

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Jude 1-4
Lesson #32
Contending for the Faith
08/14/2022

“To create
despair you
need hope -”

**false hope
in things
that will
disappoint.**



Bane
Batman's foe in
“The Dark Knight”

John 10

“¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; **I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.** ¹¹ I am the good shepherd; **the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.**”

Psalm 23:1

“The Lord is my shepherd, **I shall not want.**”

John 16:33

“in Me you may have peace. **In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.**”

Matthew 20:28

“the Son of Man did not come to be served, but **to serve**, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Jude

“¹ Jude, a **bond-servant** of Jesus Christ, and brother of James to those who are the **called, beloved** in God the Father, and **kept** for (by) Jesus Christ: ² May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.”

The Word and Way of the Cross is

“good news”

*for those called by God
and kept “in Christ”.*



Jude

“³ 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 (fight) earnestly** for the faith **which was once for all handed down to the saints.**”

***But why would we have to “contend”
for such a wonderful message?***

*As we face life's stresses we may
feel that there is a gap between
expectations & experience.*



How Is Christianity working for you?

- Too much to live with & not enough to live for.
- Failed expectations of God, His people, and His Word.
- Little or no experience of God's presence, a changed life, or power to change anything.
- Feeling alone, confused, left out, over looked, beaten down, without hope.

***Is there
something wrong
with me?***

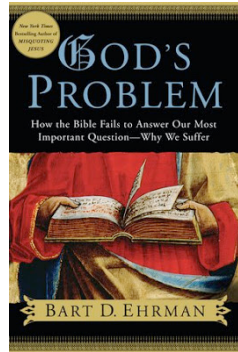
***Is the
message
true?***



If Jesus is the “Good Shepherd” why are the sheep suffering so?

“How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question – Why we Suffer?”

“I just began to lose it. It wasn’t for lack of trying. But I just couldn’t believe there was a God in charge of this mess.”



6

Temptation is always a battle over truth and trust.

The temptation is to believe that **ABUNDANT LIFE** comes only through circumstances in this life

that God can control if we trust Him.

7

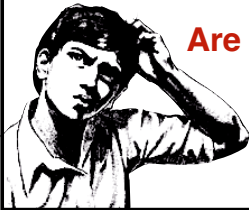
Jude assures us that the message is **universal, and final.**

Jude 1-4

“our **common** salvation”
“**contend** earnestly for the faith”
“which was **once for all** handed down to the saints.”

The problem may be in the context of our application.

“**All Scripture is written FOR us but not necessarily TO us or ABOUT us.**”



Are we living under the New Cov. for the blessings of heaven and under the Old Cov. for the blessings of earth?

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Contrasting worlds

Old Covenant	New Covenant
HOPE centered in this world	HOPE centered in the world to come
ORTHOPRAXY (behavior centered)	ORTHODOXY (belief centered)
LAW emphasis	GRACE emphasis
UNION WITH GOD through Israel	UNION WITH GOD through the Body of Christ
Warrior King Messiah	Suffering Servant Messiah

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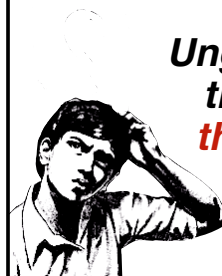
Contrasting worlds

Old Covenant	New Covenant
<i>John 1:17a</i> For the Law was given through Moses;	<i>John 1:17b</i> grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ;

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Jude

“4 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.”



Ungodly messengers among the sheep misunderstand the Word of the Cross and the Way of the Cross.

11



As Christians
we are not alone
*in more ways
than one.*

*The Way of the
Cross is not
good news
for this life.*

12

2 Peter 2

“14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which **the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.**”

Many had separated the WORD of the Cross (Christ's death FOR us) from the WAY of the Cross (Christ's life IN and THROUGH us).

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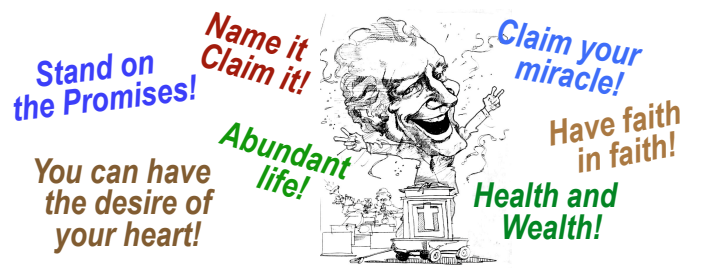
Romans 6

“1 What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?** 2 **May it never be!** How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

This question confirms Paul's teaching of God's radical grace in Christ.

