

“Seeing Clearly”
July 22, 2012

Jude 3ff. (Jude- an encyclical letter to many churches) To counteract the false teaching that: (1) Saw Jesus as a mere man—inspiring us to self-improvement (2) Saw the Bible as a book of myths—questioning God’s involvement in our world (Result)- “Self” is optimal & following Jesus is optional

PROP- We are being called to the place of CLEAR PERSPECTIVES—re-assessing our lives in light of eternity (*knowing that one day we will give an account*).

1. JESUS IS LORD (not “Jesus is AN option”)

(Jude 3-4) A warning: “Contend for the faith”- *unrelenting tenacity (i.e., battle)*

- Keeping Jesus as “the chief cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20)
- When we “measure/compare” ourselves among ourselves—we are “not wise” (2 Cor. 20:12)
- Resist the compromise of an insulated, comfortable, costless Gospel (NOTE: It will cost us everything—but worth every drop) 1 Peter 3:15
- Jesus is the “desired of the nations” (Hag. 2:7)—the longing of every heart...
- ...therefore, it is vital that we follow Him fully → we may represent Him accurately.
- We cannot distort the Gospel to accommodate a “feel good” culture.
- Called to an up close and personal relationship with Him, “the One (our) soul loves” rather than living as one who “veils herself beside the flock of (His) companions” (Song of Songs 1:7)

2. HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE (not “God is loving”—“doesn’t judge”)

- The people of God “rejoice” and “are glad because of Your judgments” (Psalm 48:11)
- (Jude 5-7) His judgments may seem “bitter” to the taste, but as we eat them they become our “joy” and our “heart’s delight” (Jer. 15:16)
- Ultimately brings the pleasant reassurance that He is not an “anything goes, whatever” God.

“And now, isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress (godly sorrow) has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart.” **2 Corinthians 7:10-11 THE MESSAGE**

3. **JESUS HAS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY OVER THE ENEMY (not “evil is ominous”)**

- (Jude 6) Demons are chained
- (Jude 9) Even angels recognize our authority is under His authority

4. **OUR GIFTS/CALLING ARE “OTHER-SERVING” (not “self-serving”)**

- (Jude 11)- Resist the ways of:
 - Cain- jealous of the favor, blessings, success of other’s
 - Balaam- using our gifts for self-promotion (see v. 16)
 - Korah- rebellious, “above correction”, pride veiled in super-spirituality (“Doesn’t God speak to all of us?”)

5. **FAITH & LOVE ARE VITAL**

- **FAITH**- (Jude 20) flows through praying in partnership with the Holy Spirit. Praying from His perspective (*“praying in the Spirit” not limited to tongues*)
- **LOVE**- (Jude 21)
 - “Keep yourselves”—our responsibility
 - “I have quieted my soul...like a weaned child is my soul within me” (Psalm 131:2)
 - Not striving to make something happen, earn approval, get word
 - Also includes...staying in healthy connection with people (1 John 4:20)
 - “Work out your (plural) salvation” in the context of relationships

RESPONSE

Receive the sharpening of our perspectives in light of the fact “He is able to keep us from blowing it!” (Jude 24)