

The Alarming Gospel, audio

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[0 : 00] Jude verses 1-4 And since it's now our new tradition, let's all stand as we read from God's Word.

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ, may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

And this is God's reading of the Word. You may be seated. We've been studying three circles evangelism training on Sunday nights, and we're continuing to do that for the next couple of weeks.

[1 : 32] Nice plug there. But anyway, this is a great evangelism technique. It's one that can be written out on something as little as a napkin, even smaller than that if you have small handwriting.

But it's a great technique. There's even an app if you have a cell phone you could use on that. But there's a verse that gets brought up in this three circles that I think is a wonderfully pertinent verse for preaching the gospel and for also witnessing to other people.

It's 2 Corinthians 5.21. It says, It is an exchange that's going on, a divine exchange.

In theological terms, we call this imputed righteousness. The fact is that when one is saved, when someone is saved, God placed your sin on Christ, and he was nailed to the cross for that sin, and you receive Christ's righteousness on your behalf.

And because of Christ's righteousness received on you, God declares you righteous. It's called justification. And that is a must necessary for the purpose of being saved, being considered saved.

[2 : 52] You will not go to heaven if that's not happened. And that's just a must, a total must. And so that's something that we need to understand. And every time we present the gospel, we need to be presenting that and also presenting a complete gospel.

The fact that Jesus did die on the cross for our sins, as important as that is, it's equally important that he rose again from the dead three days later. So we need to remember that as well when we present the gospel.

Now, what happens when we do present the gospel, or let's say that we are in the process of growing in faith and we want to continue in good, solid Christian living and living according to the Bible.

And we are confronted with opposition. Now, I don't really have a lot to say about our current culture today. I thought that video that we saw this morning was a very good summary of what's going on.

Things are a mess out there. Things are ridiculous. Ten years ago, they were ridiculous. They've been ridiculous for a long time. A total mess in our society. And that's what sin does to societies.

[3 : 58] But what happens whenever we present the gospel or we choose to live in conviction of scripture and we are confronted by that type of situation?

And that happens. It's happened to me a number of times. Sometimes out of the blue, I'll tell you of two occasions, both of them on Facebook, both of them a few years back. But one of them was, there was some memes that went around when memes was just a very new thing, very new word. I don't know how long ago that was, four or five years ago maybe. And there was some mention, I think, the don't ask, don't tell thing was going on in the military. And so people were putting up their support of homosexual marriage or their support of traditional biblical marriage.

And I just decided to find the meme that I could find that was the least controversial, I guess, at least in my thought, to put up on that. And I did put it on Facebook and just shared, this is what I believe.

And I had a good friend come on, a good friend from high school, that basically said that I was a bigot and that I was uninformed.

[5 : 11] And he said all kinds of other things and it hurt. And we shared a little bit, exchanged a little bit, and it was kind of, it wasn't pretty.

And I had about ten friends that decided to unfriend me because of that one meme that I honestly thought was not that big of a deal. Okay, perhaps I was naive.

Well, that's kind of Christian living, and that's going to happen whenever you confront a culture that is against what you believe. But what happens when the culture confronts you, someone confronts you about something that you think is a gift, you think is a wonderful thing?

How about grace? When someone confronts you in an issue of grace, again, a couple of years ago, there was a Christian person that's fairly known that failed, that fell.

And anyway, I presented a message with the verse Romans 8.1, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

[6 : 18] That's great news, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and that there is forgiveness in the cross of Christ and in resurrection. And again, a young lady came on again.

Why do you have that message? Grace is wrong. You know, we need to be, we cannot forgive these people. They are, they cannot be forgiven.

And you know, that's just, it went on for paragraphs and paragraphs, and lots of people came in and talked. So I'm just giving you the synopsis. But it's a really sad thing.

We're still Facebook friends today. She was actually a lot, you know, she was certainly allowed a lot more than others did.

But anyway, nonetheless, there are people out there that cannot stand the Christian life, cannot stand the gospel, cannot stand even basic parts and basic elements that we might even consider to be thanksgiving and divine gifts.

