

# 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**

#### 83. The History of Heresy Part 53

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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 over the last 52 broadcasts, I have gone over with you exactly who these "certain persons" that Jude talked about here in verse 4 were, by reviewing the seven major heresies that have attacked the Church over the last 2,000 years. As I mentioned to you earlier, every heresy that we face today is a modern day equivalent or a derivative of one or more of these seven heresies. And today- I want to quickly review those seven major heresies.

Notice in verse 4, that Jude tells us some interesting things about the people who he is talking about. First of all, Jude says that these heretics are "**certain persons**" who have been "**marked out for this condemnation**".

So Jude is telling us that the lies and false teachings that these men bring forth are not accidental. Jude says that these men are not well meaning but misunderstood people simply trying to bring forth a new take on existing scripture. No, Jude says that these men are marked out by God for condemnation because they bring into the Church apostasy- that is meant to deceive and destroy the souls of men.

And this illustrates the point that we must be careful that what we preach and what we teach and what we believe is indeed what God

has said. Let's read **2Peter 1:20&21:**

**20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,**

**21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**

We have today a literal avalanche of personal and individual interpretations of the Scriptures. Some how, many in the modern Church feel the liberty to place any interpretation on the Word of God that best suites them. But this is a wrong and dangerous process that yields terrible results.

I have been in many Bible Studies and perhaps you have too, where each person in the study was able to give his own "take" or interpretation on the Scripture and bring forth what that verse "meant to them". This is a common way that the modern Church holds Bible Study and it is designed to give every person an input as to what the Bible actually means. But let's discuss that for a minute.

What difference does it make what a particular Scripture means to me? I may be as off base in my understanding of that Scripture as I can possibly be and simply giving my take on what the Bible seems to say to me without a proper and full investigation and study can lead to a completely wrong view of what it actually says. And if my view is not true- then precisely how is that valuable to anyone- including me?

The goal of Bible Study should be to find out what God the Holy Ghost put *into* the verse- not what people want to take *out* of the verse. Our effort to study the Bible is a waste of time unless we investigate and study and examine the Scriptures with the idea of uncovering or learning exactly what God is actually saying through that verse.

By putting our *own* take on Scripture- we damage the validity of the Bible. Most of the time, what *we* think is not what God thinks. How we view life and godliness and right and wrong is many times at odds with the way that God views these things. So the goal of Bible Study should not be to try to get the Bible to justify or to validate some personally held belief that I might have. No, the goal of Bible Study should be to humbly come before God and find out what He is saying to us.

We need to understand that every single heretic that we have

studied over the last 52 broadcasts thought that their personal take on Scripture was right. Every single heretic that we have studied in this mini-series used the Bible to try to prove their point. But they misappropriated and misunderstood or they misinterpreted the Word of God and because they did that – they made serious and tragic errors in their application and in their interpretation of the inspired and infallible Word of God. Now we could look at this and just say, “*Woops-nobody’s perfect*” and just shrug our shoulders and walk away. But we must remember, brothers and sisters, that their wrong interpretation of Scripture led them into what the Bible calls damnable heresy. Their incorrect view of what God said led them to serious error about eternal matters. Their twisting of the Scriptures led them to apostasy. And we also have to know that this is the reason that we have cults and religious organizations today who teach and preach another “gospel” that is not the Gospel of God.

For about 1900 years, the Christian Church taught and proclaimed and held that there was a correct and a right and a true interpretation of Scripture. The Christian Church was nearly unanimous in the understanding that by using a literal, historical, and grammatical approach to Biblical interpretation, all of us could arrive at the True and correct interpretation of what God actually said. This gave the Church and God’s people great stability and consistency and certainty about the Word of God.

But during my lifetime- because of the massive resurgence of private and individual interpretation- that certainty and that stability and that sureness about what the Bible says and means has been greatly eroded and we are all poorer as the result of that.

We have made the tragic mistake to assume that the glorious liberty that comes with the Spirit of God has given each believer the license to privately interpret the Bible as they see fit and that has weakened the Church- not strengthened it; It has opened the door again to the ancient heresies to make a comeback and has brought forth a new wave of heresies that trouble us today.

Being filled with the Holy Ghost does not give you the authority to stamp your own personal image on to the Bible. That was wrong when the ancient heretics did it and it is wrong today. And make no mistake about it- when you privately interpret the Bible; when you create your

own personal interpretations on Scripture without doing proper study- that is exactly what you are doing.

Being filled with the Holy Ghost does not eliminate your responsibility to study and to investigate and to research the Scriptures correctly. Being filled with the Holy Ghost does not give you license to take short cuts with the Bible so that you won't have to spend as much time with the Bible. And simply copying what some other famous preacher says is not studying the Bible.

