

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**

56. The History of Heresy Part 26

WOSM Wednesday 01/23/08

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 really were by studying the seven major groups of heresy. And we have already covered the Antinomians, the Judaizers, the Gnostics, and the Modalists. And we are continuing in our study of one of the most important times of the Christian Church- a time when the Church nearly lost its understanding of the Deity of Jesus Christ and when heresy nearly destroyed the Gospel. This is what the heresy of the Arians was all about.

Now as we discussed last time, the Christian Church developed a summary of belief from the Council that was held in the city of Nicaea in 325 A.D. to combat the heresy of Arianism that denied the Deity of Jesus Christ. This Creed is known today as the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed is a summary or a short version of a much more detailed Confession of Faith that was hammered out during this meeting that basically destroyed the false teaching that formulates the foundational doctrine of the Arians, which has been carried forward by the modern Jehovah's Witnesses.

Now you would think that the development of a Creed and the formal excommunication of Arius from the Church in 325 A.D, along with 300 bishops would have settled the matter of the false teaching of Arianism. But like all false teachings- heresy never dies- it never goes away- it is either successfully defended against or it overtakes the weak and simple minded. Arianism was not defeated in the Council at Nicaea; neither was it defeated by the excommunication of Arius and all those who agreed with him; neither was Arianism defeated by the development of a Creed.

This illustrates a very important point as it pertains to the preservation of Biblical Truth and the removal of false teaching. Church Councils do not preserve Biblical Truth. Developing a Creed does not preserve Biblical Truth. The only way; the sole way; the single way for Sound, Biblical Truth to be preserved in the Church is for each succeeding generation to study it and learn it and love it and live it and teach it to faithful men who in turn will hand it down to others. Look at what Paul said about this to the pastor of the Church at Ephesus in **2 Timothy 2:1-2:**

1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.
2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

So here Paul tells Timothy to take the things that Timothy had heard from Paul and many other witnesses who had also seen the Lord and been taught by Him and for Timothy to write these things down and commit them to men who would be faithful; who in turn would teach others also. Paul told Timothy to learn Sound Doctrine himself; and then raise up godly and faithful men in his Church who he could pass this Biblical Truth to; and then they in turn would give it to others. In other words Sound, Biblical, inspired, orthodox, Truth from the very Heart and Mouth of God Almighty must be taught; it must be learned; it must be loved; it must be valued; it must be protected; it must be defended; it must be lived and then it must be passed on to others who will in turn pass it on to still others. This is the only way for heresy to be defeated.

Now for the most part- Americans put a high premium on individuality. We like it when people have a fresh approach to the things of life. We buy products because they say, "New and Improved"

on the label. We want things to be better and smarter and easier and simpler and bigger and more luxurious than that which came before it- and to some degree that is a good thing.

But not when it comes to the things of God. Individualism is not the goal in Christianity- conformity is the goal. We are never told in Scripture to be individuals in Christ- we are told to be like Jesus. Unlike American culture- individuality in Christ is not good- it is rebellion. Christ never invited anyone to come to Him so that we could fulfill our own dreams- we are told to come to Christ so that we could die to ourselves and fulfill His dream. Being a Christian does not allow some giant that lives inside us to be free- coming to Christ slays the giant of self that lives inside us and frees the servant that follows the Lamb whithersoever He goes.

We are never told to spread our wings and fly in Christ- we are told to come and die to ourselves and to live for Him. We are not told anywhere in Scripture to seek a new take on the Gospel that will fit better into modern society- we are told to repeat the very same words that God breathed and to not be ashamed of those words.

We should not praise or value individuality in the Church- we should not put a premium on people doing what is right in their own eyes. No, we should only value how much we are being molded and shaped and formed to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. This is what Jude meant when he talked about the “common salvation”. We are not to remake Christianity- we are to conform to it. We are not to seek after new revelations- we are to study and learn and love and live the existing Revelation of Holy Scripture. We are not to re-invent the wheel when it comes to the Church we are to follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before us and who followed the Words of God. We are not to redo Church- we are to be a part of the very same Church that Jesus Christ set up and which His Apostles founded and which He is the Head.

No one; no church; no preacher; no evangelist; no author has any authority from God to stick a “New and Improved” label on the Gospel- the Gospel is sufficient just like it is. It doesn’t need to be updated; it doesn’t need to be improved; it doesn’t need to be fixed- it isn’t broke-; it doesn’t need to be changed; altered; corrected; or repackaged. No, the Gospel needs to be preached; and it needs to be preached rightly and it needs to be preached fully and it needs to be

preached fearlessly with power and authority and conviction and anointing from the lips of saved, born again, regenerated, dedicated and consecrated men of God who actually live what the Gospel says.

The only thing that is wrong with Church today is that we have far too many people who think they are saved-yet who haven't been born again who are in the Church and who are hindering the saved people who actually want to serve God.