- ✓ **The question makes sense only if Paul's teaching of radical freedom from the condemnation of the Law is his intention.**
- ✓ **Note what he is NOT saying in response.** “You have misunderstood me.” “You can't remove the condemnation of the Law from the Christian life. **You are still under the Law.**”
- ✓ **Note what he will say.** “Your new identity frees you from fear and calls you to freedom from sin's lie, that it will bring you life.”

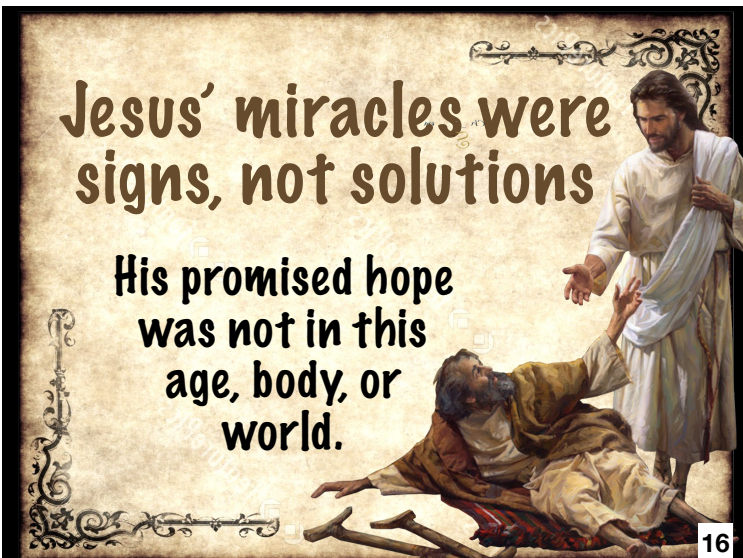
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“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.” *1 Cor.15:19*

Christ came to save our soul not our plans.
Christ calls us to a cross (in this life) before a crown (in the next).

15



Jesus' miracles were signs, not solutions

His promised hope was not in this age, body, or world.

16

The temptation of Jesus and all humanity

Fear Matthew 4 **HOPE**

Change the circumstances!

“3 **Command** that these stones become bread.”

Claim the promises!

6 **He will command His angels concerning you** so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

Compromise the means!

9 All these things I will give you, **if you (prostrate yourself before) me.**”

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Matthew 4

prosperity?

“3 **Command** that these stones become bread.”

protection?

6 **He will command His angels concerning you** so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

power?

9 All these things I will give you, **if you (prostrate yourself before) me.**”

The temptation is to live with the expectations of O.C. shalom (this world's peace).

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Spiritual warfare

Apostolic teaching

Peace & Power



Unmet expectations

Shipwreck & despair

Healthy Christian faith is:

intellectually convincing,
emotionally soothing,
morally transforming,
socially connecting,
culturally inspiring.



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Mathew 11:12

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and **violent men take it by force.**”

Is the “Kingdom of God” to be taken by FORCE?

1 Corinthians 1:18

“For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing **foolishness**, but to us who are being saved it is the **power of God.**”

Does the Cross of Christ make sense to THIS WORLD?

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People who see themselves as Victims



don't get **BETTER** and **BRIGHTER**
they get **BITTER** and **BLINDER**



being slaves to FEAR (anger & anxiety)

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The Kingdom & Politics

the Left

The Messiah State

Social ethics

Kingdom without King

Justice as equality of result primarily

Poor are victims of rich

Wealth is a corporate creation to be shared

the Right

Uncritical Nationalism

Individual ethics

Kingdom before its time

Justice as equality of opportunity primarily

Poor are irresponsible

Wealth is earned and controlled by the owner

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Christians on both political sides share more in common than they realize.



They both neglect the Way of the Cross.

- They invest too much in worldly culture.
- They put their hope in this life & stuff.
- They seek political & material power.
- They are driven by anxiety & anger.

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United with Christ in baptism

WORD of
the Cross

What Christ
did **FOR** us

Justified by
FAITH



WAY of
the Cross

What Christ
does **IN** and
THROUGH us

Witnessed by
FOLLOWING



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IDEAS

THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH
IS BREAKING APART

Christians must reclaim Jesus
from his church.
By Peter Wehner



The Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/10/evangelical-trump-christians-politics/620469/>

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