Well, why did God empower them? Did God empower these men so that they could take the money that believers gave them and buy condominiums in New York and live like prima Donnas? No, it isn't. God empowered these men so that they could receive inspired, inerrant, infallible, authoritative, and eternal words right out of the Mouth and Mind and Heart of Almighty God and pen them down for us so that Christianity would be a common faith with a common salvation.

And once those words were given; once those Doctrines were clearly and precisely and fully laid out for us in Scripture; once God had given the final, full, and completed revelation of God to man that we have today in the New Testament- the Church of Jesus Christ was set up and the job of the office of Apostles was fulfilled and finished.

Nobody who came after the Apostles needed to set up the Church because the Church had already been set up. Since the Church has been set up- new inspired scriptures are not need. We have everything that we need for both life and godliness already contained in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible, and we do not need- and God is not giving- any further Scriptures to anybody.

So, since God is not giving anyone new Scriptures- we have no need any longer for any Apostles. Anyone who self-appoints himself as an Apostle today is just confused and doesn't understand what an Apostle is chosen to do or he is purposely trying to give himself spiritual credibility that he is not entitled to have so that he can deceive other people and cause them to think that he has a special insight into God or that he has a special hot line to heaven that no one else has. Both are bad and either one disqualifies that man from being listened to or followed.

Brothers and sisters, we do not need to *establish* Christianity on the earth today. Christianity was set and up and established over 2,000 years ago. What we *do* need to do today is to repent and return to what God set up through the Apostles. We *do* need to return to the pattern that these men set up. We *do* need to teach and preach and learn and be taught and live and love and obey those inspired Words that the Apostles wrote down as they established Christianity two millennia ago.

We *do* need to be faithful to what has already been set up. We *do* need to stop adding and taking away from what God gave to these men so that we may once again have that common salvation; that common faith; that alike faith that was Christianity.

You see, this is why Jude wrote this Epistle. Once the Christian Faith was established- it was settled forever. No one can ever add anything to Christianity to make it better. Nothing is wrong with true genuine biblical Christianity- it is perfect. The only thing that is wrong today is that we do not either know or we do not obey true genuine biblical Christianity. So, the answer is not to reinvent Christianity. The answer is not to start a new religion. The answer is to repent and return to what the Bible teaches so that the Church may once again be the Church.

This repenting; this returning; this struggle to once again make the Church to be what God created it to be is what Jude was talking about when he said that we should:

... contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

At the moment that the Bible was finished. At that very moment- Christianity was established; the Faith was given; the Church of Jesus Christ was set up and all was well.

So, Jude began his letter talking about the common Salvation. Jude was going to write about the unity of the faith; Jude was going to write about how that the very same doctrine that was preached at Ephesus was preached at Sardis and was preached at Philippi and was preached at Philadelphia.

But as he was beginning his letter, the Holy Ghost began to deal with Jude about how false teachers and false prophets and bad doctrine;

and wrong teaching was moving into the Church at such a speed that if we didn't begin to earnestly contend for the faith that was once and for all given to the saints— we were not going to have a faith.

You see, since it is true that Christianity was established by receiving correct divine Truth and doctrine from the very Mouth and Mind and heart of God- since it was the inspired Words of Scripture that set up the Church- it is also true that by changing those words or by changing the meaning of those inspired words- the Church would fall.

True, genuine, heaven sent, Holy Ghost inspired Words are what set up the Church in the beginning. And so, by attacking those Words; by altering the meaning of what those Words said; by adding to or taking anything away from those Words- the Church; the Faith; Christianity would be defeated.

So very soon right after the Words of Scripture were finalized- those Words and what those words meant began to be attacked; they were challenged. People came into the Church under the guise of being teachers and prophets and leaders and even Apostles and they began to teach things contrary to what God had given to the real Apostles.

You see, when you change Scripture; when you alter what God has said; when you add to or take away from that which God has clearly laid out- you create another religion that God did not create; you cause Truth to be hidden and unknown; and you fashion a “god” that is made in your image and your likeness.

John and Paul and Peter and James and Jude realized that by attacking the Truth of Scripture- these people were attacking the Church- and by attacking the Church- they were attacking God. So, these men whom God had used to establish Christianity now were charged with defending it.

Let me give you a real example of what I am talking about here. When you change what God said, for example about how a man is justified before God- you cause justification itself to be different from what God said that it was, and you then cause the Faith of those that you have wrongly taught to be uncommon and not alike from that which God gave to the Apostles.

God said that we are saved by Grace through Faith without any human cooperation or human works at all. So, if anyone adds human works to Salvation- they have changed justification from being a

Sovereign work of God to a work of man and that is not what God revealed to the Apostles. Those who believe that Salvation is a work of man or that it is a cooperative effort between God and man do not believe in the same justification that God gave to the Apostles, and they are not in common with the true Church or the true Christian Faith. That is how serious this is.

Any teaching or any doctrine; or any revelation from any man or any organization or any church for any reason that differs in any way from that inspired Truth that God gave to the Apostles changes the faith and it makes the faith to not be in unity with that pure Faith that God gave to the Apostles- and it is therefore not of God and should be exposed and reject by all those who love God- regardless of how popular that teaching might be.

You see, beloved, no human being on earth has the right or the authority to monkey around with that which God has already established- because God has in fact already established all that we need to go to heaven. So, Jude was saying here that precisely because evil men were creeping into the Church to pervert the right way of the Lord- that he pleads with us to earnestly contend for that already given Faith that was established by the Apostles by the Power of God.

So please make sure that what you believe and what you are being taught is common or alike with that which God gave to the Apostles of our precious Lord.

Well, I'm out of time for today- but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. 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

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.