

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

Chapter 12- The Characteristics of the Heretics **Jude 12-13**

124 The Characteristics of the Heretics- Part 2

WOSM Monday 04/28/08

Welcome again my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse study of the Book of Jude and we are now at the point where we are going to examine the characteristics of the heretics. So, let's read verses 12 & 13 of Jude:

12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Now on the last broadcast, we began to look at what Jude was telling us in these verses by examining the first of five characteristics of the heretics. In verse 12, Jude tells us that the heretics would be like :

hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear

And last time, I was showing you how that the early Church held what was called "Love Feasts" to promote fellowship and harmony among those who love and serve Jesus Christ. We were looking at the divisions that exist that hinder this fellowship and we saw that divisions and strife in the Church of Jesus Christ over sinful things like race or culture or education or financial or social status or based upon pride or arrogance is expressly forbidden in Scripture. We also saw how God had to supernaturally deal with Peter's heart so that he would accept the Gentile, Cornelius into the Body of Christ and how God opened the door for the Gospel to be preached to every

creature in every nation by the glorious words that He spoke to Peter in **The Acts 10:15**:

What God hath cleansed, no longer consider unholy.

Now those who know their Bibles know that even though God showed this vision to Peter three times and even though God spoke thee soul stirring words to Peter and even though Peter personally saw how that the Gentiles could be saved as well as the Jews- Peter failed in carrying out this glorious Revelation in the daily practice of his *own* life because he was never able to completely get over the division that existed in his own heart over the Gentiles and the Apostle Paul and not Peter became the Apostle to the Gentiles. So, we must be careful that we do not harbor the same divisions in our hearts that will divide believers along lines that shouldn't be.

Now I would imagine that almost everyone that has heard what I just said would agree at least in principle with it. We must labor diligently so that wrong and sinful divisions do not work in our hearts and divide the people of God.

But, in our modern age of ungodly tolerance- we will take the truth that we should not let ungodly division exist within the ranks of the believers to a place where God never intended it to go, and we will think that God doesn't want *anything* to *ever* divide *anyone*- and that is simply not true.

So, while it is true that *most all* division among God's people is sinful- it is also true that *some* division is correct. While it is true that to be divided over things like race or culture or social or financial status or division based on education or gender, or age is sinful and wrong- it is equally true that there are some very specific Biblical reasons to divide people from people- even among believers and in some cases especially among believers with the sinful world.

Now that statement may come as a shock to some of you- but please allow me to explain myself. Let me repeat what I just said. I am saying that, in general, it is wrong to be divided among ourselves over most issues like race, finances, and educational levels. But I am also saying that it is also wrong to *not* be divided over some issues that the Bible clearly teaches.

So, let's end the speculation and see what God said about this in His holy and inspired Word. Let's read about a time when God Himself divided His people from other people in **Exodus 8:20-23**:

20 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

21 "For if you do not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and on your servants and on your people and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians will be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they *dwell*.

22 "But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the LORD, am in the midst of the land.

23 "I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur.'"

Because God had determined to judge Egypt and set His Own people free- the Bible says that God put a "division" between the people of God and the people of Egypt and separated them from one another. So, God *purposefully* divided between His people and the people of Egypt to show that God was with His people and was judging the other people. So, we can see that in *this* case where God was judging a nation- God Himself divided between that sinful nation and His people so that He could preserve His chosen people.

The entire history of the Jewish people in the Old Testament was one of division between them and the other people of the world. Over and over in the Old Testament, God tells His chosen people to separate or to divide themselves from the lost and un- chosen world. This doesn't mean that the Jews were better than the people of the world- no, in some cases the people of the world were more honorable and more moral than the Jew- but it does mean that God had done something unique with the Jew that He had not done with any other group at that time and that made their separation or division necessary.

The division between the Jew and the world was to show honor for what God had done *to* them and *for* them and *in* them and *about* them- and not to bring glory to the Jew.

