

# 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**

### 82. The History of Heresy Part 52

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WOSM Thursday 02/28/08

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 were by studying the seven major groups of heresy and today I want to complete our look at Socinianism, which is the seventh major heresy to attack the Church in the sixteenth century.

And on the last broadcast, I was showing you how that the modern equivalent to the Socinianism heresy of rationalism came from the mind and heart and pen of Norman Vincent Peale and his notion of the Power of Positive Thinking. Almost single handedly, Dr. Peale modified the Gospel of the Bible into a sort of "Therapeutic" Gospel that taught that the real problem with fallen Man is low self esteem and that thinking good thoughts about yourself is the same thing as being saved.

Of course, the Bible doesn't teach that low self esteem is the problem with Man. The Bible teaches that sin is the problem with Man. Let's read **Isaiah 59:2**:

**But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear.**

Biblical Christianity differs from Positive Thinking Theology on four fundamental fronts. First of all what the Bible teaches and what Dr. Peale taught about the problem with man is not the same. The Bible teaches that all men- good men and bad men- all men- are born in sin and are shapen in iniquity. The Bible teaches that not only are all men tainted with the sin nature of Adam, but the Bible clearly teaches that all men are individually guilty of the sin of Adam. This is what is called, The Doctrine of Original Sin.

Dr. Peale rejected the Doctrine of Original Sin and taught the Pelagian heresy that Man is born basically good. Dr. Peale also differed from Scripture on how a man can be saved.

The Bible very boldly declares that no man can saved himself. The Bible teaches that man cannot earn his own salvation through good or moral deeds; and that God is not impressed with actions that are put forth to try to *assist* God in the saving of a soul.

God saves men based upon Sovereign Grace and Sovereign Grace alone. Men are saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone absent any human works. We don't deserve Salvation; we cannot earn it; we cannot contribute to it and we cannot cooperate with God to achieve it. Salvation is all *of* God and all *by* God and all *through* God- all to the glory of God.

Peale taught that men are lost because they don't know. Peale taught a theology that said that Men are lost because of what someone else did to them and they are "found" or "saved" based upon what men do for themselves. Once again, the Bible teaches just the opposite of that.

The Bible says that Men are lost precisely because of what Men did to themselves. Adam sinned in the Garden precisely because he wanted to and as soon as we grow old enough to know right from wrong, 100% of men sin today. We are not sinners because we sin- we sin because we are already sinners in our heart and soul and nature. But if we are to be saved, it will not be based upon what we do- it will be based upon what Christ has done for us.

Peale taught the false teaching that says that men can build up their *own* righteousness through a series of good works and noble acts that God will recognize and accept as being good enough to qualify them for heaven. These good acts and noble deeds come forth from a

heart and mind that has risen to a place of falling in love with themselves through the building up of the self in their own mind.

Once again, the Bible teaches just the opposite. The Bible teaches that in order for men to love God- they have to hate themselves and anything else that is in competition for our own affection. Let's read **Luke 14:26-35**:

**26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.**

**27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

**28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?**

**29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,**

**30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'**

**31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand *men* to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?**

**32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.**

**33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.**

**34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?**

**35 "It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."**

Now what Jesus was saying here is that no one or no thing should compete with the love and devotion that we have for God. Jesus was saying here that unless we learn to "hate" or to "despise" those things that compete with our affections- then that person cannot be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. And this Teaching of Jesus brings forth what the Puritans called, "self loathing" which actually caused men to value human life much more than the teaching of self esteem could ever do.

Biblical “self loathing” causes men to love God more than anything else and anyone else- while the unbiblical teaching called, “self esteem” causes people to love themselves more than anyone else- including God. Scriptural self loathing looks at Man as being lost and sinful and in need of a Savior; while unbiblical self esteem looks at man as being worthy and just fine. Self loathing brings forth a humble and correct view of sinful man while self esteem brings forth an arrogant and incorrect view of man. Self loathing causes humility through the knowledge of our own unworthiness. Self-esteem brings forth arrogance and selfishness and self- centeredness by exalting man higher than they should. Self loathing causes all men to look to God for help and salvation; while self esteem causes men to look to inward; to themselves for help and salvation through the power of man’s own so-called inner strength and by applying psychological principles.

Self loathing *gives* to others because it values God. Self esteem *takes* from others because it values self. Self loathing is grateful to be a servant because it understands man’s own unworthiness and teaches that only Christ is Master. Self Esteem demands to be recognized; feels slighted when it is not; cannot bear to be second; cannot stand to decrease and builds up the carnal desire to be its own master.

