

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**

16. The Common Salvation- Part 8

WOSM Monday 11/26/07; WPAS Monday 05/12/08

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 in our new section of study and look again at what Jude taught about, "The Common Salvation" so let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 3** again 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.

Now we have been studying what Jude meant by using the term, "**common salvation**" here in verse 3 and to do that- we were looking at the four characteristics of the early Church that we found in **The Acts 2:42** that says:

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

So, we can see that based upon this verse- what made the Church of Jesus Christ to be "common" or alike was that four characteristics were the same in all of the Churches:

1. They continued steadfastly in the Apostles Teaching
2. Fellowship
3. Breaking of Bread (The Lord's Supper)
4. Prayer

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at the fourth characteristic that made the Church to be common or alike and today

I want to continue to examine this powerful attribute- prayer- and we were examining how Jesus taught us to pray by looking at **Matthew 6**

Now on the last broadcast- we saw how that when Jesus said that we are to pray, **“Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your Name”**, we are not to simply repeat that phrase; or to say this prayer as fast as possible so that we can get on to more important things, but we are to savor the moment; we are to dwell on this glorious aspect of God- that God is to be hallowed and valued.

So the key in this phase of prayer is not to merely parrot the words, **“Hallowed be Your Name”**, but to actually see God as the prophet Isaiah did in **Isaiah 6**- as being high and lifted up; that we see God as Who He really is; that we see God as inspired Scripture declares Him to be.

And the purpose of dwelling on Who God is as we pray- is so that our minds may be transformed from earthly concepts about ourselves to heavenly and correct concepts about God. And in so doing, as we see God correctly, as we view the Almighty properly- then and only then can we see ourselves correctly and properly.

Let us look closely at **Isaiah 6:4**:

And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

So, when we see God high and lifted up; when we correctly view God as being the only goal of our worship and the only goal of our adoration and the total focus of our prayer- then there will be a shaking; there will be a stirring; there will be a transformation. Isaiah said that the foundations of the thresholds of the temple itself moved at the Voice of God. Beloved, when God speaks, we are to sit up and pay attention.

But today- God speaks to Man through His Word- and so when we give due honor and due reverence and the correct and proper respect for the Word of God- then God will be honored.

Today, there is an appalling spirit of arrogance in the Church that gives us the notion that God owes us something. This ungodly arrogance has taught us that we *deserve* or that we are *entitled* to things from God or that God is obligated to do things by virtue of us being saved and as this arrogance runs its course- it causes us to treat

many of the demands and the expectations that the Word of God places on us as being optional rather than mandatory.

And it is this low view of God's Word that has allowed the ungodly and unbiblical activities that we see come into the Church unchallenged. That is why so many in the modern Church have come to the conclusion that Salvation is the result of human initiative rather than a Sovereign Act of Grace.

For example- nowhere in Scripture does the Bible teach or speak about *inviting* lost souls to come to Jesus. God doesn't *ask* a sinner to repent; God doesn't *beg* a sinner to repent; God doesn't *plead* with a sinner to pretty please give your heart to Me. No, Almighty God *demand*s repentance; God *command*s repentance; and God *expect*s all men to repent. To prove what I just said, please read **The Book of the Acts of the Apostles 17:30&31** with me that says:

30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent,
31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

I tell you that we need to repent of our arrogance, and we need to develop a proper view of God as One Whom we must honor and One Whom we must reverence with godly fear. We have been told that the man who is valuable today is the man of arrogance; the man of self confidence; the man of means; the man who "pulls himself up by his own bootstraps"- but God has another view of that in **Isaiah 66:2**, when God said:

... but to this one will I look, To him that is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

Prayer that is in accord with Scripture will *always* produce humility; it will *always* bring forth a brokenness. Proper Biblical prayer will *always* manifest a contrite spirit and will cause us to tremble at that which God has said. But arrogant and unscriptural prayer will *always* produce murmuring; complaining; and discontent.

When we pray after the manner that Jesus commanded- the first result will be that we see the great contrast between God and us and

that will cause us to confess sin and we will repent. Every single time that a human came unto contact with God in the Bible- that person always repented. Repentance has been incorrectly viewed by many in the modern Church as something that we do one time when we are first saved. But that is not true; that is not Scriptural. And many also view repentance as being the same thing as saying, “*I’m sorry*”. And that isn’t true either.

When a person says that they are sorry- we have to ask them a further question. “*Why are you sorry?*” Are you sorry that you sinned against God, or are you really sorry because of the *penalty* of your sin? Are you sorry that you are hurting; are you sorry that your sin cost you so much money; or that it cost you your marriage; or that it cost you that jail time or because you had to pay that fine, or that your wife found out about it? In other words- are you sorry simply because you got caught?