[7 : 24] like grace, you know, like mercy, like God's love for you. I mean, these are things we might consider to be basic. But a lot of people, that's a problem, a major problem.

George Whitefield says this, a pastor from the, or preacher from the 18th century, saying, if you are going to walk with Jesus Christ, you are going to be opposed.

in our day, to be a Christian, to be a true Christian, is really to become a scandal. And if that was true over 200 years ago, it definitely has to be true today.

And it was true over 2,000 years ago. But 1 Corinthians 1.23 simply says this, but we preach, Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews, and folly to Gentiles.

Folly, the word folly is the same as foolishness. And Paul continues on in that passage, in verse 27, it says, but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise.

[8 : 22] So that's the purpose of foolishness. But what's the purpose of a stumbling block? Or a stone of stumbling? Now that's referred to all over the place in Scripture, Old and New Testament, Isaiah 8.14, referring to Christ the Emmanuel, God with us, saying this, he will become a sanctuary, and a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling, to Israel, and to Jerusalem.

Now that word, in Hebrew it's something else, but in the Greek, when it's been brought over to the Greek, the New Testament, it's the word skandalon. The word skandalon, you hear a word in there that we use in the English language, scandal.

And when you know that something is a scandal, you know what that is. It's scandalous. And so, skandalon is an important word in the Bible. And there's a songwriter that I really enjoy.

His name's Michael Card, wrote a song called Skandalon. And I want to read a little bit of it. This is the chorus of the song. It says, he will be the truth, this is Christ, will be the truth, and will offend them one and all.

A stone that makes men stumble, and a rock that makes them fall. Many will be broken so that he can make them whole, and many will be crushed and lose their own soul.

[9 : 40] And that's a nice summary of the idea of what skandalon is, a stumbling block. And the reality is, Christ needs to be a stumbling block for all of us. We need to be looking at him, and either we bow to him, we either consider him to be our master and our savior and our lord, or we reject him.

And that's the response that we have to give to Christ. When we see Christ, and we see that it is something that is completely different than what we might think human nature is going to be, it's going to be a stumbling block, and we have to do something about that.

We have to either turn to him as our savior and our lord, or just reject him. And those are the only two choices, honestly. And so, when we come back to the book of Jude here, we come back to this, and we look like it's an introduction, but there's something that's said here that talks about what our faith needs to be, what the gospel needs to be about, and what people who believe the gospel and want to serve the Lord need to be about.

And the first one, it says, those expressing faith in Christ will serve him, will serve him. If you notice, in just the first part of Jude, the first verse of Jude, it just says, Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James.

So who is Jude? It says he's a brother of James, but what's that about? Okay, well, let's talk about that, who these guys happen to be. Matthew chapter 13, verse 55, it has the list of names.

[11:15] And it's talking about Jesus going to Nazareth and serving them, and of course, this is his hometown, and they're thinking, isn't this guy the son of the carpenter? Isn't he the son of Mary?

He's just the basic guy, and they list the name of all of his brothers, and listed James, and also lists Judas, which Judas is the actual name. Jude is a shortened name of that.

And so listed the brothers, and that's who's listed right there, James and Jude. And also John 7, 5, as Jesus is kind of finishing his ministry up beginning to his last year, went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, but as they are in Galilee still, his brothers basically say, why don't you come up with us, and you can do all the miracles, and you can really wow them.

Of course, Jesus had other plans with the idea that it wasn't his time to be crucified, and that's what the Jews wanted to do to him at the time, at least the Pharisees and such.

And so he wasn't going to go, but nonetheless it says that his brothers did not believe him, just simply did not believe that he was the Messiah. They just thought he was kind of a crazy guy, maybe a sideshow like it's part of a circus.

[12:28] And so in Acts 1, 14, just eight months after that one scene in John, the brothers are listed among the believers right before Pentecost.

And so now they are a part of the group that the apostles are part of and following the apostles at this point. And so it's quite a change.

