

Presented, February 26, 2006

OUR COMMON SALVATION Jude 3

This morning we want to look at a text that was read a few moments in our weekly Bible readings. Vs. 3 of the book of Jude has many lessons we could spend considerable time with. There is the admonition to “contend for the faith”, questions about what “the faith” is, and establishment of the fact this faith was “once for all” delivered to the saints. But this morning I want us to focus on our “common” salvation. What does that mean? In what way is our salvation “common”? And what does that mean to us?

I. The Word “Common”

- a. There are several definitions for this word in the English language – 1) relating to community, 2) ordinary, 3) most widely known, 4) having no special designation – common people, 5) of no special quality, 6) mediocre and 7) belonging equally to two or more. (Derived from the American Heritage Dictionary, © 2000, online edition)
- b. In the Greek, the word used here also has shades of two of these meanings
 - i. It is the Greek word κοινός (koinos) which is primary root of koinonia (fellowship, sharing, to have all things in common).
 - ii. Average (ordinary) – AT times used in a derogatory way. For example, Acts 10:14, 28 – as Peter is sent to Cornelius, we find the word used twice: 10:14 – Peter had not eaten anything “common” or unclean. As the word is used it points to the fact that God’s rules were not ordinary or the way the average person acted. Later in 10:28 – Peter has learned that no man is “common or unclean” – speaking of Gentiles.
As JUDE uses the word in vs. 3, he is not speaking of a salvation that is ordinary or average. That NEVER describes anything about God.
 - iii. Shared by all –
Acts 2:42 speaks of the fact that the disciples had “all things in common” meaning they shared (Also 4:32).
Titus 1:4 speaks of the “common faith” Paul had with Titus.
It is in this sense that the word is used in our text.

So in what way is our salvation “common”? Let us notice some things about our salvation that we all share alike.

II. In what way is our Salvation common?

- a. We have a common need – salvation from our sins
Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned...” This comes as the conclusion of a discourse (chapters 1-3) in which Paul has noted that “both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin.” (3:9)
1 John 1:8-10 even notes that as believers we need to be concerned about not claiming that we are without sin.
Because of our sins, we are condemned to death (spiritual, eternal separation from God) – Romans 6:23.
OUR common need is to be forgiven of these sins. But how is that achieved?
- b. A common sacrifice – 2 Corinthians 5:15 - Christ died for us: ALL of us.
Ever since the first sin was committed (Genesis 3), God put a plan into place to provide forgiveness for our sins. It involved a single sacrifice.
Throughout history God has demanded sacrifices. But the sacrifices of the Old Law and even before that could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:1-4). They were simply accepted in earnest of a sacrifice that once and for all would provide forgiveness. THAT sacrifice is found in Jesus.
John 3:16 says, “God so loved the world...that WHOEVER believes...”
Romans 5:6-8 says Christ died for sinners.
Ephesians 1:7 says, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins”
- c. A common way – Paul establishes in Romans that there is only one way to heaven. Your nationality does NOT matter, nor does anything else. And He spends considerable time noting we are all saved the SAME WAY. Romans 10:9-10. Romans 3:30 notes that both Jews and Gentiles and justified by “faith.” Galatians 3:26-29 drives this point home.

That plan consists of belief, repentance, confession and baptism – Mark 16:16, 1 Pet. 3:21

- d. A common law – God’s word
In our text (Jude 3), Jude calls for these brethren to contend for the faith which was “once for all” delivered to the saints. In that He notes that God’s word has been once and for all established.
Acts 20:27 – Paul referred to the gospel as “the whole counsel of God.”
Peter spoke of God having given us “all things that pertain to life and godliness.” – 2 Pet. 1:3
2 Timothy 3:17 – they are able to make us “complete”
We have a common law that is available to all mankind and that will not change, ever again, as long as this world continues to exist. Paul even said that we CAN understand it – Eph. 5:17.
- e. A common faith – Titus 1:4 speaks of “our common faith” (Titus and Paul)
Finally; we have a common faith and bond. It is our “like precious faith” that keeps us together and sets us apart from the rest of the world. 2 Peter 1:1
Romans 1:12 speaks of our “mutual faith”
In speaking of unity, Paul said, there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism...” (Eph. 4:5)
It is why we prefer one another, why we weigh carefully how we treat one another and the source of our love.

