



JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”
Week 3: “The Salvation We Share, Part 1”
April 28, 2024
Instructor: Steve Schmutzer

Review:

- A. Last week, we concluded our two-week introduction to the book of Jude.
 1. Primarily, this was a look at the first two verses of Jude.
 2. We addressed the basic questions, “Who?” “What?” “Why?” and so on.
 3. Our efforts were to understand the author, the purpose, and the general context of the Book of Jude.
- B. We know a few important details from the past two lessons:
 1. Jude is the half-brother of Jesus Christ.
 2. The Book of Jude was probably written after the death of Jude’s well-known brother, James, and before the death of the apostle Peter.
 3. The book is written to other believers. This is an important detail to keep in mind as we proceed forward in this study.
 4. Jude regards himself as a ‘servant,’ or a ‘slave’ of Jesus Christ. We looked at several ways last week in which this posture is a sign of spiritual maturity.
- I. In this lesson, I want to drill down a bit into Jude’s ORIGINAL purpose for writing. He mentions this purpose in **vs. 3** where he says: he was eager to write *“about the salvation we share.”* Some translations say, *“our common salvation.”* This week, and with our next lesson in Jude, I want to take a slight detour and unpack some of the underlying issues behind this phrase.
 - A. **A question occurs to me as I consider this objective: “If this salvation was common, as in commonly understood and commonly received, why should Jude feel this need to write about it?”**
 1. Here’s the basic answer: Through the entirety of the Church Age, it has been proven that the basic doctrines of the Gospel are more important than any other truths.
 - a. Herein lies a great obligation. Those doctrines which seem to be the most elementary and the most generally received, are therefore also most likely to be things which fall prey to greatest mishandling.
 - b. As a result, it is these matters upon which it is imperative to place emphasis on again and again.
 - c. Various other doctrines, theories, positions, and details of Scripture are, in the end, outgrowths of the core message of the Gospel.
 - d. They all need to be preached and taught in due proportion; but if they are not handled this way, the risk will not be extreme.

2. But as for the root facts, the fundamental doctrines, the primary truths of Scripture, and the Gospel itself, these are matters we must from day-to-day dwell upon.
 - a. It is easy to say of such fundamental truths, "Everybody knows them," but unfortunately, everybody tends to forget them.
 - b. Moreover, the modern church today greatly misrepresents the Gospel. It is the most attacked and diluted essential doctrine of the Bible.
 - c. Many churches today claim, "It's all about the Gospel," but their words and their actions do not properly support this claim.
 - d. Consequently, there are many people who routinely sit in the pews but do not fully understand or embrace these vital truths as they most need to.
 - e. They have not been properly "equipped or edified."
 - f. As **Matthew 7:22-29** spells out so clearly, that many will find out too late that they were not truly saved as they thought they were. They missed the most important truth while they were alive on earth.

3. Paul said in **1 Timothy 1:15**: *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."*
 - a. If this message of the Gospel is indeed worthy of all acceptance, and it is!, then it is certainly worthy of all proclamation and all reminders.
 - b. It is certainly a calling of the church, and a calling of individual believers within the church, to continually proclaim that Jesus came to save sinners.
 - c. Since this is, as Jude puts it, a "common truth," then there is the necessity that we should constantly and diligently make this truth known.
 - d. In other words, our "common salvation" should be commonly spoken of, however I fear it is instead commonly neglected and mishandled these days.
 - e. Therein lies the great necessity which entreats each of us to be as Jude is here: to write of, to speak of, and to share "our common salvation."

B. Furthermore, the Gospel is the greatest remedy against apostasy.

1. As we've already learned in our introduction to Jude, certain men had crept into the church unawares.
 - a. A threat had entered the church, not from the outside, but from the inside.
 - b. Apostasy – a departure from the truth – had invaded.
 - c. Men who were not genuine 'servants,' not genuine 'slaves of Christ,' had asserted their personal agenda and were willfully abandoning God's truth.

2. We noted last week that this is also happening with great frequency in the church today where leaders are:
 - a. Suppressing clear doctrine – *this avoids the truth.*
 - b. Elevating prescriptive and shallow 'worship,' – *this distracts from the truth.*

- c. Substituting sound teaching with politically-correct clichés – *this sugarcoats and dilutes the truth.*
- d. Disagreeing with the plain statements of Scripture – *this fights against the truth.*
- e. These are ALL symptoms of apostasy. We learned last week that apostasy always invades where choices are made to introduce worldly compromise over Biblical commitment.

