

Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Monday, July 27, 2015

One of The Most Misunderstood Verses In The Word of God

“Few There Be”

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Who Is Talking?

It is very obvious the One doing the talking here is Christ. Matthew 5:1,2 says, “And seeing the multitudes, **he** went up into a mountain: and when **he** was set, **his** disciples came unto **him**: And **he** opened **his** mouth, and taught them...”

Who Is Christ Talking To?

It is very obvious the Lord was talking to His disciples, and only His disciples.

This Has Nothing To Do With Getting Saved!

It is obvious that Christ was not talking about eternal life. He was talking to people whose “Father” was “in Heaven.” The Lord would not make the following statement to the Pharisees or the multitude of followers who followed Him only for what they could get.

- **Ch.5:13**, “Ye are the salt of the earth.”
- **Ch.5:14**, “Ye are the light of the world.”
- **Ch.5:16**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.5:45**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.5:48**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.6:1**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.6:8**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.6:15**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”
- **Ch.7:11**, “Your Father which is in heaven.”

Christ was speaking to twelve men, and only to those twelve men, who who would be with Him in the ministry.

It was to these men Christ said in Matthew 7:13-14,

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

At the end of their ministry with Christ the disciples again met with Him on a mountain.

Matthew 24:3,

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”

In Matthew 24:12 Christ said,

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

Peter warned in Second Peter 2:1-2,

*“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, **even denying the Lord that bought them**, and bring upon themselves swift **destruction**. (Translated “waste” 3 times) And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you...”*

Another Misunderstood Portion of Scripture

Jude 1:3-4,

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It will be a great day for the cause of Christ when we put our commentaries away and compare Scripture with Scripture, before comparing Scripture with commentaries. Every commentary I have checked concerning this verse says that Jude changed his mind about what to write about. **That is simply not Scriptural.**

The Greek word translated common in Jude 1:3 is, “*koinos*.”

This word was used by the Jews concerning something that was unhallowed, profane, or unclean.

- In Mark 7:2 it is translated, “**defiled**.”
- In Romans 14:14 it is translated, “**unclean**” three times.
- In Hebrews 10:29 it has been translated, “**an unholy thing**.”

Two Types of Salvation

The Bible refers to a “**great salvation**” (Hebrews 2:3), and also refers to a “**common salvation**” (Jude 1:3). In Jude’s day the apostasy had turned God’s “**great salvation**” into a “**common salvation**.” **It was a salvation that was “defiled,” “unclean,” and “an unholy thing.”**

Therefore Jude said,

“It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (v.3).

Jude continued,

“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.4).

Several things are mentioned in these verses.

Jude, “gave all diligence” to write and warn us about the fact that the plan of salvation had been made “common.” He did not give diligence, he gave “all diligence.” The Greek word translated diligence is “*spoude*.” It has also been translated “with haste” in other places.

He said it was “needful” to exhort them that they should “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” The Greek word needful is “*anagke*.” It has been translated “distress” three times.

When a Doctor’s patient goes into distress, that person is in danger of dying. Jude was very concerned about the common salvation that had replaced “*the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*.” The apostasy promoters had “*crept in unawares*.” That is, they moved slowly and carefully, in order to avoid being noticed.

The apostasy promoters were ordained to “*this condemnation*” (Translated “*judgment*” thirteen times) for their actions. They were not ordained to creep into the churches. They were “ordained” (translated “*set forth*” Galatians 3:1) for judgment.

They were “*ungodly men*” and verse fifteen tells us these “*ungodly*” men were “*among them*.” Verse twelve says, “*they feast with you*.” They were, “*turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness*.” They were, “*denying the Lord*.” The conclusion is obvious. Pastors had promoted a “*common salvation*” allowing people to simply pray a prayer and join the local church.

Two Types of Apostasy Promoters

It is obvious that the promoters of apostasy that Jude was talking about were unsaved.

Peter Warned Us about Christians Who Would Promote Apostasy In The Last Days.

The phrase “*among you*” is found three times in First and Second Peter, all of which refer to Christians.

- **First Peter 5:1**, “*The elders which are among you...*”
- **First Peter 5:2**, “*The flock of God which is among you.*”
- **Second Peter 2:1**, *There shall be false teachers among you.*”

We know Peter refers to Christian false teachers because he said they were, “**denying the Lord that bought them**” (Second Peter 2:1). The Greek word “*bought*” (*agorazo*) is translated “**redeemed**” three times in the New Testament. To deny the Lord is to refuse Him access. (See Revelation 3:20).

Christian leaders today, under the banner of fundamentalism, are the ones who are bringing in, “damnable heresies” (Second Peter 2:1).

In recent days, our fundamental **movement** has become flooded with Christian leaders who are promoting apostasy by promoting their new “common salvation.”

Jesus plainly warned us in Luke 13:3, “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” We now have many in our ranks of fundamentalist who are promoting the “damnable heresy” that repentance is not necessary for salvation.

Our Common Salvation

Some years ago, I had a well-known soul-winning evangelist come to our church. Many, if not most, reading this article would know who I was talking about if I mentioned his name. We knocked on the door of a man in the area and the soul-winning evangelist started his sales pitch.