And what happened? What was the big change that went on there? Well, the Bible also refers to that as well. The resurrection was the big change. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15, it says that Christ died according to the scriptures, was raised to life according to the scriptures, and he appeared to all these people.

And in verse 7, it says that he appeared to James. And the belief is that was his brother, James, that he appeared to. James being the head of that house, the second born.

So with Jesus now being with the father, he is going to, James is now the head of the household, and you would think because of that, he is telling his brothers and his family about the great Christ.

[13:34] Okay, so here's what's going on there. So he's a brother of Jesus. He's also a brother of James, of course, as it says. But he denies Jesus as the Messiah until after the crucifixion and the resurrection.

And so this is just simply who he is. But you would imagine Jude would call himself a brother of Jesus Christ. I mean, that's really quite an accolade. Even the apostles couldn't say that.

Apostle Paul couldn't say he was a brother of Jesus Christ. That's quite an accolade. You would think he'd want to pat himself on the back on that. But really, him as well, he and as well as his brother James in his epistle call themselves servants or bond servants, slaves.

And so it's an interesting concept. And yet, that really needs to be our role as well when it comes to our relationship with Jesus Christ.

we are to be his servants as well. We are joint heirs with him, but he is our master. He is our Lord and we are to serve him as Jude says as well.

[14:41] We are to submit to his lordship. John 13, verse 14, Jesus comes, he washes his disciples' feet and he tells them what that's about because that was really odd for someone that is a teacher and someone who's a master to bow down and do what the lowest servant was going to be doing to the people coming in from the dirty outside.

He says, if I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. A euphemism for serving one another.
And then 1 Corinthians 7, chapter 7, verse 22, for he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise, he who was free when called is a slave of Christ.
So when we call ourselves servants, no matter where our socioeconomic background is, no matter our ethnicity, no matter where we come from, it doesn't really matter. We are all equal in the sight of God as servants of him when we are believers.
And that's a reality of, that's a real truth. And so whether you are great or whether you are lowly in this world, when you choose to serve Christ as Savior and Lord, that is really what, that's something that we all see each other there as servants, fellow servants of Christ serving together in this world.
[16:10] Okay, so, those expressing faith in Christ will serve him and then we also need to understand something here too beyond this. The last part of verse 1 as well as verse 2, faith is the foundation.

Faith is the foundation. Our faith needs to be foundation, faith in Christ. And it says, Jude wrote this letter to several different, same people, but several different ways of describing them.
Those who are called is the first way. Those who are called. And when it's called, it's God's elective call to salvation. And it yields so many things.
It yields so many wonderful privileges. It yields fellowship with Christ, peace, freedom, a worthy walk, a hope, holiness, blessing, the list can go on and on.
There's so many wonderful, wonderful things that that calling from the Lord yields and that we ought to be serving him and the Lord gives us the strength and gives us the ability to be able to serve him in that way.
[17:16] It also yields eternal glory and we also need to understand that these truths, all of these truths that we call, that we're called by Christ to serve him, we're called by Christ to obey him, these truths must feed us when we engage our culture with the gospel.

In a couple weeks, we're going to go out and engage our community. And we need to understand that we are engaging as servants of God, as servants of Jesus Christ. We need to be serving him with his strength, with his power, not on our own power, but with Christ's power.
And so we will speak more on that when we come to verse three as well. It's also beloved in God the Father as the ESV says here. The NKJV, the New King James Version, actually has a different translation, it's a little bit better.
We're sanctified. So if we're beloved in God the Father, we are obviously loved by him. That love is unconditional. That love is unending. But even beyond that, this term is really talking about being set apart in God the Father, set apart in him.
So we are called by God. We are set apart by God the Father. And then those who are in Christ are kept by Jesus Christ, as it says right here. We are preserved by Jesus Christ.
[18:32] And not only does God initiate salvation, but he will also complete it through Jesus Christ, as John 10, 28 says. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

