

SEPARATION FROM SIN:  
The Neglected Doctrine  
Message 6  
Text: Jude 1-11

INTRO: This is the sixth message in what I planned to do in a few. Because of what is before us, we will take a break from this rather heavy subject during the summer. Our subject is sin. Sin is man's primary problem. Failing finances, failing marriages, failing homes; these are not man's primary problems. Sin is the primary problem. We could then hardly overestimate the importance of our subject. My wife and I listened to D. Martin Lloyd Jones a while ago. He spoke of how man was forsaking God in his time, and they were placing their trust in two major things: the dignity of man and the capability of man. Man thought back in those days that when you educate man enough, he can pretty will save himself.

Well, some 60-70 years have passed since he preached that message and today, because of the view of the dignity of man, we have to allow anybody to use any washroom facility because they can decide if they are a he or a she or an it. There is man's capacity to maintain the dignity of man. As far as education? Well, man's ability is no greater in that. Man has a God problem, and he has a sin problem.

And what we are doing in these messages is exposing sin. We are shining the light of God's Word on man's sinful actions and Satan has not been happy about that. I would ask you to pray for the Lord's protection over our home and family, and yours. When we went through a very major church problem a while ago, it was not long after we had exposed demonism.

So we have looked at some major categories of sin. I humbly submit these definitions: To transgress is to overstep some bound which makes the act wrong. Iniquity is to twist the truth to suit our wishes. Error is to inadvertently do that which is not right. Wickedness is generally moral evil, but it is moral evil that is not satisfied to stay alone. It wants to pull others into its sinfulness as well.

Disobedience is to fail to hear under, and do that which has been required or requested. The hearer is instructed by someone in authority in an area, and refuses to obey. Unbelief is to not be persuaded by truth. Lawlessness is to fail to obey general revealed laws. Ungodliness is to fail to distinguish the holy

from the mundane. It is to dabble in the holy with that which does not belong there.

In the last message we looked at unrighteousness. The key idea in unrighteousness is unjust actions towards others. Then we began to look at narrow terms used to describe sin. We looked at adultery. It is the marital unfaithfulness whether in thought or action. Then we looked at fornication. That is the physical unfaithfulness of unmarried persons, whether in thought or action. Then we looked at uncleanness. In brief, I would say that the sin of uncleanness is to contaminate the body or the spirit, with sin. It is uncleanness. By the way, we did not look at the whole aspect of ceremonial uncleanness in the OT.

#### d. Lewdness

So turn to Galatians 5 (read verse 19). Our next word is lewdness. Now, this looking at sins is a messy business. But if we will recognize some of these things in our own lives and will go to the Lord or other people if necessary, and clean up where we have failed, we can come away feeling like we have had a spiritual bath.

Let me mention one other thing. Maybe you are wondering, "Why do you keep giving us those words in a different language?" It is because the ground on which we base our doctrine is the Hebrew language of the OT and the Greek of the NT, not English. Very many times you cannot go by the English word because the translators have translated different Greek or Hebrew words by different English words. In this case the KJV translates the word as lasciviousness 6 times, wantonness 2 times and filthy 1. The NKJV translates it as lewdness 6 times, lust 2 times and filth 1 time. All of those are the one Greek word and the word is 'aselgeia'.

And just what is aselgeia? Vine's dictionary says the key idea is 'shameless behaviour.' In the last message I gave you an illustration of uncleanness. We looked at uncleanness on the inside and outside of a cup. I didn't bring the cup this morning but if I showed it to you picturing this sin, it would be yellow and black and dirty on the outside. You

see, the scribes and Pharisees washed the outside of the cup. They cared much about the outside. But they were full of uncleanness on the inside, while on the outside they were beautiful Christians. The lewd person is smeared on the inside and on the outside with this same uncleanness, but he doesn't care about the outside. He glories in his visible grossness. He doesn't care if you see him on the outside like he is on the inside.

Is this an important word for our day? And what is lewdness or lasciviousness as this word *aselgia* is translated in the KJV? Webster's 1828 dictionary says it comes from the word *to loosen, to relax* and then *loose, wanton, lewd, lustful*. And then it says it is *looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires*. And what does it say of lewdness? It is *being given to the unlawful indulgence of lust; addicted to fornication or adultery; dissolute; lustful; libidinous.*" Well, you get the jist. And Vine says the key idea is *shameless behavior*.

Let us begin with 1 Peter 4 (Read 1-3). The NKJV has translated the word *aselgia* as *lasciviousness*. Other NKJV translations have *lewdness*. As my wife and I discussed the subject of sin, she said she wondered what the word *lewdness* meant because she had just been reading of this in Jude. Turn to the book of Jude (read 1-4). I have many times felt like Jude. He wanted to write about the Christian's common salvation but the need to deal with pressing sin issues crowded it out. That is how I feel about preaching sometimes. And so, instead of writing about this wonderful subject of salvation, look at what he has to write about. Certain men have crept in. Here we have sneaky business. Here is a threat within the church. Certain men have crept IN. And they have crept in unawares. We have seen this first hand.

