

# 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**

### 33. The History of Heresy Part 3

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WOSM Wednesday 12/19/07

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **Jude** and today I want to continue our examination of "The History of Heresy." So let's open our Bibles and read the fourth verse of Jude again 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 in our last broadcast, we looked at the seven major heresies that are the foundation for all the false doctrine that plagues the Church today. And those seven groups are:

1. The heresy of the Judaizers
2. The heresy of the Antinomians
3. The heresy of the Gnostics
4. The heresy of the Modalists
5. The heresy of the Arians
6. The Pelagian Controversy
7. The heresy of the Socinians

And all false teaching that exists on earth today comes from one or more of these seven roots. And since that is true- I believe that it is necessary for us to go over these seven foundational heresies so that we may get a firm grasp on the seriousness of the problem that Jude spoke about in the first century and that we also face today in the modern Church.

Now of these seven groups- three of them- the Judaizers, the

Antinomians, and the Gnostics- waged war against the Christian Church during the same time that God the Holy Spirit was moving upon the writers of the New Testament to give us those inspired 27 Books that would later be added to the original 39 Books of the Old Testament.

It was primarily the Apostle Paul who waged a long and intense war against both the Judaizers and the Antinomians. James wrote the Epistle that bears his name to do battle against the Antinomians and the Apostle John rejected and taught against the heresy of the Gnostics.

So the heresy of the Modalists, the Arians, and the Pelagians came in the third and fourth centuries; and the lies of the Socinians came later in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Now some of you may be wondering what any of this has to do with our lives today in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And here's the answer. Just because a heresy is ancient does not mean that it is extinct. And the sad truth is that there are more people alive today who espouse one or more of these ancient heresies than there was when they first reared their ugly heads and waged war against the Church.

And when you add to the mix the indisputable fact that the overwhelming majority of people who sit in the modern Church really don't know what they believe or why they believe it- you have a recipe for great disaster.

And here is the crux of the matter. Christianity is the only religion in the history of the world that teaches that sinners are saved because of what they *believe in*- rather than what they "do." All other religions throughout human history all teach a variation of the same thing- that we are saved by what we do for ourselves.

But Biblical Christianity alone teaches that we are not saved by what we do. For example- we are not saved through our obedience to the Law of God; we are not saved by partaking of Communion or by being baptized or by attending the Mass; or by speaking in tongues; or by "making a decision" for Christ.

The Holy Bible teaches clearly and repeatedly that unworthy sinners are saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone and not by human works- not even by good works or noble works or even religious works.

And so because it is true that we are saved by what we believe in; and by what we trust in; and by what we confess- then what we believe and trust in and what we confess is paramount. And *that* is why Doctrine

matters. And *that* is why we need to know what the Bible says and what the Bible means by what it says.

Now just to show you that false teachings die hard; just to prove to you that it is a lot easier to be deceived and fall into error than it is to be Scriptural and to stay Scriptural about Doctrine- here is a short sampling of what is going on today:

- ✓ There is a New York Times best- selling book out today called, “The DaVinci Code” which was written by a man named Dan Brown and which has been made into a motion picture. This book promotes ancient Gnostic heresies and blasphemies about Jesus.
- ✓ About every 25 years or so, there is a resurgence of the so-called “Lost Books of the Bible” most notably, “The Gospel of Thomas” which are actually nothing more than ancient Gnostic writings.
- ✓ Hollywood types are promoting the heresies of Ron Hubbard and Scientology which are nothing more than Socinian lies that the Christian Church condemned over 500 years ago.
- ✓ The pop singer Madonna has joined another Gnostic cult called Kabala, which mixes Christian teachings with ancient pagan beliefs.
- ✓ Many small independent groups of Judaizers are springing up all around us today.
- ✓ At the Council of Trent- in response to the Protestant Reformation, the Roman Church adopted a semi-Pelagian approach to Salvation that espouses many of the tenets of both the Judaizers of the first century and the Pelagians of the fourth century.
- ✓ As I stated on earlier broadcasts, the foundational doctrine of the Jehovah’s Witnesses is the ancient heresy of Arianism, which the Christian Church condemned in A.D 325 at the Council of Nicea.
- ✓ Antinomian and Gnostic teachings which Paul denounced in the Scriptures are alive and well in the Word of Faith Movement.
- ✓ The Mormon cult embraces many Gnostic teachings today.
- ✓ The foundational doctrine of the Oneness Pentecostal Movement has its roots in the heresy of the Modalists.
- ✓ Many people today take the glorious Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints and twist it to resemble the heresy of the Antinomians more than it does Biblical Christianity.
- ✓ Legalism- which is just another name for the heresy of the Judaizers- is very much alive and well and living among us.