It is a preservation that the Lord gives us. When he saves us, he preserves us into eternity, and it's a wonderful thing. And so this greeting, this wonderful greeting that is brought to us, we can see this as indicative of a description of who a believer ought to be.
They are called. They are kept for Christ Jesus. They are beloved and sanctified by God the Father. And now we receive mercy and peace and love.
And that is all multiplied to us. You know, that's something that we need to understand of that mercy, peace, and love because it tells us what this message is about. Is it about the law? Is it about works? All about works, what you do? No. Because if it was all about that, then it would be saying death and failure belong to you. But it says mercy, peace, and love.
[19:42] So it's all about grace. It's all about God's grace. That's great news. Wonderful. Okay, and as we also come to verse 3, it says that our faith needs to be shared, must be shared, within the body.

We need to be sharing within the body. And by sharing, I mean at this particular point, united in our belief. Not sharing the gospel. That comes later. But we need to be united in our belief, shared within the body.

And it says right here, Jude wanted to write something that was different than what he actually wrote with the divine inspiration of God. But he said he was eager to write to you about our common salvation.

Our common salvation. Now what's our common salvation about? Well, there's a couple ways of looking at it. When you look at all of the epistles in the New Testament, the next thing that usually comes right here is a thankfulness offering.

I thank my God. I thank God through Jesus Christ. And Paul wrote that in almost every single epistle that he wrote, as well as the other epistles writers wrote as well.

[20 : 48] And I want to share a few of them. The ones, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. The one in Galatians that says grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil age.

You know, you hear all those plural pronouns. That's about believers. Gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil age. In Ephesians, verses 3 through 4 in chapter 1, blessed be our God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him in love.

If you notice, every spiritual blessing, you see, he chose us. These are all things that we share together and that unite us in Jesus Christ. In Philippians 1, 3 through 6, it says, I thank my God upon every remembrance of you for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Another example of something that we share. The fact that any work that the Lord has created in you, the work of salvation, it will be completed. That is a promise that we have as believers individually, but that's something that we share as believers with one another and that's a wonderful truth.

And then Colossians 1, 3 through 5, we give thanks and praying always for you since we heard from your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all the saints because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, the hope of heaven, something we share of which you heard before the word of the truth of the gospel.

[22 : 29] And I can go on for hours about the things that we share together as believers. But I want to give you a summary instead of hours, maybe just minutes.

Acts 2, 42 is a great summary of what the church ought to be. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

The apostles' doctrine about the centrality of Jesus, about ethical and practical teaching and the grounding in the central promise God has given in Jesus Christ.

And that's really just a summary of what the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, all these things that are taught, even what Paul delivered in these Thanksgiving messages I read, and the other ones, all of that being the apostles' teaching and fellowship.

The fellowship, the koinonia, with Christ as center, all other things in life must come below him in priority. And then also, the common salvation is so important that we should not tolerate anyone perverting it or changing it in any way.

[23 : 38] Let me read that again because we're about to get into something that's important about that. The common salvation is so important that we should not tolerate anyone perverting it or changing it in any way.

So, what did Jude write about? You know, he wrote about common salvation, yes, in a sense, but he wrote about something in particular about that common salvation, about defending it, about contending for the faith, as it says here in this translation, the English Standard Version.

So, we must defend our faith when necessary. Defend our faith and we will find it is often, so often necessary to be doing this in many ways.

So, what does that mean? Well, this verse helps to inform us of this. It's 1 Peter 3.15 and if you hear the word apologetics, it's not about apologizing, it's about making a defense.

This is where this verse, that word comes from, from the Greek. 1 Peter 3.15, In your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.

[24 : 56] Okay, to summarize this verse, let's look at a who, what, when, where, why, and how. What are we to do? Well, we are to make a defense. Okay, to whom are we to make a defense?

To anyone, it says right here in this verse, anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, that's who we are to make a defense of. and how, and when are we to do it?

And where are we to do it? Well, anytime, and anywhere, anyone asks that kind of thing. But it also says something else about where and when.

We need to always be prepared because we may not necessarily know where and when it's going to happen. So we need to be prepared. And then also, how do we do this? We do it with gentleness and respect.