But not only have they crept in undetected, but they are now in a sneaky wretched business. And just what was that business? It was turning the grace of God into lewdness, *aselgia*; shameless conduct! Let me ask you, is our community immune to

this? We have a man in the community who recently fathered a child with another man's wife and, I am told, he walks around town totally shameless. I am talking about a professing Christian. I am talking about an excommunicated man. He has been seen sitting visiting with a local pastor, who no doubt, is trying in ignorance, to help such a lewd, excommunicated man by befriending him.

I am afraid the modern teaching of unconditional love; unconditional forgiveness; and listen, unconditional grace is turning the true grace of God into licentiousness; wantonness; lewdness; aselgeia in the church!

Go to 2 Peter 2 where he speaks of, it seems, the same people Jude is addressing. This whole chapter is applicable here, but look at 2:1-7 (read).

Listen to Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

#### e. Idolatry

The next sin mentioned is idolatry. Let us begin by defining idolatry. The key matter in idolatry is worship. I have said that if I could change one external element on churches in America, it would be the wording on the sign, "Worship Hour." For the most part we do not worship. As I see it for the most part we do not even worship in song. So let me define worship as I see it by making a distinction between praise, thanksgiving, blessing, and worship. If we define prayer as talking to God, those are different aspects of prayer.

Praising the Lord is expressing good things to the Lord for any action or attribute of God, while the one who is praising is in an uplifted state. Thanksgiving is an expression of gratitude to God for any action or attribute of God or for His goodness to us. That is also in an uplifted state. Blessing the Lord is saying good things about the

Lord to others, while the one speaking is in an uplifted state. Worship is an expression of awe or adoration to God for who He is or what He is, has done, or is doing; or in other words, for any action or attribute of God; while the worshipper is in a deeply humbled state.

To worship is to bow down to someone or some thing. And if that someone is not God Almighty, that worship is idolatry. Turn to Exodus 20 (read 1-6). You see, so important is the subject of worshipping God, and Him alone, that it is the very first commandment. God said, "You shall have no other gods before Me."

So I ask, does this mean you can have other gods, but they must not be considered higher than He? They should not come before Him? Or does it mean, you shall have no other gods, period? Well, the Hebrew literally reads, "You shall have no other gods in My face", or, we would say, in my presence. Since God is omnipresent, that would mean man should not have any other gods, period.

Now, note how this generally wants to take place in verse 4 (read). The general way of having other gods is to make an image and then treat it like a god. In the OT apocraphal book there is a story called Bel and the Dragon. The Babylonians had a dragon they worshipped as a god. And the story says, "There were spent on him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep and six vessels of wine." So we must ask, where did all that food go over night?

Well, the king worshipped and adored this image every day, but Daniel, the OT prophet, worshipped his God. And so one day the king said to Daniel, "Why don't you worship Bel?" And Daniel said, "Because I may not worship other gods." And then the king said, "Thinkest thou not that Bel is a living god? Seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?" Then Daniel smiled and said, "O king be not deceived: for this is but clay within and brass without, and did never eat or drink anything."

Well the king then demanded that the priests show him who eats all the stuff brought to the dragon every day. The priests told the king to set the offerings as usual and then seal the door with his own ring. If Bel does not eat the food, the priests are to die, but if the food is eaten, Daniel is to die. There were 70 priests with their children which would mean a lot of deaths if Daniel was right. And so when the priests had left, the foods were set out as usual, but Daniel had the servants bring some ashes and scatter them over the floor.

In the morning Daniel and the king went to the temple and the king said, "Are the doors sealed?" And Daniel said they were. When they had opened the door, the food was gone and the king said, "Great art thou O Bel, and with thee there is no deceit." And Daniel said, "Behold now the pavement and mark well whose footsteps are these?" Well, the king admitted they were footprints of men and women and children. Unbeknown to the king, the priests had a secret door through which they could enter at night.

Well, there is more to the story. Though the story is probably not true, the moral of this story is correct for listen to Psalm 135:15-18 says, "The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths. Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them."

But I am happy to tell you that we do not have trouble with idolatry in North America, well at least not La Crete. Right? In Exodus the Lord said, "You shall have no other gods in My presence." Then He said this, "You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth..." Then He talked about worship. He said, "...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them." Bowing down to them is the worship.

