

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

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

### Chapter 6- The History of Heresy **Jude 4**

#### 73. The History of Heresy Part 43

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WOSM Friday 02/15/08

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 our examination of The History of Heresy by looking at the fourth verse of Jude- so let's read verse 4 together:

**For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

Now we are continuing to study about who these "certain persons" that Jude talks about here in verse 4 were by studying the seven major groups of heresy and today we are continuing to examine the heresy of Pelagianism which attacked the Christian Church late in the fourth century over the Doctrines of Original Sin, the Total and Complete Depravity of all Humans, the Sovereignty of God and the Free Will of Man.

Now on the last broadcast- we found out about a *modification* of Pelagianism that was willing to compromise on five of the six tenets of pure Pelagianism- but which held on to one- the Sovereignty of the Free Will of Man. And we need to discuss this.

The Free Will of Man is a very popular teaching today. Most every Church has members in it that hold to this teaching- even though what the Bible actually teaches about this subject is much different from what we all have been taught. No one is absolutely certain where this teaching originally came from- but one of the origins of the modern concept Human Free Will lies in Pelagianism's rejection of Total Human Depravity.

You see, there are basically three views of fallen man in the world

today. There is the view that Man is just fine. That view is held by the pure Pelagians who hold a humanistic view of Man. This Humanistic view of man was put forth by the British monk, Pelagius, and teaches that the Fall of Man is a myth and so-called “fallen Man” is his really not fallen at all but is his own god who is completely able to do whatever good is necessary to obtain eternal life by simply choosing to do so by and through his own power without any Grace and without any assistance from God or anyone else. The Humanists does not need or want Christ; he does not need or want Salvation; and does not believe in the Biblical definition of sin. This is the view of Man that is espoused by the secular world and those who desire to promote a secular agenda on America. It is a view that Man is just fine without God and Salvation is nothing more than us doing good things.

The second view of Man is what is called the “semi- Pelagian” or the “Spiritually sick” view. This is the view of Man that is espoused by many in the Church today. I was taught this view when I was saved and I suspect that many of you were taught this also. Semi-Pelagianism is the view that lost Man is indeed fallen- but he is not totally depraved. He was affected by the Fall- but not destroyed by it. He was ruined by the Fall- but not totally ruined.

In this view- Man is not spiritually “dead”- he is spiritually “sick”. And being sick- and not dead- lost fallen man is still able to choose God and to choose to accept or reject God in Salvation. Because he was not completely ruined by the Fall- man was somehow able to hold on to the free will that Adam had and did not lose that component in the Fall. Now just how fallen Man was able to hold on to that part of Adam’s nature- when he lost everything else is never explained- but suffice it to say- that is what they believe. Semi- Pelagianism teaches therefore that Salvation is not a Sovereign act of God alone- but is a cooperative effort between God and Man.

This semi- Pelagian view of lost Man is that lost souls are “sick”- but not “dead”. These semi-Pelagians teach that the Fall of Man was true and that it was very damaging. They teach that Man lost his immortality in the Fall; and they agree that Man lost his emotional perfection in the Fall; that the ground was cursed; that animals became hostile to one another; that the world in general began to decay; that pain in childbirth was placed upon women; and that even male and female relationships were damaged by the fall. But the semi-Pelagians

believe that somehow- someway that nobody can explain- lost fallen Man somehow managed to keep the same free will that Adam had before the Fall- although they are not clear as to just how this was done.

Semi- Pelagianism is very popular today because it puts Man in charge of Salvation and puts Man in charge of his spiritual development. Semi- Pelagians teach that even though God wants to save *everybody*- He can't save *anybody* unless that person chooses to accept God's invitation- thus allowing Man- not God- to have Sovereignty over who is and who is not saved.

Semi-Pelagianism feeds the pride and arrogance of fallen Man in that it teaches that unless Man cooperates with God- then God *cannot* and God *will not* save him because for some strange reason- they say that God will never violate the free will of man. What is fascinating is that the concept that so many believe today that God will never violate the free will of Man is not found anywhere in Scripture- but was first taught by Pelagius- the heretic.

The fact of the matter is that God violates human free will all the time. We have incorrectly put human free will on such a high pedestal- but God never did that. And as a result- we have manufactured a "god" that operates according to what we think is fair rather than according to His Own Sovereign Will- because God is Sovereign- not Man. There are countless examples brothers and sisters of God violating human free will over and over and over again all throughout Scripture- and we'll get into this in detail later- but in the meantime go ask Jonah about whether he went to Nineveh because he chose to go or because God told him to. Go ask Moses if he wanted to go to Pharaoh or whether he was content to herd sheep.