It is very true that it is the Holy Spirit that brings forth the Truth about what Jesus said. Let's look at **John 16:13**:

**"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.**

Now many today take this verse as a license to do with the Bible whatever they see fit. But that is a wrong interpretation of this verse. It is true that we have glorious liberty in Jesus Christ. But it is also true that liberty without responsibility is not freedom- it is anarchy. And the modern Church is filled today with spiritual anarchists, who feel some special privilege to twist the Scriptures to mean things that it doesn't mean.

This contemporary idea that says that we have the freedom to serve God anyway we choose and to serve God on our own terms in our own way and through our own understanding is not spiritual liberty it is heretical bondage that is as old as the Church.

When Jesus said that when the Spirit of Truth is come- He will guide you into all Truth- that is exactly what He meant. The Holy Spirit will never lead anyone into a lie; He will never lead you into a heresy; He will never lead you into a false understanding of the Bible or a part of the Bible. Yet today, the Church is filled with people who have various and opposing views on major and essential Christian Doctrines. How could this be? The answer is simple- the Holy Spirit did not lead them to their conclusions.

And I'm not talking about unimportant subjects either- I am talking about essential Doctrines like Scriptural Authority and Salvation that the Christian Church must speak with one voice and be in one mind and one accord on.

For example, just how is a lost person justified before God? Is a man saved by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone as the Bible teaches, or is a man saved by Grace through Faith plus human works as the Roman Catholic Church teaches? Both views cannot be true. One view is right, and the other is wrong. One view of Justification is Scriptural, and the other is not. One is based on inspired writings and the other is based on Man. One is based in human reasoning and the other comes from the Mouth and Heart and Mind of God.

If we don't know the objective; unchanging; inspired; and infallible Truth about how a man is saved; if we do not comprehend how God says that He saves lost men, then how can we possibly know if we are saved? And if we don't know how a man is saved, how can we possibly lead anyone else to Christ? Don't you think that things like Salvation and Scriptural Authority are items that should be forever settled and not up for grabs?

Now I fully realize that it is possible that there may be some individuals within the Roman Church who do not personally believe their Church's official teaching about Salvation and Scriptural authority and that is good- because the Roman Church's teaching on Justification is heretical- but the fact remains that their official catechism about Salvation does not reference only Scripture- it also references the writings of men. So why does the Roman Church teach a way of Salvation that the Bible does not authorize?

The Holy Spirit doesn't lead anyone or any Church or any group or any organization to violate what the Scriptures teach. The Holy Spirit cannot do that because, according to Jesus, the Holy Spirit can only lead us into all Truth and Jesus said in **John 17:17**:

**... Your word is truth .**

So any Church- your church or my church- that does not uphold the authority of Scripture is not being led by God's Spirit and is, at best, off base and could very well be walking in heresy.

Today, many within the Full Gospel, or Charismatic, or Pentecostal ranks have made the very same tragic error as did Rome and they feel that they have a unique and privileged hotline to Heaven that allows them to interpret the Bible anyway that they "feel led".

They feel that they don't have to use a literal, grammatical, propositional, and historical method of interpretation, but they can bypass this tried and true method and invent or fabricate their own interpretation based on a little bit of information; a little bit of knowledge; a little bit of history; and a little bit of what somebody else said and then say that God led them. Beloved, the Spirit of God does not operate this haphazardly.

Now you can get angry at me for saying these things, but what you should be angry about is those who teach things that neither God, nor the Spirit, nor the Bible told them to.

Some say that to preach like this is harsh or mean spirited or unloving or even unchristian. Some say that to ever point out problem areas with the Church is to support the enemy. I disagree. First of all- what I am saying is true. Secondly, I love the Church, and I love people, and I want both the people and the Church to be right with God. You have to understand, that as a Pastor, I see many people constantly frustrated because their man- made doctrines don't work out. I see many people who have been devastated because they were taught wrong and now their lives are a wreck. We are in a time when the very thing that has the ability to make both the Church and the people strong- Sound Biblical Doctrine- is the last thing on everyone's list of things that we even need in the Church.

Beloved, this is why Jude told all of us to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. To earnestly contend for the Faith involves correctly comprehending exactly what the Faith is and then defending that Faith against all error.

My brothers and sisters, Jude told us all to make sure that we keep the Gospel pure. Jude told us all to make sure that we do not let ravening wolves come in to destroy the flock of God. Jude told us all to stand upon the Word of God and boldly proclaim its message to every creature; and Jude told us all 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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