By the way, I believe behind every idol is at least one demon, and maybe more. \*\*Worship is the key thing they want and when an idol is worshipped the demons get what they want most of all; worship. One of the key elements of worship is the lowering of

worshipper down and the lifting up of the worshipped. We acknowledge the superiority of the one worshipped. One of man's earliest problems was worshipping false gods, and so throughout the OT we see the problem of idols. Israel was to drive out all the nations in Canaan. Go to Numbers 33 (51-55). Well, Israel did not do this and ended up worshipping their gods.

The Roman Catholic Church began somewhere in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, not long after Christ ascended to heaven. And not too long after this church got going, the worship of images and relics began. Roman Catholicism is full of idol worship. It is all over our country. You can go to no place where Roman Catholicism is present that you do not have idols. The Popes worship images of Mary among a host of other things.

Go to Exodus 20 again. When Roman Catholicism gives the list of the ten commandments it goes like this (read 1-3 and then skip to 7). Verses 4-6 are skipped. And what of verses 4-6? They say in 2129, "The divine injunction included the prohibition of every representation of God by the hand of man." That is correct. That is verses 4-6. Then in 2130 they say, "Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically to salvation by the incarnate Word: so it was with the bronze serpent, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim." They fail to mention that when Israel turned the bronze serpent into an image. Go to 2 Kings 18 (read verse 4). Now note what they called it, Nehushtan, Ryrie says, means, "A mere piece of brass."

Then the Catholic catechism says in 2132, "The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, 'the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype,' and whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it." Well, there is idolatry under guise of godliness. Go to any country overrun by Catholics and you will see

images and relics all over; in churches, beside the road, in the mountains and anywhere else. And what is it? Idolatry! And behind it is Satan!

Let me just mention that there is a relational side to worship. The one who worships experiences some kind of relationship with the one or the thing worshipped. Therefore, one cannot worship God by going through Mary or any so called saint. And when there is a medium, even such as Mary, I personally am fully convinced behind the medium is a demon receiving what ought to go to God.

But let us come a little closer to home. Go to Colossians 3 (read 1-7). Now notice that Paul says in verse 5 that covetousness is idolatry. Now what is covetousness? The original word is pleonexia. It comes from the word *more*, and to it is added the word *to have*. It is the desire to have more.

There are some very wonderful things where the difference between that wonderful thing and a huge sin, is so very easy to cross. For example, to receive glory is a wonderful thing when it is legitimate, and which is often legitimate. But when that desire causes me to do that which is not right to get it, immediately I am in a very huge sin. And if true glory is due, and I receive it, and then am filled with pride, now it has become a huge sin.

The desire to have more is perfectly legitimate. It is hard to live when you don't have it. But as soon as it usurps any lordship over the Lord God, or robs us of time that should be given to God, it has become idol worship. It has taken the place of God in my life. It could be over ever such legitimate things: a wife, a husband, a truck, a car, a motorcycle, hunting, fishing, sports etc... etc...

A stranger came to our community. And as he visited with someone from here, they spoke of the industriousness of the Mennonites and their prosperity. And then this stranger said, "Yes, but money is their god!" I ask, is it true?

And now let me ask, what can other gods give to us? What can any of those things that want to crowd the



true God out give us when it comes down to life and death? No forgiveness of sin. No salvation. No spiritual blessings! And not one extra moment of life.

f. Witchcraft

The next sin Paul lists in Galatians 5 is witchcraft. Here is the original word, *pharmakia*. Somebody tell me what English word we get from this? Pharmacy, of course. When we were in Mexico we saw the sign "Farmasia" in many places.

Vine's Dictionary of Greek words says, "...primarily signified 'the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then, 'poisoning'." When this word is used as in our list as a major sin, Vine says, "In 'sorcery,' the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers with the provision of various charms, amulets, etc., professedly designed to keep the applicant or patient from the attention and power of demons, but actually to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer."

In another message I spoke to you of Simon the sorcerer who supposedly got saved. And he thought he could buy spiritual powers from God with money. I suppose he paid well to learn magic and sorcery so he could deceive people into thinking he was something great.

But go now to Acts 13 (read 4-12). In verse 8 we have this man called Elymas, and he is called a sorcerer. The actual word here is *magos*. When you read of the Magi at Christmas, these were *magos* men. Now *magos*, according to the Online Bible is, and I quote, "the name given by the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, augers, soothsayers, sorcerers etc.

So the Magi who visited Jesus were, according to the Online Bible, "oriental wise men (astrologers) who, having discovered by the rising of a

remarkable star that the Messiah had just been born, came to Jerusalem to worship him." As this word is used in calling Elymus a sorcerer, magos, we have the idea of someone involved in drugs and deception of all kinds. The magicians or sorcerers were in the business of deceiving people.

