

# Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

## An Expositional Study of the **Epistle of Jude** Chapter 3- The Common Salvation **Jude 3** 21. The Common Salvation- Part 13

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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 to look at what Jude meant when he talked about the “**Common Salvation**”. So, let’s 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 over the last several broadcasts, we have explored what Jude was talking about when he said that he wanted to write this Epistle to the Church concerning the “Common Salvation”. We have seen that what made the Salvation that the church of the first century had to be called “common” was the attributes that were declared in **The Book of the Acts 2:42**:

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

Now over these last broadcasts- we have seen that all in the Church had these four things “common” or “alike” among them and it was these four things that made the Church strong and vibrant and alive. We explored together just what the Apostles’ Teaching was and was not; we saw how important godly times of fellowship is among those who are saved; we saw that the Church is commanded to be faithful to keep the Lord’s Supper or the Communion Service and to keep it often; and we saw how important prayer was to the Church and

how that prayer was about worshipping and loving and knowing God- not about us getting things that our hearts lust after.

These four attributes; these four characteristics made the Church of Jesus unique and different from anything else and from everything else that the world had ever seen. And God moved in the early Church. The people had been saved and they had been born again and they were so grateful that Christ had washed their sins away and they were excited about serving the Lord with all their hearts and serving each other and excited about going to Heaven.

And on the last broadcast- we saw that the way that Christianity was established in the earth was not by building buildings but through the creation and establishing of Biblical Doctrine- Divine Truth- which was laid out for us clearly in Scripture. So, what God said; what God revealed to Man in Scripture is therefore paramount and vital to the success of the Church.

Christianity is the teaching and the believing of what God has done and said to Man through the Lord Jesus Christ. So, the Church is assigned the responsibility and duty to understand and to teach and believe and obey and defend that which God has already said. But in doing that- it is assumed that the Church doesn't need or teach anything else.

So, the common Salvation that Jude is talking about here in verse 3; the Common Faith is that one single faith; that one single Truth that was given to God by and through Jesus Christ and articulated and explained and expounded upon in the 27 Books of the New Testament by the Apostles.

Now here is why this is so important. If we add anything to what God has said- we change what God has said. If we take anything away from what God has said- we change what God has said. If we alter the meaning of words that came out of the Mouth of God- we change what God means by what He says. If we inaccurately apply certain verses or if we take verses out of context- we alter what God has said.

And if we alter what God has said- no matter how sincere we may be- we lose what God has said and therefore we do not have what God has said and we do not know what God has said and that brings in confusion about what we are to believe and trust in.

Now here is how all this works together. Christianity is not something that we can define any way that suites our fancy. No one

has the right or the authority to change the meaning of Divine Truth, beloved. Christianity is what it is. It has already been defined. It has already been established. It has already been created and set up by the Power of the Holy Spirit working in holy men who were moved along by the Holy Ghost to pen down inerrant and infallible Words that came right out of the Heart and Mind and Mouth of Almighty God.

No one can change that, and no one should even try. Because what God set up is fine; it is sufficient; it is perfect. Christianity doesn't need any corrections or improvements. What is wrong in the modern Church, beloved is that we do not adhere to the established Truth that God has already revealed to us in Scripture.

So, we don't need new Truth. We don't need new Doctrine. We don't need new Revelation. What we need is the desire and the power to obey and love and follow and learn and teach and submit to the already revealed Truth and the already given Doctrine and the already completed Revelation of Biblical Christianity. This is what Jude meant when he said that we need to:

**... contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.**

Jude was saying that what was wrong with the Church was the fact that people in the Church in the first century were teaching things that God had not sanctioned; They were believing things that God had not said. So, Jude pleaded with the leaders of the Christian Church to repent and return to that one Faith; that single Faith; that already established Faith; that Common Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints by and through the Holy Spirit working through the Apostles.

So, Jude saw the danger and he was warning the Church to return to those four things that made the Church to be common in the beginning that we found in **The Acts 2:42**:

1. Continuing steadfastly in the Apostles Teaching
2. Continuing steadfastly in godly fellowship'
3. Continuing steadfastly in Communion
4. Continuing steadfastly in Prayer

You see, dear friends, if you change Christianity in any way- if you alter the meaning of Divine Truth in any way for any reason- you do not have legitimate Christianity any longer. When you add to what God has already said or when you take away from what God has already said or when you change the meaning of what God has already said- you have, in effect, created a new religion that is not Christianity because true, legitimate Christianity has already been established and true Christianity already means something.

