

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** 68. The History of Heresy Part 38

WOSM Friday 02/08/08

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 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 and the Total and Complete Depravity of Man and the Sovereignty of God and the Free Will of Man.

Now back in 1982, President Ronald Reagan made a speech at Westminster Cathedral in London England. In that speech, President Reagan said, "*No matter how much evil I see in the world today, it can never shake my faith in the basic goodness of all men.*"

Now that statement that our 40th President made several years ago is very popular, but that statement is patently wrong, and it is unbiblical and statements like that are at the heart of the Pelagian Controversy of the fifth century. And it illustrates one of the greatest questions of all time: "Is Man inherently Good or is Man inherently Evil?"

Pelagius the heretic said, "*Yes. And although some men may*

occasionally do bad things, basically, Man is inherently good.” But Augustine said, *“No, the Bible teaches absolutely that Man is inherently corrupt and evil in his very nature”*.

But in spite of the fact that the Bible clearly teaches that Man is evil and corrupt by birth- the vast majority of the people on earth today would agree with Pelagius and say, *“Yes, Man is inherently good!”* And this deception over Man’s goodness reaches into every area of American life today- including, sadly, the modern Church.

In fact, the official position of the American Psychiatric Association; the American Psychological Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and both the Republican and Democratic National Committees is that these organizations have all officially agreed with the Pelagian position on the inherent goodness of all men and have rejected the Bible’s clear declaration of man’s inherent wickedness. And even though Pelagius was condemned as a heretic almost 1600 years ago- his false and unbiblical teaching about Man’s inherent goodness is almost universally accepted as being true today.

Ray Comfort of Living Waters Ministry recently took a poll in our American Prisons. Comfort brought 7,000 inmates who are on death row a single question,

“Do you consider yourself to be a good person”.

Now as you listen to the response to this question, you need to keep in mind that these were not 7,000 people who sing in the choir. This simple question of inherent human goodness was not asked of 7,000 deacons or 7,000 pastors or 7,000 housewives.

No, Comfort asked 7,000 rapists, murderers, pedophiles, and other violent and cruel men if they thought that they were basically good. Guess what they said? 7,000 out of 7,000 said, *“Yes, they thought that they were basically good people.”* 100% of these violent and cruel men who had been convicted of serious felonies and were now living on death row awaiting their own execution- 100% of these men said that while they knew that they had done some bad things in their lives- they thought that basically they were good people and what is interesting is that they could all name specific instances of good and noble and kind things that they had done at some point in their lives.

But how could this be? This level of deception exists almost universally for one reason and one reason only- we are radically corrupt. The very fact that any of us could ever think that we are good only shows how fallen and corrupt and blind and deceived we really are.

You see, the mistake that we make about how we view ourselves is that we base our judgment of ourselves not on what the Bible teaches about us- no, we base our judgment about ourselves based upon a false concept of other human relationships.

For example, we look at a man like the Apostle Paul or a man like Moses or a man like Abraham and we say to ourselves, "*Well, I'm not that good.*" And then we look at a horrible man like Hitler or Stalin or Saddam Hussein and we say to ourselves, "*But I'm not that bad, either.*"

So, we then imagine ourselves to be morally somewhere in between an Apostle Paul and a Adolf Hitler and we take comfort that while we may not be as good as the top one- we are certainly not as bad as the bottom one- and we reason to ourselves, "*I'm okay.*"

The problem with using this faulty logic is that while *we* may take great comfort in examining ourselves like that- God doesn't use the same scale as we do.

No, God's view of us is not like our view. God's view of how good we are is recorded for us in the Bible. Let's look at **Romans 3:10-18**:

10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPES IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";

15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,

16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,

17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."

18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

So according to the Holy Bible, there is not one single good person on earth; not one righteous person on earth; and not a single lost soul who even seeks after God. Now if the Bible is true- then that means that there is not one single person on earth who is able to declare himself to be "good".

You see God looks at us through His Eyes and not ours. This is all because God is perfectly Righteous and He is perfectly Holy and He is without any sin whatsoever. So only God has the authority to declare anyone to be "okay". The Bible teaches that Sin is so horrible to God; sin is such an offense to God; sin is such an insult to God's Nature and Character that God views all sin; every sin; big sin and little sin to be an evil of such gargantuan proportions that all who sin deserve immediate and eternal punishment in the flames of a devil's hell.

God has set the bar of Holiness and Righteousness so high- no man born of woman can ever reach it by and through his own power. Let's look at the one single Standard by which God will judge all men. Let's turn to **Exodus 20:1-17**:

1 Then God spoke all these words, saying,

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female

servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Now what I just read to you is commonly called the "Ten Commandments", but to God- these Laws are nothing more than a reflection of His own Personal Character and Nature. That is why these Ten Commandments are eternal and moral Absolutes that constitute the one single Standard by which God is going to examine and judge every man, woman, and child on this earth. In other words, if anyone is going to go to Heaven- they have to be just like God. Look at what Jesus said about this in **Matthew 5:48:**

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

So, every single person from every culture in every country that is alive now or that has ever lived or that will ever live will be held accountable to these Moral and Spiritual Absolutes and will be judged by them.

Now this Standard by itself is high enough- but God raises the bar even higher. Let's look at **James 2:10:**

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

Now the Bible clearly says here that not only is God going to judge all men by the single Standard of His Own Righteous and Holy Nature- but James tells us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit

that if we break just one of these Commandments even one time- we are guilty of breaking them all. So not only are we compared and judged by how we stack up against this Standard of perfect Righteousness- but if we break one Commandment even one time- we are condemned as being a sinner who is worthy of eternal death. So not only do we have to be just like God to go to Heaven, we have to be just like God all the time. But it gets even worse.

And God raises the Standard even higher. Let's look at the red-letter words of the Lord Jesus Christ in **Matthew 5:19-28:**

19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, '*YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER*' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'

22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

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.

25 "Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.

26 "Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.

27 "You have heard that it was said, '*YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY*';

28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

So, we can see now that not only do we have to be like God in

order to go to Heaven; not only to we have to be just like God all the time- but now we have to be just like God in the very intent of our hearts and *not* just in our actions.

In other words, God has set the bar so high to enter into Heaven that it will take a miracle for any of us to ever get there. And that is precisely what Salvation is- a miracle from Almighty God to undeserving sinners like you and me.

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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