Even in the natural- human free will is not supreme. The very act of birth is a violation of the will of the baby. Nobody consulted with the baby about whether he wanted to be born or not- and in every case- the parents impose their will on the unborn child by naming it something that pleases them- not the baby. Death is another violation of the free will of the deceased. Nobody ever volunteers for trials or tests or temptations or persecutions- no, these things are always *imposed* upon God's people and they are allowed by God to try them and prove them and bring them forth as pure gold. If those things were by choice- nobody would ever choose to go through them. Natural disasters are another example of God violating the stew out of human free will.

Nobody in their right mind volunteers or chooses to go through a hurricane. They don't call these things- "human choices"- they call them "acts of God".

So without any Scriptural proof and without using any logic- the semi- Pelagians teach that Man cannot and will not be saved unless Man wants to and that unless Man offers his free will in cooperation to God- God is helpless to save; or to heal; or to do anything of any importance in the earth today. This has the effect of semi- Pelagians rejecting the Doctrine of the Sovereignty of God itself because Sovereignty by definition says that God is in charge of everything and that Man is in charge of nothing.

Thus someone who holds to a semi-Pelagian view of Man- or a spiritually sick view of Man would believe that God *cannot* save anyone unless that person gives God permission to save him by submitting himself to God's saving Grace. So, to a Semi-Pelagian, Salvation is not determined by what God wills- but Salvation is determined by what Man wills- thus putting Man- not God- in charge of Salvation.

Likewise, a semi-Pelagian would also believe that God *cannot* and *will not* heal anyone based upon the Will of God- but that unless that person "builds up" his own faith or "exercises" his own faith in order to cooperate with God in his healing- then God *can't* heal him.

Likewise a person who holds to a "spiritual sick" view of Man or a semi-Pelagian view of man would believe that financial prosperity is simply matter of what Man does; how Man exercises his faith or how Man uses his words; or how Man learns certain techniques; or how Man commands prosperity to flow to him.

Since Salvation and healing and prosperity are all results of what Man does in cooperation to what God has done- a semi- Pelagian must develop his *own* worthiness and his *own* abilities and his *own* techniques and his *own* power and so the effort of the semi-Pelagian is in building up "self" in order to do all that he thinks God requires of him- and this is where all the teachings about "self esteem" and "self worth" and "self fulfillment" come from.

To a semi-Pelagian *everybody* can be saved- as long as *they want* to; everybody can and should be healed- as long as *they* do something; and *everybody* can be fabulously wealthy- as long as they pray the right prayers and go through the right techniques that these people will be glad to sell you.

So we can see that by holding to a semi- Pelagian or a spiritually “sick” view of Man- who is saved; and who is healed; and how God moves in the earth is determined by Man- not by God.

Now it needs to be said here that neither the humanistic view nor the semi-Pelagian view of man is Scriptural. Neither one of these first two views of Man is found anywhere in the Bible. Both of these two views of fallen Man are false and wrong views of Man that are contrary to what the Bible teaches about Man and thus they are not helpful in any way- but both are enemies of the Cross of Jesus Christ and must be rejected by the Christian.

The third view of Man is the Biblical view that teaches that lost Man is totally and completely depraved. This view agrees with what Scripture declares to be true about fallen Man and says Man in his unregenerate condition is spiritually “dead” and “blind” and “deaf” to God and the things of God due to the depth of his own Lostness and this view teaches that God must go to lost Man because lost Man does not have the power or the desire to come to God on his own. Look at what Jesus said in **John 6:44**:

**No man can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him:**

Jesus says here that not one person on earth can come to Him for Salvation unless and until God Sovereignly draws them. Now the word that was translated into English as “can” in this verse is the Greek word, *dunamai*, which means: *to be able* or *to have the power*.

Jesus did not say that these people didn’t have *permission* to come to Him- Jesus said very clearly here that lost man doesn’t have the ability; they simply don’t possess the power to come to Him unless God draws them.

Well, “permission” and “ability” are not the same things are they? If someone does not have permission to come- then all that he needs to do is get permission. But if someone does not possess the ability or the power to come on his own- then that means that he is helpless. And the Bible clearly teaches over and over again that lost Man is indeed helpless to come to Christ unless God draws that lost soul.

This third view teaches that Salvation is wholly and solely a gracious act of a Sovereign God and is in no way helped or assisted in any way by Man. So therefore all praise and all glory and all honor for

Salvation goes to God and to God alone. Once again, let's turn to Scripture. Let's look at **Jeremiah 17:9**:

**The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick, Who can understand it?**

The only Biblical view of Man is that he is lost and totally depraved and thus he is *unable* or without the ability to save himself. This view insults the arrogance and pride of fallen Man who desperately tries to hold on to the myth that he is in charge which is exactly the reason why lost people think that the Bible is foolishness.

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.

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