

going to fight our rescue efforts. Paul reminded us “*we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph 6:12).

- b) **Second**, we must hate even the garment spotted by the flesh. Albert Barnes points out that the garment spotted by the flesh “*may be an allusion to a garment worn by one who had had the plague, or some offensive disease which might be communicated to others by touching even the clothing which they had worn*” (Barnes 1520). Remember that among the sins the apostates promoted were the sins of uncontrolled lust, speaking evil, opposing leaders, murmuring, complaining and mocking God. The devil will seek to turn you from truth or to get you to sin while you are witnessing to unbelievers. You must be **very** careful, especially when dealing with cults and false teachers.

Conclusion: If you are a true Christian, God has given you the job of rescuing others from false teachers. **First**, you must have a flourishing relationship with God. **Then**, you must work with compassion or mercy to rescue deceived Christians. **However**, you must use fear and extreme caution when witnessing to unbelievers who have adopted false teachings. They do not need reform. They need new life in Christ. Religious unbelievers and every other unbeliever need to receive Jesus as their Saviour to escape judgment.

Hell and the Lake of Fire are real and eternal. Once in hell there is no escape. If you are not 100% positive you have trusted Christ to save you from hell, please speak to me and let me help you today.

Song: Rescue the Perishing - 432

Rescuing from Apostasy

19 August 2018 AM – Jude 1:22-23 – Jude18 – Scott Childs

Introduction: A rescue is when a brave person helps someone who is in danger and brings them to safety. Stories of heroic rescues are heart-warming. However, Jude tells us of a rescue mission that is even more heroic. Our duty is the rescue of but deceived Christians or religious unbelievers from the grasp of false teachings.

Transition: This morning, I want us to examine the instructions God gave us for rescuing deceived Christians and religious unbelievers.

1. Rescuing Deceived Christians (v.22)

a. These need compassion or mercy.

- 1) Some of those trapped by false teachers and apostates are immature Christians who are ignorant of the Bible and are deceived by false teachers.
- 2) On these, we are to have compassion. This is a command. We find the word translated “*compassion*” 31 times in the Bible and 29 of those times it is translated “*mercy*”. This word means to help one afflicted or seeking aid; to help the afflicted, to bring help to the wretched.
- 3) Deceived Christians do not realize that the false teachers are leading them astray. They lack God’s wisdom to be able to identify the errors of the false teachers. They need help.
- 4) Rescuing straying Christians is not just the pastor’s job. It is the job of every Christian. (Galatians 6:1) “*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*”
- 5) To help them, you must know your Bible well and be spiritual (not carnal). False teachers are experts in twisting the Bible to support their ideas. Last week, we examined the previous two verses where God told us how to prepare ourselves (Jude 1:20-21).
 - a) You must daily be building up yourself through a flourishing relationship with God.
 - b) You must be walking in the Spirit so that He can guide

your prayers.

- c) You must be looking for the mercy of the Lord that will one day deliver you from this evil world.

b. Making the difference can be difficult.

- 1) The word translated "*difference*" means to separate, to make a distinction, or to give judgment.
- 2) By this, God is telling us that we must make a distinction between the deceived Christian and the religious unbeliever. Discerning whether a person is a deceived Christian or a religious unbeliever can be difficult. We must take a merciful approach when helping the deceived Christian but a fearful approach when helping an unbeliever.
- 3) **Beware!** Bibles that translate this verse, "And have mercy on those who doubt" are based on a corrupt Greek text.

2. Rescuing Religious Unbelievers (v.23)

a. Religious unbelievers need God's salvation.

- 1) It was common then as it is today for unbelievers to attend church services. Such people are somewhat religious but still unsaved. False teachers seek to pull them into their snares.
- 2) Here God **commands**, *others save with fear*. The word "*others*" identifies them as different from the deceived Christians. While the word translated "*save*" can simply mean to deliver or rescue. However, the phrase "pulling them out of the fire" strongly implies that we must save them from the flames of hell. The phrase "*with fear*" means we must use appeals that produce fear. They must clearly see the danger they are in. (2 Thessalonians 1:8) "*In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*" (Revelation 20:15) "*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*"
- 3) Just as the angels urged and pulled Lot, his wife and his two daughters out from Sodom just in time to avoid the fires of God's fiery judgment (v.7), so we must try to save

religious unbelievers who follow false teachers.

- 4) Every spiritual Christian is on God's "**fire rescue squad**". We must do our best to rescue victims before the flames of hell overtake them.
 - 5) The word "*pulling*" describes the act of snatching out or seizing. While we cannot force an unbeliever to flee from the wrath to come, we must be tactfully aggressive.
 - a) Amos described sinful Israel as a burning stick pulled from the fire. (Amos 4:11) "*I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.*"
 - b) If you have ever watch a campfire, you know that if you pull a branch out or if it falls out of the fire, it generally stops burning. This is our duty toward religious unbelievers that are heading for God's fiery judgment.
 - 6) We must preach the Gospel to them. Jesus bled, died, was buried, and rose again to pay for our sins. Sinners must place their faith in Jesus' payment alone as their only hope of escaping hell and entering heaven. This is God's exclusive and complete remedy for our sin. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) "*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.*"
- #### b. Beware of the danger.
- 1) Just as the job of a fire fighter is dangerous, so the job of pulling an unbeliever from the flames is dangerous.
 - 2) We must approach our duty with caution. Going into the "burning house of sin" to help rescue a religious sinner is a dangerous task for two reasons.
 - a) **First**, pulling them out of the fire describes the difficult rescue process. Jude recognized that these sinners were in great danger. Not only were they unbelievers in need of salvation, but they had believed the religious lie of the apostates from which they must be pulled away (cf. Mat 7:21-23). Satan is