



## 5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

# Erring from the Truth

False teaching has been a problem in the church from its earliest conception (Jude 1:3). Apostles wrote letters to combat the heresies that would soon be creeping in (Jude 1:4). What do these New Testament letters state? What does the passage say? When the letter to the church was read, what did it mean to the listeners? Did they change it and say it couldn't mean what the Apostle said?

In our day we must unify all verses to make our doctrines fit. So we end up throwing out or ignoring many verses so that we can hold on to our denominational creeds. But Jesus did not teach this way. His message was centered on the Kingdom of God. It was the hub of the wheel, but from the hub were many spokes such as:

*“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field,”* (Matthew 13:24)

*“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed”* (Matthew 13:31)

*“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven,”* (Matthew 13:33)

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field;”*  
(Matthew 13:44)

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net,”* (Matthew 13:47)

Each spoke had a peculiar point or truth, but Jesus never tried to unify the spokes. They were all a different facet of truth concerning His Kingdom. We would do well to take to heart Jesus' method of preaching.

Today we will be breaking down two verses of Scripture — James 5:19 and 20 in the King James Version. We will be breaking down the passage using a Greek lexicon and then will summarize our findings.

*<sup>19</sup>Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;*

*<sup>20</sup>Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”*  
(James 5:19-20 King James Version)

James 5:19

**Brethren** — a brother or fellow believer

**If** — in the event that this happens

**Any of you** — any one

**Do err from the truth** — go astray or wander from the truth, to separate from the truth, the truth pertaining to God whether it is moral or doctrinal truth

**And one** — that is, someone

**Convert him** — to turn or return, by bringing that one back to the love and obedience of God

James 5:20

**Let him know** — understand

**That he which converteth** - he who caused someone to turn or return back to God

**The sinner** — someone who is devoted to sin

**From the error** — the wandering and straying

**Of his way** — a course of conduct

**Shall save** — to rescue from danger or destruction, to save from the penalties of judgment (used here in the future tense)

**A soul** — a life

**From death** - the separation of soul and body by which life on earth is ended; with the implied idea of future misery in hell

**And shall hide** — or cover; cover these sins from future judgment (Greek uses the Future Tense)

**A multitude** — a great number

**Of sins** — the wandering from the path of righteousness

A paraphrase of James 5:19-20:

*Brothers and Sisters (from the Jerusalem church who are now scattered among the nations James 1:1), if any of you do err from the truth, (and you know you had to have been in the truth before you could err, or go astray from the truth) and one converts you (that is, one turns you back and brings you back to love and obedience to God). Understand this, that this one who turns you back to God, away from your love and devotion to sin, will save your soul from death (from perishing, from the danger of destruction) and shall cover and hide your great number of sins from future judgment (Acts 17:30-31; Acts 24:24-25).*

We do not know if these verses are describing Christians or not, because Jesus said that some who receive the word of the Kingdom, receive it with joy but only believe for a

while, in time of testing they fall away (Luke 8:13). We do know this, James was writing to a Christian church in which some had moved away from the truth of Christian doctrine and its conduct and lifestyle, resulting in practicing the sins of the flesh. These offenders of God are now called “sinners.” Ezekiel 18:24 states it like this; “If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked person does, will they live?” (Ezekiel 18:24 NIV). I don’t think we are speaking about a sin, but a practice of sin, a lifestyle, they practice the same detestable things the wicked practice.

Vine’s Expository Dictionary states under the word “Error,” “a wandering, a forsaking of the right path, see James 5:20, whether in doctrine, 2 Peter 3:17; 1 John 4:6, or in morals, Romans 1:27; 2 Peter 2:18; Jude 11, though, in Scripture, doctrine and morals are never divided by any sharp line. ‘Errors’ in doctrine are not infrequently the effect of relaxed morality, and vice versa.”

It seems that these believers had strayed from Apostolic teaching and James was trying to bring them back to sound doctrine that was according to godliness (1 Timothy 6:3). By immorality or other works of the flesh, they seemed to be practicing sin because they are addressed as sinners, doing the same detestable things as the wicked (Ezekiel 18:24).

The solution to this problem is “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...” (Acts 3:19). Return to sound doctrine, the doctrine of Christ!

## Questions

**1** Read Acts 20:28-30 (KJV).

*“<sup>28</sup>Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. <sup>29</sup>For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup>Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” - Acts 20:28-30 (KJV)*

False teaching has been a problem in the church from its earliest conception.

True or False

**2** Read Jude 1:3-4.

*“<sup>3</sup>Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. <sup>4</sup>For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” - Jude 1:3-4*

Apostles wrote letters to combat the heresies that would soon be creeping in the church.

True or False

**3** Read Romans 5:9.

*“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” - Romans 5:9*

“Save” means to rescue from danger or destruction, to save from the penalties of sin and judgment.

True or False

**4** Read 2 Peter 3:17.

*“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” - 2 Peter 3:17*

“Error,” is a wandering, a forsaking of the right path, whether in doctrine, or in morals.

True or False

**5** Read Acts 3:19.

*“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...”  
- Acts 3:19*

In order to have your sins blotted out, and be converted, you must:

- A. go to church on Sunday
- B. fast every week
- C. repent (Acts 26:18-20 NIV)

*“<sup>18</sup>to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’*

*<sup>19</sup>So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.  
<sup>20</sup>First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.” - Acts 26:18-20 (NIV)*

**We want to hear from you!**

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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## Answer Key

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**True**

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