All of those things are the *penalties* of sin beloved- but they are not the sin itself. The penalties of sin are great and vicious. Sin does indeed bring great pain; sin does bring great hurt; sin brings horrific destruction; and sin ultimately brings death; sinning against a holy God brings great and terrible disasters into our lives and many times, we are real sorry that we got caught; we are real sorry that the penalty of our sin is so great- but are we really sorry that we sinned?

So that is why I said that most of the time the penalty of sin is only brought to our minds because we got caught. When we get caught, we see so clearly that the Bible is true and that the wages of sin is death and we sure don’t like the death that sin brings- so we are so very sorrowful.

The lost world calls this kind of sorrow “jailhouse repentance” and the world correctly understands that if that person had not been caught- then he probably wouldn’t have repented at all.

This wrong view of repentance is the result of not seeing God correctly as being high and lifted up when we pray. It is precisely because we have been taught that God exists in order to do things for us; and that prayer is all about us telling God what we want that brings forth this perversion of repentance.

Praying after the manner that Jesus taught however causes us to see God as He really is, and that true and correct vision of God allows us to see ourselves as we really are and that glorious time of

seeing God as He is and seeing ourselves as we really are brings forth holy conviction to our hearts and that godly conviction brings forth genuine repentance. Now look at **Isaiah 6:5**:

Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up. Isaiah saw the manifestation of God's Power and God's Glory displayed before him. So, what did he do after he saw all of this? What was his very first reaction when Isaiah saw the contrast between Who God is and who he was? He repented.

Because we have, for the most part, lost the fear of God in our Churches today, our first reaction to the Presence of the Lord is to celebrate; to dance; or to rejoice. But beloved, that is not proper. Isaiah didn't start dancing all over the church at the first display of God's glory. No, his first reaction is a model for our first reaction when we come into God's Presence- repentance.

Isaiah knew something that we need to know today. Coming into God's Presence is not about what we feel. Coming into God's Presence is about what we see. The purpose of coming into God's Presence is not so that we can start acting foolish- remember- nothing about worship is about us. Coming into God's Presence is giving us an opportunity to see God high and lifted up and to see the great contrast between us and God; and to bring you and me to a place of cleansing and purification.

You see, God views sin totally different than we do. We look at sin as something that harms **us**; something that makes **us** feel bad; something that causes **us** to feel empty and wrong and dirty and therefore sin is bad because of how sin makes **us** feel and what sin does to **us**.

But beloved, that is not the way that the Bible teaches that we are to view sin. We need to know that sin is bad- not because of what sin does to *us*- but sin is bad because sin offends God. Sin insults God. Sin rejects God. Sin makes a mockery of God. Sin lowers God. Sin transgresses against God's holiness. When we sin- we degrade God. When we sin- we lose our ability to bring honor to God. When we sin-

we forfeit our ability to give God the Glory that He is entitled to and that He rightfully deserves. That is what makes sin bad.

So, when we first come into His Presence- we have need to be cleansed; we have cause to repent; we have the urgent need to be forgiven. Cleansing and forgiveness can only come about by genuine repentance. Beloved, praise and celebration are important aspects in a Christian's life. You can praise your way out of trouble. You can praise your way out of discouragement. You can praise your way out of opposition and attacks of the enemy. You can praise your way out of a lot of things. But you cannot praise your way out of sin. You have to repent your way out of sin.

To try to praise God with unrepented sin active in our lives is an abomination to God. It makes a mockery of all that God is. Beloved, we must fear to come to God unwashed and uncleansed.

When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well, He told her that the Father sought people to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. What Jesus was telling her and us is that it matters how we come to God. It matters whether or not we come dirty or cleansed. It matters that we come humbly or arrogantly.

To be sure, when a sinner comes to God for the free gift of Salvation, he *must* come dirty and filthy and sinful because he has no other way to come to God- He is lost. But to those who have already been saved- how we approach our holy God matters.

The lost person comes, "Just as I am, without one plea". And that lost soul coming in genuine brokenness over his lost condition is a beautiful thing in the eyes of God. And God warmly receives them.

But those who are already saved must approach God in the prescribed manner in which He has said in His Word. We who belong to Jesus no longer have the right to come to God- just as we are. We have to come right. We have to come humbly; we have to come fearfully; we have to come reverently; we have to come repenting and asking God to forgive us.

We see a picture of a man standing in the sanctuary with his arms held open wide and his face turned upward and with tears streaming down his face and we think to ourselves that this is a great picture of true worship. We see a picture of supposed sincerity and we equate that with worshipping God in Truth. And it very well may be.

But if in fact, that same man is living in open adultery and those tears are not tears of repentance- then that man's outward sincerity; his attempt at worship, is not worship at all, but is, in fact, an offense to God and his actions are a farce. True worship means that we worship God with our lives- not just in Church during the song service.

Isaiah's first reaction when he saw the Lord high and lifted up was to repent. And I tell you that we must repent. We must see God as exalted; we must see God as higher than we are and we must return to and contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. May God help us all.

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