And that's something we need to definitely remember when we are contending for the faith, making a defense. We need to be doing that with gentleness and respect. And why do we do this? Well, according to this verse, because Christ has set us apart for his purposes and we submit to his lordship.

[26 : 00] And of course, people need to hear about it. And who are the people that need to hear about it? Well, go back to the verse. Anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. That's who needs to hear about it.

And so, any time that is being asked and if you haven't been asked that in a long time and it's been a while and you can't think and remember that time, March 31st. That could be a good time for people to ask you that or at least for you to share the gospel with other people.

And you'll have plenty of people asking you for the hope that is in you for a reason. Why are you even here? Why are you on the soccer field? You don't have children or whatever it might be. that's something that's worthwhile to remember.

March 31st. And then while the salvation is not in jeopardy about why we need to defend the faith, we contend because we have been entrusted to guard the treasure of salvation.

So, when people come along perverting the gospel, we must wage war against error in all forms and fight strenuously for the truth. So, this calling that is given to us is given to the people he wrote to, which is us and everyone before us, about contending for the faith.

[27 : 21] It is an urgent call. It is an urgent appeal. He feels necessary to write and to appeal to us, to urge, to exhort in this way.

So, we need to sense that urgency and understand that urgency. Why is that urgency needed?

Well, because false teachers exist. That's why that urgency is needed. False teachers are active in their work and they're effective in their work as well.

They do a great job at presenting that false teaching and people want to hear it. and, you know, I mean, I can name names. Why not? I'll name a name.

Joel Osteen is a great name of a person who preaches false doctrine. I mean, honestly, he really does. And why is this church so large? Because they want him to preach what he preaches.

That's why it's so large. And, nonetheless, it didn't start with Joel Osteen or Norman Vincent Peale or anybody before him. I mean, it's been around for a long time.

[28 : 21] If you go back to Matthew chapter 23, Jesus talks about Pharisees doing some of this as well. It says, Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces, for you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.

Jesus gave the Pharisees eight different woes just like this. And then 2 Timothy chapter 4 verses 3 from 4, this talks about our current time. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but have itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

So, hey, why do people want to hear these guys that have this theology that doesn't square with scripture? Well, because they don't want to hear anything that squares with scripture. They want to hear something else.

And that's why it's going on. And then they're fed well and they're fed quite handsomely too. And so, so this is something that we need to understand about this defending our faith because our faith is something worth defending.

Our faith is something worth cherishing. The faith in Jesus Christ in the biblical gospel, it is worth cherishing and it is worth defending. So, defending an essential aspect of our faith because it says why.

[29 : 41] The faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. once for all delivered to the saints. What does that mean? What was delivered to the saints once for all?

Well, say it in two different ways. The person of Jesus Christ. The truth of the person of Jesus Christ. His nature being fully God and fully man. His sinless life. His teaching all pointing back to God's revealed word. I mean, if you really look at what he teaches you could go back to the Old Testament and find all over the place there. His work of miracles. His call to salvation. His crucifixion. His burial. His resurrection. His promise to return. All of that in one lump sum right there. In one person of Jesus Christ fully God fully human. So, does everyone who preached Jesus Christ preach all of that? No. No, there's lots of people that preach something else other than that. [30 : 39] And if they get one thing different than all of that they're wrong. they're preaching a different Jesus. That's something we need to know. Jesus is fully God and fully human.

That one is a big one right there. And if you go one way you go into one heresy that's been around for 2,000 years you go another way you go into another heresy that's been around for 2,000 years. And it's still around today. Gnosticism, Arianism is what they're called. Okay, so and also the scripture the Bible the complete word once the word has been completed at this point. And it's been complete for a long, long time. And so we need to believe that word. God's revelation has been delivered as a complete unit. And it's not to be added to deleted modified or embellished in any way.

We just sang about it this morning. How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord is laid for your faith in his excellent word. What more can he say than to you he has said to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled.