C. What is the Gospel? Let's nail down some important points in today's lesson.

1. The word "Gospel" literally means "good news" and occurs 93 times in the Bible, specifically within the NT.
 - a. It comes from a Greek term through which we get our English words "evangelist" and "evangelical."
 - b. The Gospel, broadly speaking, is the whole counsel of Scripture responsibly taught and presented. If this is done properly, the Gospel gets proclaimed.
 - c. More narrowly however, the Gospel is the good news concerning Jesus Christ and the way of salvation.

2. Here is a very important fact to consider: For the Gospel to be "good news," we must know WHY it is "good news." Also, we need to know that, we must first know and understand the "bad news."
 - a. Many things in life have two sides: they have both good news and bad news associated with them. The entire truth of those things is typically found in a combination of both sides.
 - b. Emphasizing one side of the equation to the exclusion of the other stops short of providing the whole truth.
 - c. This half-truth approach can have the same results as full deception. This very same principle is true of the Gospel.

3. The bad news is we are all sinners, and we are destined for hell as a result. **(Cf. Romans 5:12)** – *"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned."*
 - a. The bad news is we are all born into sin, and we are all cursed with that condition.
 - a. **(Cf. Psalms 51:5)** – *"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."*
 - b. There is nothing we can do to change this situation we are born in. It gets worse, our sin dooms us to hell.
 - c. That's Part 1 of the bad news.
4. Part 2 of the bad news is our sinful condition sets us up to be adversarial against a Holy God
 - a. **(Cf. familiar verse in Romans 3:23):**
 - *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

- Our sin keeps us from a right relationship with God and from eternal life.
 - b. No one can earn their way into the presence of God because the Bible says there is *“no one righteous, not even one”* in **Romans 3:10**.
 - c. No matter what we do, no matter how hard we try, no matter what rituals we attempt to keep, no matter what habits we form or get rid of, the Bible says in **Isaiah 64:6** that our best human efforts to please God are *“as filthy rags.”*
5. This is the bad news. We are born into a doomed condition and there’s nothing we can do to change that and nothing we can do to save ourselves.
- a. It’s not until we fully understand the bad news that we can fully appreciate and receive the “good news.”
 - b. As one commentator puts it, *“You would not appreciate a stranger bursting into your home and dragging you outside, unless you first understood that your house was on fire.”*
 - c. Until we understand that we are destined for hell because of our sin, we cannot appreciate a way out of this dire situation.
6. This brings us to “the good news.” That brings us to the core truth of “the Gospel.”
- a. The good news is that God loves us, and He doesn’t want us to be doomed to hell.
 - b. The good news is He has provided a way out of this fate that we are born into (**Cf. John 3:16–18; reading more than just vs. 16 here**) – *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”*
 - Here we are reminded that God loves us.
 - Here we are reminded that we don’t have to perish in hell.
 - Here we are reminded that we can have eternal life instead.
 - Here we are reminded that we have a choice we need to make.
 - And, here we are reminded that “believing in Jesus Christ” is the right choice. This saves us from our condemnation.
7. Teachers, pastors, and/or anyone who focuses only on a watered-down version of the good news of the Gospel are not providing the full picture.
- NOTE:** How can you fully appreciate being dragged out of your house if you don’t know it’s already on fire?
- a. A vital part of God’s plan of salvation, is knowing the fate of our sinful condition.

- b. This is why we need to repent. When John the Baptist was calling people into a right relationship with God, he said: *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”* **(Cf. Matthew 3:2)**

D. What does it mean to repent, and why is repentance important concerning the Gospel?

- a. The literal meaning of ‘repent’ is to turn 180 degrees away from something. Spiritually speaking, the term *repentance* therefore implies “turning away from sin.”
 - a. True spiritual repentance includes the fact that we regret our sin, and we turn from it. But a more precise meaning of “repent” in the Bible also means: “to change one’s mind.”
 - b. This sort of true repentance, according to the Bible, will result in a change of actions. It will provide results. **(Cf. Luke 3:8)** *“Bear fruits in keeping with repentance.”*
 - c. In summarizing his own ministry in **Acts 26;20**, Paul states: *“I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.”*
 - d. The ‘cliff notes’ definition of Biblical repentance is: “A change of mind concerning one’s sin and concerning Jesus Christ that results in a change of action.”
- b. Diving a little deeper: Repentance requires that we recognize that we’ve thought wrongly in the past, and we’re determined to think rightly in the future.
 - a. A repentant person has “second thoughts” about the mindset or about things they formerly embraced.
 - b. Replacing those old patterns are new ways of thinking about God, about sin, about holiness, and about doing what God wants us to do.
 - c. True repentance is always marked by “godly sorrow.” It is grief over one’s condition, and according to the Bible, this sort of repentance that *“leads to salvation.”*
 - **(Cf. 2 Corinthians 7:10)** – *“For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret...”*
 - d. Perhaps you are wondering, “What about faith?” How does that factor into this ‘repentance’ issue?
 - e. Repentance and faith can be understood as two sides of the same coin.
 - We’ve already seen that fully believing in Jesus Christ is essential for salvation. That’s the essence of faith.
 - But, one cannot place their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior without first changing their mind about their sinful condition, and about who Jesus Christ is and what He has done.

