

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**

18. The Common Salvation- Part 10

WOSM Wednesday 11/28/07; WPAS Wednesday 05/14/08

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 to look at what Jude meant when he talked about the “**Common Salvation.**” So, let’s read **Jude 3** 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 first Church that we found in **The Acts 2:42**:

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
4. Prayers

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 right in the middle of examining how Jesus taught us to pray by looking at His pattern for prayer given to us in **Matthew 6** And on the last broadcast- we had just begun to touch on the part of prayer that involves forgiveness, so I want to read again **Matthew 6:12:**

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Now what this verse is actually saying is that we are asking God to forgive- but only to the extent; or to the same degree as we forgive those who have sinned against us. Now just how important is this? Here's how- another way of saying this is that we are asking God to hold our sins against us as long as we hold the sins of others against them. Now that is quite a payer!

But the truth is that those in the early church valued each other more than we do today. They had a bond and a love between them that was very real and very powerful. The Apostle John had a lot to say about our relationship with other saints in **1John 3:11:**

For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

1John 3:23

This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

1John 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1John 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1John 4:12

No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1John 4:20&21

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom

he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Jesus taught that it was so important that we love each other and forgive each other that we cannot even give a gift to God and it be received, if we have ought against each other. Let's look at **Matthew 5:23&24:**

**23 "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,
24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.**

Today we have people who go to the same church; raise their hands to worship the same God; proclaim their love for the same Lord, yet who do not even speak to each other. Beloved, that ought not be. Please do not think that God receives your worship when we worship with unforgiveness in our hearts, no, in fact, we are making a mockery of worship when we do that.

Jesus told us that we are to forgive and to love- even when they do wrong to us. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:43-48:**

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'

44 "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

So, we can see that the saved people in the early church took these things seriously and that is why God moved among them so

marvelously. We don't see the things that they saw. That is because we do not take these things seriously. When we begin to take these things seriously; when we begin to pray like they prayed; when we do what they did- we will see what they saw.

Well, even though we have spent a considerable amount of time with the Lord here in prayer- we can see that the church in the Bible never did get around to the long list of wants and wishes that we are so quick to bring to the Lord today. They had a completely different focus and a completely different concept and a completely different purpose in prayer than we do today.

They knew that the primary focus of prayer was their adoration to God. They knew that prayer was actually worship. They knew that it was through prayer that they learned how to Trust God and how to depend upon Him and how to rely upon Him and how to become content with what God had provided.

Oh how wonderful it would be today if we could learn to be content with what God has provided. We are the most blessed nation on earth and even the poorest among us have more than most people ever could hope to have and yet we are the discontented people on earth. We are never satisfied. We have, but we want more. We get and that doesn't satisfy us- so we want even more.

We are like this because we are spoiled. We are like this as a direct result of our unbelievable prosperity. Beloved, I want you to know that over the last 50 years, this nation has enjoyed unprecedented prosperity; unprecedented peace; and unprecedented safety. And those three things Peace, Safety, and Prosperity have almost destroyed us. At the same time that we have seen this unprecedented Peace, Safety, and Prosperity, we have seen an almost total collapse of biblical morality. Beloved, the two things are linked together.

The world wonders after America as we have so much and yet want more. They look at us in bewilderment as we take and take and take and yet want and want and are never satisfied.

Until about 1950, materialism was preached on in the Church as one of the biggest sins among the saved. The sin of lusting and lusting and lusting for more of this world's goods was considered to be a horrible sin until about 50 years ago, and then almost overnight- it all changed.

Today, Materialism is hardly ever mentioned as being a sin. In some areas and in some books and in some ministries- not only is materialism not preached as being sin- but materialism is actually promoted many times as being God's Will or something that should be sought after instead of the trap and the snare that the Bible says that it is.

I tell you that this type of godless Prosperity that America has enjoyed for the last 50 years is a curse; it is not of God; it is poison to the soul of the church and it produces real bad fruit. We have promoted selfishness in the Church and called it good. We have promoted self centeredness in the Church and we have called it holy and we have promoted materialism in the Church and we have called it godly. During our lifetime, you and I have watched the day that we take to celebrate the glorious birth of Jesus Christ become nothing more than a demonstration of greed, materialism, and covetousness like the world has never known.

Today we have modern Barnum and Bailey carnival hucksters prancing around like peacocks and flaunting their wealth and saying that it is God's blessings. That isn't the blessings of God beloved- that is sin. If God would have given them blessings that which God gave would have never made them arrogant- it would have made them humble.

The Bible says that the love of money is the root of all evil- I didn't say that- God did. Jesus said that you cannot serve God and Money. Paul taught Timothy that rich people fall into temptations and snares and many foolish and hurtful lusts precisely because of their wealth. The Apostle James said that rich people should howl and weep at what is coming their way. The Holy Ghost inspired Paul to write that having bread and water we need to be content; and that godliness with contentment is great gain. The Holy Bible says that we are to be in good and health and prosper only to the extent that our soul is right with God- never simply to puff up our own self importance.

Yet in spite of all of these sound godly teachings on the dangers of wealth and prosperity and materialism- these are the things make up the majority of what we pray about today- and I plead with you to see that this is wrong. The Church never concerned themselves with praying about these things until the last few years and it should stop

today. We have no Scriptural basis for thinking that more money means more of God; we have no Scriptural basis to believe that more stuff means that God is pleased with us. That has never been true and it is not true today. In fact Paul had a lot to say about this in **1 Timothy 6:3-12**

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

4 he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

6 But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

When the church in the Bible prayed the heavens opened to them; God moved; and the devil trembled. They didn't pray that they could have more stuff- they prayed that with all boldness they could preach the word of God to the point of Death. The church in the Bible didn't pray that God would increase their holdings and make them wealthy- the church prayed earnestly that would not be entangled with the cares of this life and the lust of other things and the deceitfulness of riches. And I tell you that we need to repent and

return to Biblical Christianity and reject the selfishness and the self centeredness and the greed of our fallen culture and earnestly contend for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. 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.