[31 : 49] And so we sang about it. We need to remember that and we need to believe it with all of our hearts that we do not add or delete or do anything to the scripture other than what it says and believe it and trust in it and trust in Jesus Christ and our Lord and Savior.

So we are like a soldier entrusted with guarding a sacred treasure. Charles Spurgeon says this the unlettered peasant unlettered means uneducated who knows the gospel by deep experience and therefore will never let it go is as true a guardian of the gospel treasure as the most profound scholar and perhaps more so the whole of you who really love God are set for the maintenance of the truth of God in the world.

Under God the Holy Spirit the cause of truth depends on you. You are its pillars and its basement. In other words you are the one that has been presented to go and spread that gospel spread this word as well.

It's to be presented to ones who are uneducated ones who are educated ones who are somewhere in between. I mean we are all to present that. That gospel. When God has saved us we present it. That's the truth. In verse 4 it continues on in this vein of defending our faith it says certain people have crept in unnoticed. So we got creepy people in the Bible and these guys we need to understand these creeps because they exist and they're good and they're wily they come in like snakes and in honest really almost literally it means they're coming through a side door.

[33 : 34] They're coming through a window and they're there here. I mean I'm not here but I hope not but they're definitely in the church today without a doubt.

And again Spurgeon says this about them most of the false doctrine in the world has been suggested by those whose office it is to preach the truth. Hence the truth of God is not trusted to the ministry it is based and pillared upon the whole church.

And every time I've had opportunity to come and present the gospel I feel that weight because that is a real weight to get it right. And because what you want to present is something that squares with scripture so people hear it and they understand it as being something that squares with scripture. That's a big deal. And yet there's so many people who say they preach God's word and I think many that even know that they're not and are choosing to do it anyway.

Do whatever they want to do. So they can tickle others ears maybe even their own. That's just for me. So four statements about these people these people that crept in unnoticed.

[34 : 48] They're right here in this verse verse four. The first one is who long ago were designated for this condemnation. This apostasy. They're apostates.

So Jude refers to several examples if you go further on in the book. He talks about fallen angels in verse five and following that Sodom and Gomorrah and Balaam his sin and his error and Korah's rebellion and the list can go on and on.

And so he talks about good examples of this of these people who are designated for this condemnation. They're also listed as ungodly people and that word is quite important in this book as well.

He says in verse 14 through 15 Behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way and of all the harsh truths that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

I mean here's the one adjective right there or adverb ungodly ungodly what does that mean without worship and it's simply referring to something along the lines of morality more than something else so it's really specifically referring to perverting morally and even further than that he perverts the grace of God into sensuality.

[36 : 16] Sensuality is a word that we need to understand a lot of people say it's about moral perversion sexual perversion and it sure is but I would say more generally this is really what it's talking about license just the simple fact of saying that we have the license to do whatever we want there are a lot of people that are preaching that message and calling themselves Christians and calling themselves Christian pastors that are teaching that we that the Bible allows us because of the grace of God allows us to liberty to be liberal I guess in other words but there's another word that is used a lot by theologian types it's called antinomianism and just simply saying it's against the law I mean they are against the law of God basically is what it's talking about gets down to the nitty gritty there it says one who holds that under the gospel dispensation of grace the moral law is of no use or obligation because faith alone is necessary to salvation it is true that faith alone is necessary to salvation but the Bible says something else about that as well it's very true it says for by grace you've been saved through faith and it's not of works lest anyone should boast it's nothing that you can do for yourself that's what it says in Ephesians 2 8-9 but it goes on in verse 10 to say for we are his workmanship created in

Christ Jesus for good works so there is there is something that's important about Christian living about wanting to live according to what the gospel says what the scripture says and living according to that so there is something important about doing what God says it really is and then also the fourth one deny our only master master and Lord Jesus Christ so master and Lord refer to two other words sovereign master is the idea of sovereign we are if we are going to be someone who wants to twist God's word we are going to deny God's sovereignty and we are also going to deny Christ as honorable we are not going to honor Christ when we choose to twist his word okay so we need to understand that but we also need to remember as we contend for the faith as we as we choose to defend it strive to defend it we need to strive we need to work at it we need to be honest about that and be out in the world and honestly believing what the