True, Gospel Preaching is not about flash or style or entertainment or pizzazz or being cool or clever or hip or "with it" or acceptable or pleasing to the ears of lukewarm or unsaved souls. And preaching is not about using a new take or a different angle or receiving some new revelation or chasing some new thing or running after some new wave of God's glory. We don't need a "new thing", we need the "first thing" that God gave and God sanctioned

Preaching is not about how many people think you're great or how much money you have coming in or how many seed partners you've got or how big your church building is or what kind of car you drive or how many body guards you've got or how big your house is or what kind of rings are on your fingers or how many people hoop and holler when you preach. Preaching is worship. Preaching is about being faithful. Preaching is about being faithful to God; faithful to the essence of Scripture; faithful to the text of the Bible and faithful to the propositional and grammatical interpretation of that which came from God.

And we are to be faithful if everybody likes us and agrees with us and our church is growing, and our books are selling and tons of money is pouring in each week and we are to be faithful if no one likes us and no one agrees with us and people leave our church and we are made a fool for Christ in the eyes of the people. Preaching is not a popularity contest; preaching is not about manipulating people to get them to do what we want them to do. The people of God are not "tools" that we can use to further our ministry- people are our ministry- and we are supposed to love the people and we should live among them, and eat with them and touch them and be touched by them and feed them and clothe them and we should get our hands dirty with their problems and we should be faithful to teach them what God says about sin and about righteousness and about life and

heaven and hell and children and money and we should care for their souls.

Woe unto those modern snake oil salesmen who use the sheep to advance their own causes. Woe unto those hypocrites who teach one thing but live another. Woe unto those false prophets who lie to the people about their souls and tell them that God doesn't mind what they do and that God doesn't care. He does mind; He does care; He is watching and He is taking notes and you can be sure that the God of the Bible will reward the faithful and you can be sure that He will punish the wicked.

Beloved, we must remember that Preaching is by nature an offense. Preaching has always been an offense. All throughout history; In every culture; in every nation preaching has been a source of tremendous ridicule and persecution against those faithful men who preached God's Word for the very simple fact that lost people- all lost people look at the Gospel as being ridiculous while saved people look at the Gospel as being the very power of God.

By definition- the Gospel is offensive to lost people. It always has been and always will be. It takes a miracle from God for lost people to hear the Gospel and receive it. All throughout the Bible, men of God were hunted down and stoned to death and sawed asunder and flogged and beaten and flayed alive and run off and laughed at and imprisoned and tortured and scorned and mocked and made fun of and criticized and they fled from city to city and they hid in caves and ate what ravens brought to them and were rejected and humiliated as fools all because they preached the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We have got to remember that by definition, Preaching is authoritative. And if there is anything that our modern culture cannot tolerate today it is a man who is sure and certain about God and a man who is unashamed at what God has said and a man who is unafraid to preach the Words that God has spoken.

Preaching is getting up and telling ungodly sinners that God says that they are in fact, ungodly sinners. Preaching is telling lost people that God says that they are lost. Preaching is about crying out against the sins of God's people. Preaching is speaking the Words of God over and over into the ears of people- who for the most part- don't want to hear it. Preaching is boldly and fearlessly proclaiming that

God is holy and that sin offends God and that unless we also repent we shall all likewise perish. Preaching is illustrating that the wrath of God against all unrighteousness is bearing down on sinful people like a freight train at 300 miles an hour and we are all tied to the tracks- that unless and until we repent and trust in the shed Blood of Jesus Christ- we have no hope.

Preaching is not about building up people's self esteem, or about propping up their own self worth or about elevating their own self importance. Preaching is not about helping people find a new paradigm or to show them how to reposition themselves in life. Preaching is about tearing down the strongholds of self and pride and about assaulting Man's 6,000 year old rebellion against God and bringing all men- rich and poor; educated and uneducated; cultured and uncultured; black and white and red and yellow; male and female; young and old; tall and short; ugly and pretty; skinny and fat to the understanding of their lost sinful condition before a holy and righteous God and to lead them to the foot of the Cross where they can beg God for forgiveness and so that they may trust in the merits of Christ alone for Salvation.

Preaching is not about making lost people feel good about themselves. The goal of preaching is repentance. The goal of preaching is for people to cease from sin. The goal of preaching is to illustrate how holy and righteous and good God is. Preaching should let people see Jesus High and lifted up; it should make people know that God is bigger than they are and more important than they are and whatever He says is good and right and true and anytime what we say contradicts what He says we are wrong and He is right.

Preaching is not about Man. Preaching is about God. Preaching is not about elevating the stature or the status of man. Preaching is all about elevating Jesus Christ and exalting Him. Preaching is about illustrating how magnificent and how glorious and how big and how powerful and how good and how pure and how holy and how glorious God is. Preaching is about showing that God is above and we are beneath; that God is holy and we are sinful; that God is righteous and we are unrighteous; that God is good and we are bad; that God is right and we are wrong; that God is High and are low; that God is big and we are small; that God is true and we are false; that God is important and we are unimportant; that God is up and we are down; that God is

Omnipotent and Omniscient and Omnipresent and that God is Sovereign and that no one is like our God and that God deserves to be honored and He deserves to be worshipped and He deserves to be praised and it pleased God to place Christ as the Head of His Church and to give Christ a Name that is above every other Name that at the name of Jesus –every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to glory of God the Father.

And preaching is about making sure that we are earnestly and sincerely and fervently contending for the very same faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. 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.