- ✓ Secular Humanism- which is the offspring of Pelagianism is the dominant religion in both our own American Government and the public school system of our nation.

You see, dear friends- even though these heresies are ancient- they are still being taught today and they are still being believed today by millions of people all across our great country precisely because the overwhelming majority of people in Church today do not value Sound Doctrine and they do not know Church History and they have no idea that many of these so-called “new revelations” that come from some of our biggest televangelists are in fact simply reruns of these ancient heresies that the Church examined and rejected hundreds of years ago.

And we need to understand the Truth about these things lest we make the same mistake that the Church did in Jude’s day when they did *not* earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints- and allowed these false teachings to come in. Jude says in verse 4 that the men who brought in these false teachings crept in- they snuck in; they came in unaware. They did this in *Jude’s* day and they are doing it in *our* day. Jude continues to describe these men in verse 4:

**... who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation ...**

Now look at what Jude said about these certain men who crept into the Church to bring damnable heresies to deceive God’s people. Jude said that these men were “**long beforehand marked out**”. Now the phrase that Jude used here is just another way of saying that these certain evil people were *predestinated* to do this and they were also *predestinated* to be condemned by God for doing so. That is what this phrase means. But how did Jude say that these heretics were going to attack the Church? In three ways- look again at verse 4:

**... who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

Jude says here that these men wouldn’t fight the Church with swords or with attacking armies- no- these men would creep into the Church and through their false teaching- they would turn the Grace of our God into something horrible and they would attack the very Character

and Nature of God the Father and they would attack the Person of Jesus Christ.

In other words- these ungodly men would fight the Christian Church with words; with teachings; with beliefs; with false Doctrine; with so-called “new revelations;” with unscriptural pronouncements; with their dreams; through their visions; and with their extra- biblical teachings- and Jude says that they would do this in a real and a serious attempt to destroy Christianity.

Again, I want to illustrate how serious this is by giving you a natural example. Every single time a Constitutional ruling is made in this country which perverts or distorts the original intent of the founders of our country- we change what America looks like. And that is precisely their goal. And because of all these changes- we are fast approaching an America which will not even resemble the America we all grew up in. We are living in a time when evil people are working overtime to alter this country and to remake it into a completely different country which has no resemblance at all to the historic America which was the envy of the whole world.

This “new” America will not publicly recognize God at all. They will murder both the unborn and the aged with impunity. This “new” America will teach sexual perversion to our children and will enact legislation and Court Rulings that will in effect make it against the law to be a practicing Christian.

And by radically changing America like this- you don’t make the country better- you tear it apart and you ruin the foundation which made this nation so great in the first place. And that is because it is categorically impossible to keep what you have and change what you have at the same time.

And the same thing is going on in the Christian Church. Heretics despise what the Church is and what the Church stands for and what the Church has been and they are working overtime to change the Church and to tear up historic Christianity in the process. And once you throw out what Jesus put into the Church- you no longer have Biblical Christianity. What you will have left is a totally and completely man-made religion and not the sovereign Creation of God.

So, these predestinated heretics attack three aspects of Biblical Truth:

1. The Character and Nature of God the Father

2. The Person of Jesus Christ in either His full Humanity or His full Deity
3. The Grace of God

So we can see that what *has* happened and what is going on right now is precisely what Jude wrote here. And it is important to remember that Jude and the other men whom God used to pen down Holy Scripture, *always* referred to these people- *not* as well meaning but wayward souls- but they referred to them as bringing in false teachings *on purpose*; of trying to destroy the Church of Jesus Christ *on purpose*, and Jude calls them here in verse 4- “**ungodly persons**”.

Now one thing that is fascinating to know is that each of the men that God used to confront these seven heresies all used the Bible and the Bible alone to defeat the false teachers- which of course makes the Doctrine of Sola Scriptura all the more important for us today.

So Lord willing- over the next several broadcasts we will go into detail as to just what each of these seven major heresies are- so that you may be sure that what you believe and trust in- is the Truth of God’s Word.

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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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.