Bible says and be able to understand it to the point that we can present it in a faithful way according to what it says and there's so I want to present this other verse from the song that I presented earlier Michael Cards a scandalon song and you may not know it it's songs almost as old as I am which to a lot of you is not that old but it says it seems today the scandalon offends no one at all the image we present can be stepped over could it be that we are like the others long ago that really I think points to something that could be most relevant to us and most relevant to say the Southern Baptist Convention of Oklahoma the fact is what we may do in terms of twisting God's word is that we just want to make it sound like it is easier than it is we may want to sound like that choosing to live for

Christ is just as simple as living life when in reality there is a major cost to living for Christ in a true way and so it is simple to come to faith in Jesus Christ as true as that is it's just simply calling to him and trusting in him and repenting of our sins and that may sound easy at first but you know to continue to do that that takes faith that takes some real living and that takes some real trusting in what God has said in life because there are going to be bumps and there are going to be twists and there are going to be cancer there's going to be autism there's going to be all kinds of things that come up that make you want to doubt and fact is when you're trusting in Christ you're trusting! is our walk with Christ offending no one that believes something that is contrary to the gospel because if it is we need to check it we really do so to conclude I still want to talk a little bit more about that three circles of evangelism training as important as that is it is very important to understand that God has a design that God has a perfect design that he established before the foundation of the world for us to live in but we don't live in that perfect design as we can tell all over

the place all over our lives that we don't live in that perfect design it's because of sin it's because of the reality that we are all sinners and that we certainly transgress against God it says in Romans 3 23 quite plainly that all have sinned fallen short of the glory of God if you don't understand that in some ways you can go back to other verses in chapter 3 and you can see that there is none righteous no not one there's none that seek after

[42 : 09] God there's none that have those things and when you see that there are none and that all have sinned you might see that includes you too and that's important to understand that the reason we don't live in God's perfect design is because of sin and that sin leads to brokenness and the fact is we can understand brokenness in our lives all we have to do is look at our paychecks look at our finances look at our family lives look at our relationships look at our work life look at people around us and we see brokenness all around us and everyone we talk to and engage event on March 31st is going to know about that brokenness unless they're like three or four they're going to know about it and that's the fact and that brokenness we want to answer we all want an answer to that brokenness and we're going to try to find all the answers we possibly can without Christ we'll turn to everything we'll turn to getting more money we'll turn to drugs and alcohol we'll turn to everything we can possibly get our hands on just to find an answer to that brokenness but without

Christ that answer is very short lived at best it just it is not an answer simple as that so what is an answer it's the gospel what we've been talking about the fact that Christ died!

according to the scriptures as it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and as it says in 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21 it says that we might become the righteousness of God in him God laid Christ's righteousness on our behalf and laid our sin on Christ's behalf and he died on that cross and he forgave that sin and because of that we can be forgiven when we trust in him and repent of our sins as it says in Romans chapter 10 verses 9 if we believe in our if we confess with our mouth Jesus is Lord the Lord Jesus if you're confessing Jesus as Lord that means that you're trusting him as your master and Lord and you need to repent of your sin and get rid of that stuff that he tells you not to do so when you confess with your mouth is made to salvation and that is as simple as it gets for justification to believe and to repent and then

God gives you the ability God gives you the grace and the strength to live for him and do according to what he says after that and because of that you can recover and pursue God's design in your life and that's beautiful that's a beautiful thought to remember and so we need to remember that don't have to wait till March 31st to tell people about that truth you can tell them about that truth this afternoon so let's be people that want to pursue other people and to tell them about the gospel of Jesus Christ let's be people that want to engage our community and then in turn engage our region and engage our world with the gospel of Jesus Christ and when necessary and it will often be necessary especially when you live a life that offends the worldly you will need to engage in a way that is defending your faith

Thank you.