For example, when we use the word, “holy”, we are using a word that denotes this division or separation. You see, dear friends, the word, “holy” doesn’t mean sinless- no, “holy” means that the thing or object that is holy is “different” or it is “set aside” or it is “called out” or “separated” or “divided” from everything else and anything else.

You see, God Himself is Holy. And the reason that God is Holy is because nothing and no one is like God. He is different from everything else, and He is different from anyone else. God is set aside, and He is unique. So, there is a necessary division between God and His Creation- and that is part of the reason that God is worthy or entitled to our worship.

God Almighty is the Creator of everything that is made and that means by definition that God is not like anything that He made. He is superior to and separated from and He is above and more important than everything else that He made. So, it is this Holiness or this “otherness” that makes it proper and correct to worship God. For example, it is God’s Holiness that makes it such a horrible sin to worship anything that was made as though that thing was as holy as God.

In the Bible, one of the greatest sins was for people to lower God in their minds to be on the same level as Man. It was a terrible evil to bring God down to our level and to lower or remove the division or the separation between God’s holiness and Man. Let’s read **Psalm 50:21**:

... You thought that I was just like you...

The Old Testament is filled with admonitions to the Jews that they were not to look like the sinful world; they were not to talk like the sinful world; they were not to marry into the sinful world or to adopt the customs and practices of the sinful world. Of course, the greatest prohibition was that they were not to worship the gods of the sinful world.

And God’s people today are called out and are to be separate and different and divided from the world in many, many areas of our lives. Let’s read what The Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to say about this in **2Corinthians 6:14-18**:

14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

So, for example- it is wrong for a Christian to go into business partnerships with a lost sinner. It is wrong for a Christian to marry or to even date an unbeliever. It is wrong for a Christian to go to bars and to nightclubs and to party with their sinful friends. It is wrong for a Christian to be dominated and influenced by the lost and sinful world and to develop a mind-set based on what the world teaches rather than what the Word of God and the Holy Spirit teaches. We are a called and chosen and set aside people by virtue of being bought and paid for by Jesus and so we are people who have been called to holiness. The Apostle Peter said this about that in **1Peter 1:13-16:**

13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,

15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;

16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

Now once again, being holy does not mean that you are better than somebody else. It doesn't mean that you are superior to anyone. Holiness, true, genuine, Biblical holiness will never make anyone prideful or arrogant or self- righteous. Don't ever forget the fact that

God didn't choose you because you were so great, Bubba, God chose you for no other reason than it was His Good Pleasure to do so- so never allow the fact that you are chosen by God to cause your head to swell. This whole thing about separation is not about you, beloved,- it is about God.

So, we have a need to be constantly reminded that God could have just as easily raised up a rock to take our place- so don't ever think that because you are chosen- you possess some innate quality in and of your self that God saw that made you attractive to Him. That's not the way it works. It was Mercy and Grace that chose you- not some good thing that you have done or that you possess.

And as we are called by Scripture to be holy- we are also called to be gentle, and we are called to be kind and we are commanded to be loving and forgiving and merciful and patient with all men- especially those who don't know Jesus Christ.

And we are called to occupy in this present evil world and so even though we are to be holy- it is God's Will for you to work and have a job and it is okay to work around sinful people and it is okay to have a sinful boss and to submit to that sinful boss. Nothing about Biblical holiness would prevent that.

And it is okay to employ sinful people in your business. It is okay to have sinful friends and to speak to them and spend time with them and to eat with them and to laugh with them to a point- just don't sin with them.

Biblical division or holiness doesn't preclude any of that. But we must get a handle on the delicate balance of being *in* the world and yet not being a part *of* the world. And we must all work very diligently to hammer out all of the details of this balance on our face in our prayer closet because while we are commanded to live in this world- we are equally commanded to not be as the world. And this is why we all need to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. Well, I've got to stop right here. But please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

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