There is so much that should be said about drugs here. But, let me ask this question: Is sorcery a danger in the church? Through certain teachings that entered the church there are many of the same things present in the Church that are in magic and sorcery. I do not know that drugs are used, but demonic influence is beyond doubt involved. You cannot be a God fearing, spiritual growing Christian and not see it in men, for example, like Benny Hin. He is a man that I have no doubt is demonically controlled. Furthermore, when you have things like people barking like dogs, uncontrollable laughter, falling over backwards, all kinds of jerking body motions, I have no doubt that many, if not all times, demons are involved. And witchcraft is the only way I can explain what happens.

In the last message we looked at uncleanness. There is a lot of uncleanness involved in magic and sorcery. What does a man like Benny Hin get out of doing what he does? The same then Simon the sorcerer and Elymus got out of their magic. It is an insatiable desire to be recognized. Their problem is not so much idol worship as it is to want to be an idol to be worshipped.

In the book of revelation, when we near the end of the tribulation, the book speaks of this sin. Go to chapter 9 (18-21). Notice that sorceries, pharmakia, is among them. In chapter 18, we have the fall of Babylon prophesied. Look at verses 20-24).

g. Hatred

We come to yet another major sin called hatred. Hatred is a strong negative feeling of aversion to someone or something. Hatred is not always wrong.

We are to hate evil. So we need to further define what our passage is talking about. Hatred that is of the wrong kind I might define as the intense, strong unjustifiable negative feeling of aversion to someone or something.

Now it is important to note that it is a feeling. And feelings usually lie in something else that is wrong within. One definition said of hate that it comes from Old English hete, which means hate, plus red. So we have hetered, or hatred. Websters 1828 dictionary said, "In all languages except Saxon hate and heat are distinguished in orthography; but the elements of the word are the same, and probably they are radically one word denoting to stir, to irritate, to rouse."

So maybe we could say, "Hatred is the intense, negative feeling of aversion to someone or something that stirs up the heat to become red with heat."

Now, when you face wrongdoing in a church like we have experienced, the devil will doubtless seek to use it to bring about hate, on both sides for that matter. We are in the danger of becoming hateful because of the sins that were committed against us that caused us to leave behind that which we had so diligently worked for. Let me read a few passages from 1 John:

*2:9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.*

*2:11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

*3:15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

*4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?*

Now let me say this, as I see it: No matter what happens, or what wrong is done to us or what sins are committed against us, if we become bitter, in that bitterness we are wrong. Secondly, if we hate anyone for such reasons, we are wrong as well. That does not make what was done to us right; it makes our response wrong.

Matthew 18 teaches that if we are sinned against and we have done what is possible to restore the person who has sinned, we are to treat him like a heathen and a tax collector. That is avoidance. Romans 16:17 instructs to avoid those who cause divisions. 2 Thessalonians 3 carefully instructs that in some cases certain people are to be noted and avoided. That is the biblical instruction. 1 Corinthians 5 gives clear instructions not to company with those who have committed gross sins, if they do not repent.

Now in all cases when we are wronged, we want revenge. Revenge is not wrong. The word revenge means 'out of justice'. We want justice. So does God. So go to Romans 12 (read 17-21). Verse 19 is rather hard to interpret. Here is my interpretation, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves..." When we are wronged by Christians there are steps to take. When nothing can be done about it, then we are not to take revenge. Then he says, "...but rather give place to wrath..." I understand that to mean, "...but rather make room for wrath..." Here is how I see to handle such situations. When all else has failed to peacefully settle a matter, do not avenge yourself. Give it over to God and make room for His wrath. So he tells us why to make room for God's wrath. It is because, "Vengeance (to deal justice) is mine says the Lord, I will repay." The time is coming when God will require every last bit to justify the matter and if it does not happen, punishment will be given in accordance to the sin.

When we hand matters like this over to God and we sense any bitterness in our hearts, we must immediately repent to God for taking that thing

back into our own hands. We must leave it with God and trust Him. The teaching of unconditional forgiveness to deal with such things is ungodly and unbiblical, but so is bitterness. Trusting God is the answer. Never allow yourselves to become bitter or to hate.

CONCL: Well, our subject is not the most uplifting. But if we discover that we are not living right and we take care of it and clean things up, that is uplifting. And we have looked at lewdness this morning. What is this? Loose shameless behaviour. These people don't mind the dirt that is on the inside showing on the outside. You can say one thing for them: they are not hypocrites.

Then we looked at idolatry. Are we in danger of idolatry? Well, not so much in imagery or icons, but are we in danger of covetousness? It is ever a danger before us. Witchcraft, pharmacy, drugs. Alcohol is a drug. Alcohol is a sin.

Hatred. Is it an ever present danger? If Satan can use some event to arouse feelings of hatred in us he will destroy us through it. Oh we must be on guard. And if this morning, the Lord spoke to some area, why not make a commitment to take care of it, and if it can be taken care of right here in prayer, let me give a moment to do that.