III. Some Considerations

- a. Since there is only one faith, then all others are WRONG!
- i. Jude spoke of “the faith.” This was NOT simply the fact that they believed and had faith in God but WHAT they believed. “The faith” is a reference to the sum of ALL they believed and had been taught. This is obvious because it was something they could contend for.
 - ii. The religious world would have you believe that exactly what we believe is not really important (hence denominationalism), as long as we are in agreement on a few key principles. Sadly this doctrine breeds ignorance and compromise, both of which are directly condemned in the New Testament.
 - iii. And so is the concept of unity in diversity (i.e. agreeing to disagree and yet remain unified).
1 Corinthians 1:10 – condemns division and calls for us to “all speak the same thing”
Galatians 1:6-8 which warns us not to accept “another gospel” and to mark all who bring ANY GOSPEL different than the gospel of Christ – e.g. “the faith”
Also, note that the NT writers did not contradict one another. They taught the same thing everywhere – 1 Corinthians 4:17, 2 Peter 3:16 where Peter mentions Paul, etc.
 - iv. If that be true, how do we know what is true? Consider Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15
- b. We must contend earnestly for “the faith”
- i. While Jude wanted to present some more general observations about their “common salvation” he found it MORE needed to exhort them to “contend for the faith”.
 - ii. Sadly, many today are not willing to stand up for the truth. It is easier to compromise or sit back and say nothing than to defend what they know to be the truth. Such attitudes are detrimental to the cause of Christ.
 - iii. The word *contend* means, “to fight for ... something” (WS Dictionary). Strong uses the word, “struggle” to define this word. Jude is telling these brethren they needed to stand up AND FIGHT for what they believed. And it wasn’t their opinions, but “the faith.” In this short epistle he is dealing with false teachers (we will notice this tonight) and the need to resist them. In Revelation 2:12-17 speaks of the church at Pergamos which had in their midst those who held to false doctrines. They were condemned. In Revelation 2:18-21 we read of the church at Thyatira that allowed false teaching without confronting it. They too were condemned and called upon to repent.
Jesus was a contender for His Father and the truth – continually exposing hypocrites and religious corruption.
Paul was a contender for the faith as He stood up to His enemies and accusers. He vigorously defended His ministry and apostleship in 2 Corinthians. He continually exposed false teachers and false doctrines. Peter and John were contenders as they refused to heed the threats of the council in Acts 4:8-12, 18-20, 5:29-32, etc.
 - iv. Brethren we need to be willing to stand up and defend the truth – ALL OF IT! We must “contend” for

our faith. There are congregations of the Lord's church, who are not teaching error, but they conveniently leave "controversial subjects" alone and thereby appease the "itching ears" of the congregation (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Chances are, that these are the subjects that need to be addressed the most, if we truly want to convict men of their sins so that they will repent and be saved.

v. But I must add a word of caution. Some abuse the idea of contending for the faith by using it as a "blank check" to "rip into" their enemies and those in error with no compassion or love. Christians are not to be contentious just for the sake of contention, arrogant, quarrelsome, filled with strife, rude, and a host of other ungodly characteristics that do more harm to the cause of Christ than good. As we give a "defense" for our hope, it must be "with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15) Ephesians 4:15 tells us to be "speaking the truth in love" Even Jude concluded this letter noting that while we are to snatch some out of the fire (using strong tactics), others are to be addressed "with compassion, making a distinction." (22-23)

vi. But understanding this, we MUST CONTEND for the faith! Fight for what is right with our all.

Thus we can see our common salvation. It is available to all and worth fighting for. What about you? Are you in a saved condition right now? If not, take whatever steps you need to take to be saved.