- Put another way, Biblical repentance, insofar as salvation is concerned, is changing your mind from a position that rejects Jesus Christ to a position that places full faith in Jesus Christ.
- c. IMPORTANT: Repentance is not a work we do to earn salvation! (Reminder: There is NO work and NO action we can do to earn salvation!)
- d. Back to repentance: no one can repent and place their faith in Jesus Christ unless God sovereignly pulls that person to Himself.
 - a. **(Cf. John 6:44)** – *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.”*
 - b. The bottom line is repentance is something God gives us the ability to exercise. It is only possible to exercise repentance because of His grace, His unmerited favor to us.
 - c. (When Peter was explaining his ministry to the Gentiles), it says in **Acts 11:18** that the Jewish believers then remarked, *“So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”*
 - d. So, no one can repent unless God grants that repentance. All of the salvation process, including repentance and faith, is a result of God drawing us to Himself, the result of Him opening our eyes, and the result of Him changing our hearts.
 - e. So again, repentance is NOT a work that WE DO to earn salvation. It is the result of what God does IN us.

E. So, coming somewhat ‘full circle.’ Let’s look a bit more at this ‘good news’ element once again.

1. It’s tempting from a human perspective to look at ‘relative goodness’ or ‘relative badness.’ I’m better than so-and-so, or so-and-so is much worse than me.
 - a. As we’ve learned from God’s Word, despite our relative “goodness” or “badness” relative to each other, we are all in the same spiritual boat.
 - b. The Bible, as we’ve seen, says we have all sinned, and the punishment for sin is death which is (eternal separation from God, eternal condemnation).
 - c. In order for this situation to be remedied, in order for us to not go to hell, but to heaven instead, our sin must be somehow be removed or paid for.
 - d. **Hebrews 9:22** says, *“Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.”* The Old Testament Law established the fact that cleansing from sin can only happen through the sacrifice of an innocent life.
2. What is central to the good news of the Gospel is Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross. This was the final sin offering that fulfilled the Law’s righteous requirement and fully paid the penalty for our sin.

- a. **(Hebrews 10:10)** – “And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
 - **Takeaway** – We are ‘sanctified’ – we are set apart as ‘holy’ – as a result of Jesus Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross
 - **Takeaway** – This only needed to happen once, and it provided the payment for sin for ALL who believe and receive this gift
 - b. **Then, two vs. later: (Cf. Hebrews 10:12)** - “But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,”
 - **Takeaway** – It’s done. Nothing more needs to be done for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was final.
 - **Takeaway** – The good news is payment is complete.
 - c. The good news of the Gospel also involves Jesus Christ’s bodily resurrection on the third day.
 - **Romans 4:25** says: “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”
 - By “justification,” it means we can be declared to be righteous.
 - Justification is an act of God. It’s that process whereby God pronounces a sinner to be righteous, because that sinner has fully placed his or her faith in Jesus Christ.
3. So, putting this all together, we see that receiving salvation – or “becoming saved” – requires several elements of the Gospel to play a part:
- d. **(These are all mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:3–6)** - “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that (1.) **Christ died** (2.) **for our sins** according to the Scriptures, that (3.) **he was buried**, that (4.) **he was raised on the third day** according to the Scriptures”
 - e. **Romans 10:9** distills these elements down even more simply – “If you declare with your mouth, (1.) **“Jesus is Lord,”** and (2.) **believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead,** you (3.) **will be saved.**”

CONCLUSION:

The Gospel is the very good news that resolves the very bad news.

That very good news means we can be rescued from the penalty of our sin. That very good news, according to **Romans 8:1** is the fact that “*there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ.*”

All of that also means that to reject the Gospel means to embrace the bad news. Those that will end up being condemned before God find themselves in that situation because of their lack of faith in Jesus Christ. They have rejected Jesus Christ - - and Jesus Christ is God’s ONLY provision for salvation.

Remember what **John 3:16-18** says: *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”*