He rhymed off his presentation like he had many times before and ended with, “do you know any reason why you couldn’t get saved right now?” The man answered “I have done this twice before.”

The soul-winning evangelist, probably not even hearing the man’s response, said, “well good then, lets pray.” The man prayed, we headed back to the church where the evangelist told everyone in the service that night about the man who he led to the Lord that day.

He actually led no one to the Lord. He was playing the part of one of those “redeemed” leaders that Peter said would be promoting the “damnable heresy” that repentance is not necessary for salvation.

Our New Incentive Salvation Is Not Found In The Bible

Just like the business world, we now offer an incentive to get people to say yes to our sales pitch. We offer the incentive of Heaven, to all who will pray a prayer.

We ask, “would you like to know for sure that you will go to Heaven when you die?” Well, who wouldn’t? Jesus never, ever, offered Heaven as an incentive for people to get saved and neither did His followers. Heaven is a tremendous by-product of salvation; however, **salvation deals with our repenting of our sin against God.** Man needs to understand that we need to fall on our faces and repent before God even if there were no such place as Heaven.

Jesus Promised A Hard Life For His Followers

In Matthew 8:19-20 we read,

“And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.”

Jesus didn’t say, “Great, just pray a little forgiveness prayer and help us make our group larger, and maybe we can build a big church here in Jerusalem.”

His response to the man was,

“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”

We read no more about the man who said he would follow Him wherever He went.

Me First Salvation?

In Luke 9:59, Christ asked another man if he would like to follow Him. His response was,

*“Lord, suffer **me first** to go and bury my father.”*

In verse sixty-one we read,

*“And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let **me first** go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.”*

Christ’s answer to these “me first” seekers of a common salvation was that they were not “fit for the kingdom of God” (Verse 62).

No Common Salvation Preached In The Word of God

- **Jesus**, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Matthew 4:17)
- **John The Baptist**, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Matthew 3:1,2, 7, 8).

Bible Preachers Did Not Focus On Attracting A Large Crowd John Preached,

- “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33)

Did John not realize that he would never build a church in Jerusalem preaching that way?

Jesus Preached,

- “Thou hypocrite” (Matthew 7:5).
- “You hypocrites” (Mark 7:6).
- “Ye are of your father the devil” (John 8:44).
- “Woe unto you...hypocrites! (Matthew 23:27)

Jesus knew that kind of preaching would drive the hypocrites away.

James Preached,

- “Ye adulterers and adulteresses” (James 4:4).

James was preaching to Christians. Did he not realize that kind of preaching might cause some people who tithed to leave his church for a more comfortable pew?

Paul Preached,

- “And thinkest thou...that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?” (Romans 2:3).

Did Paul not know anything about winning friends and influencing people?

How Did Paul Preach To Christians?

Paul’s focus was on the truth, not on pampering Christians.

- “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” (First Corinthians 3:1).

Did Paul not realize that he might lose some members if he preached like that?

When Christian women dressed immodestly he commanded,

- “That women adorn themselves in modest apparel” (First Timothy 2:9).

Did he not realize that most church problems are stirred up by women? Did he think he could build a church by getting the women upset?

When dealing with immature Christians at Ephesus, he told them to,

- “grow up” (Ephesians 4:15)

Grow up? You mean Paul preached straight forward telling church members to “grow up?” Yes, he did!

He spoke to the Colossian Christians concerning,

- “fornication”
- “uncleanness”
- “inordinate affection”
- “evil concupiscence”
- “and covetousness, which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5).

Over a dozen times Paul warned Christians about their,

- “lusts.”

Paul rebuked the church at Corinth because of their attitude toward...

- “fornicators”
- “idolators”
- “adulterers”
- “effeminate”
- “abusers of themselves with mankind.”

Referring to the church congregation, Paul said they were becoming,

- “lovers of their own selves”
- “covetous”
- “boasters”
- “proud”
- “blasphemers”
- “disobedient to parents”
- “unthankful”
- “unholy”
- “Without natural affection”
- “trucebreakers”
- “false accusers”
- “incontinent”
- “fierce”
- “despisers of those that are good.”
- “traitors”
- “heady”
- “highminded”
- “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”
- “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (Second Timothy 3:2-5).

To the Galatians Paul said,

- “Are ye so foolish?” (Galatians 3:3)

The difference concerning Paul, and most of the so-called fundamental preaching of today is, Paul obviously was more concerned about preaching the truth than drawing crowds, keeping crowds or building a new auditorium. Paul could honestly say, “I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you...” (Acts 20:20) He said, “I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). One reason apostasy has come in like a flood is because we have become more focused on church building than on preaching “all the counsel of God.”

How Christian Leaders Become Apostate

- 1.They receive the truth.
- 2.They reject the truth.
- 3.They ridicule the truth.
- 4.They replace the truth.

Preachers who once received the truth preached, “repent or perish.” Somewhere along the trail, they found that kind of preaching would hurt the attendance so they they rejected this truth. Soon they found it necessary to ridicule those who still preached the truth, and then they replaced the truth with what Jude calls “the common salvation.” Peter was not quite as polite. He called it a “damnable heresy,” even being preached by Christian leaders.

Politically Correct Fundamentalism

Preaching that offends nobody.