Now I realize that nice people stand up today in the modern Church and utter statements and then they sign God's Name to those statements by saying, "*Thus saith the Lord*". And I agree that most of these people are very sincere and well-meaning, and they may even love Jesus. But they are wrong. To sign God's Name to *anything* is to give that thing Divine Credibility and by default that means that what has been spoken is as equally inspired and as equally inerrant and as equally infallible as Scripture itself- and that is simply not true.

If our utterings are as inspired and inerrant and infallible as Scripture, beloved, if that is true- then we need to write them down and put them in the back of our Bibles and study them and teach them as being the 67<sup>th</sup> Book of the Bible. But if that is true then the Bible is wrong when it says that we should not add anything to what God has already spoken.

Now the Jehovah's Witness Organization teaches that God is still speaking words today that are equally as inspired as the words of Paul and Peter and Moses. The Mormon System teaches that too. Muhammad said that God was giving him additional Revelation. But those religious organizations are not Christian because they disallow the validity of Scripture and add other writings to the mix which God did not speak. So, we must be careful, beloved that we are not doing the same thing as they are.

We already have 66 Books which God did speak. We have 39 Books of the Old Testament and 27 Books of the New Testament which are the very Words of God, and they are accurate, and they do deserve credibility. We don't need grand sounding pronouncements from self - appointed people who are accountable to no one to give us supposed fresh revelations of God, beloved. Most of the time- the only reason that they speak like they speak is so that you will think that they have a

secret contact with God or a hot line to heaven that no one else but them has. Run from these people.

The devil in all his wickedness attacks what God has already said; he challenges what God has said, he tries to add to or take away from what God has said so as to change what God has said so that we will not know; we will now understand and therefore we will not and cannot be obedient to that which God has said. This is the main way that the devil fights God's people.

And the devil has been doing this against what God has said since the beginning. Read with me **Genesis 3:1**:

**Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"**

Now back in **Genesis 2:16&17**, the Lord had told Adam:

**16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;**

**17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."**

Now this is pretty clear, isn't it? Do not eat of the fruit of this one tree or you will die. Not a whole lot of wiggle room here, is there? I mean I understand this very well, and I went to public school. So, by the devil asking Eve the question, "**Has God said**", he was really saying, "**Is this really what God said? Are you sure this is what God meant by what He said?**" Now that question was not meant to give Eve confidence in what God has said so that she could remain faithful to God- that question was designed by satan to put doubt in her mind about what God had said.

This is how the devil operates, beloved. He *always* challenges what God had said. And that is why we must know that the real war is not between us and the devil- it is between the devil and God. Satan is at war with God and those who align themselves with satan are also at war with God. The only way not to be at war with God is to be on God's side.

We need to be on God's side, beloved and quit trying to get God to be on our side. Because our side is not perfect- God's is. Our side is not always holy- God's is. Our side is not always pure- God's is. So, we do not need to pray or work to get God to be on *our* side- we need to work real hard to get on God's side.

God is not an American, brothers and sisters. God doesn't drive a Chevrolet or salute the flag or watch the Dallas Cowboys. God is not automatically on America's side. If America is on God's side- then God will bless her and keep her and defend her. But when America fights against God; When America turns her back on God; When America rebels against God- then rest assured that God is against America and God is *not* on our side.

Now notice that satan was not content with simply putting doubt in Eve's mind by challenging what God had said to Eve. His next step is to contradict what God has said. As soon as the devil challenged what God had already said, Eve made a very weak attempt at faithfulness by saying,

### **Genesis 3:2&3**

**2... From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;**

**3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"**

But what was the devil's response to this? Read with me **Genesis 3:4&5**

**4... You surely will not die:**

**5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**

So, see how the devil went from simply putting doubt in Eve's mind to outright contradicting what God had said. God said, "*Do not eat this fruit or you will die*". The devil said, "*Naw, you won't die- go ahead and eat it- it will make you like God.*"

Well, I have to stop right here 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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