Norman Vincent Peale taught that sin was of no consequence as long as people thought good thoughts. But the Bible says that unless a man is convinced that he is a sinner- he will never repent and if he never repents- he can never be forgiven.

Peale taught that what man needed was a change in attitude. The Bible says that what men need is a new nature. Peale taught that men can develop their own positive attitude through his teachings. The Bible says that men need a Savior and his Name is Jesus. Peale taught that what men do to themselves and for themselves is all that he needs to make him great. The Bible teaches that men can only be great when they die to self and live for God and only God can change the human heart.

Peale taught that what a man did for himself is what matters. The Bible teaches that what God does for us is all that matters. Peale’s teachings bring forth people who don’t need God. The Bible’s teachings bring forth people who desperately need God.

So, lets' review. What Norman Vincent Peale taught is the exact opposite of what the Bible teaches about things like Original Sin; man's Lostness; Total Human Depravity; Sovereign Grace; Salvation; Repentance; and Eternity. So other than those few pesky things, I guess what Peale taught was just fine.

Some people have come to me to tell me of the many good things that Norman Vincent Peale's philosophy of Life did for them or for people that they know. My response is this:

I cannot judge another man's heart. I cannot even judge another man's motive. But I can and I do and I should judge what they teach and what they say and what they write based upon the Word of God; and if it doesn't agree with Scripture- then it is wrong- no matter how many people perceive that it has helped them.

You know, it isn't like we don't already have a Book that God gave us that tells us everything that we need for life and godliness. It isn't like we can't all just turn to God and see what He says about these things. Now I suppose if we didn't have the Bible, then Peale's ideas would be as good as anyone else's. But the fact of the matter is that we do have the Bible and just because people don't read it- doesn't in any way negate its Truth. And just because some don't believe what it says doesn't change the fact that it is the inerrant and infallible and inspired Word of the living God. And just because some people want to try *anything* except the Bible doesn't mean that they won't still be judge by the Bible. And just because men will try *anything* before they will look to God doesn't mean that anything is okay.

Norman Vincent Peale should have preached the Gospel. He had the opportunity to tell millions that they were lost in sin and that they could not save themselves. He had the opportunity to tell them about a Savior, Who lived and died and Who rose again. He had the chance to preach what Paul preached about Repentance and Forgiveness and Justification by Grace alone through Faith alone through Christ alone. But he didn't. He told people that they were good. He told people that they were not lost. He told people to love themselves. He told people to build up themselves. He told people to think positive thoughts- so they did. And if they believed what this man said and if they trusted their souls to his care and if they based their salvation on what this man wrote- they went into eternity

unsaved and unwashed and they lifted up their eyes in hell, because there is nothing in Peale's books or teachings or writings that would lead anyone to Christ.

Some say that because millions of people believed in the therapeutic gospel that Peale taught, that, that made it okay with God. It didn't. How many people believe something has absolutely no affect at all in determining whether it is true. Literally millions of people believed in National Socialism in Germany in the 1930's. But they were wrong and they were evil and they died fighting to defend it. Millions of people believe that Lord Krishna will grab their pony tails and yank them up to heaven one day- but it is a lie. Krishna is not Lord and they are not going to Heaven. Millions of Buddhists believe that God is an overweight; half naked unemployed young boy who sits in the lotus position and contemplates his own navel- but He isn't. God is the Creator of Heaven and Earth and He flies through the midst of Heaven while cherubims cry out, "*Holy, Holy, Holy, the whole earth is full of His glory*".

Millions of Muslims believe that if they can just manage to blow themselves up and kill as many ten year old girls as possible- then God will let them go to heaven. But He won't and the devil has deceived them, and by the way- Islam is not a religion of peace- it is a demonic religion that encourages hate and fear and it hurts people real bad.

However many people follow something does not in any way make it to be true. Something is true only if it is true and when your talking about God and Salvation and Heaven and Hell and Sin and Eternity- unless the Bible declares it to be true- everything and everyone that disagree with Scripture isn't good- it is bad; it isn't noble – it is evil; it isn't another opinion- it is a lie; it isn't a particular take- it is either of the straight and narrow path that leads to life eternal or it is of the broad road that leads to destruction.

And this is why we all need to earnestly contend for the 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.

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