

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

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

Chapter 15- How to Combat Heresy **Jude 17-21**

174 How to Combat Heresy Part 10

WOSM Monday 07/07/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the **Epistle of Jude** and today we are continuing to go over what Jude taught about "How to Combat Heresy". So, let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 17-21** again together:

17 But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."

19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

Now we are continuing to go over the first of the four ways that Jude gave us to combat heresy when it comes to our Church. This first way is based upon the inspired words that Jude wrote to us in verse 20:

1. Build Yourself Up on Your Most Holy Faith

And as we have been studying- there are 10 separate Biblical keys for every believer to become spiritually strong; edified; mature; and equipped. So, let's go over the list:

1. Prayer

2. Bible Study
3. Godly Fellowship
4. Obedience
5. Being Filled With the Spirit
6. Confession
7. Love
8. Trust
9. Witnessing
10. Discernment

Now we have already gone over the first three items- Prayer and Bible Study and Fellowship and today I want to look at the fourth way that will help us build on our most holy Faith- and that is Obedience.

Obedience is almost the forgotten part of the modern Christian life. Many today look at obeying the Words of the Lord as being optional as though *some* faithful Christians obey while others- who are equally faithful- do not need to obey- and that is simply not true. The hallmark of being saved is that all truly born again believers have the inward desire and the supernatural Power to obey God and to follow Jesus. Now I realize that we are not always successful in accomplishing that- but nevertheless, we do desire to obey, and we are more obedient than we are not obedient. Look what Jesus said in **John 14:15:**

If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.

And again, in **Luke 6:46-49:**

46 "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

47 "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like:

48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

49 "But the one who has heard and has not acted *accordingly*, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

Do you see in this passage that Jesus said that if we do not obey His Words- we are guaranteed to fall? Did you hear that Jesus said that if we love Him- we will obey Him?

There is a great deception out there today, my brothers and sisters, which says that a person can be saved and yet somehow remain disobedient to Jesus as a normal course of his daily life. This false teaching says that someone can go to heaven without following Jesus. How would that be possible? Isn't *following* Jesus the very essence of Salvation?

Beloved, for 1900 years the Christian Church taught that Salvation meant so much more than simply joining the Church; or being baptized; or going down front; or making a decision for Christ; or shaking the preachers hand. The Christian Church taught that being saved was a miracle; that it was supernatural event that came by the Sovereign Grace of a merciful God to undeserving sinners.

Right up until the mid 1800's the Church believed and taught that Jesus Christ was both the Author and the Finisher of our Faith and that being saved really meant something.

But with the advent of false teaching by some famous 19th Century Evangelists like Charles Finney- the Church abandoned the Biblical definition of Salvation and began to lower the bar about what it meant to be saved. By doing that- larger numbers of so-called "conversions" were recorded and that encouraged more and more Churches to implement the unbiblical practice that these evangelists began.

The same thing happened to the public school system of the United States in the 1960's. Sociologists and Government officials became increasingly alarmed that more and more children were failing tests and dropping out of school- and for some unexplained reason- the leaders of our school system thought they could solve the problem by lowering the standards that were required in order to pass.

Now it is true that by lowering the academic standards- more and more children graduated than ever before- and everyone stood around and congratulated each other on what a great thing they had done. But there was this little nagging problem that went along with lowering academic standards in public schools. Because they lowered the requirements for graduating, the young people who did graduate

were not as educated as previous generations had been. So, all that we really did was we sacrificed educational integrity so that we could have more numbers of graduates.

Today we have children graduating from High School who cannot read past a sixth grade level. These young people are not really educated- but they have a diploma saying that they are educated.

This is the very same thing that we have done to the Church. In our mad rush to grow the Church with more numbers of people and become successful according to the standards of the lost world- we have sacrificed Biblical integrity and we have lowered God's standards about what Salvation is and is not. The result is that we have more people in Church today than ever before- but we also have an ever growing segment of those people who are not born again; they have not been transformed and they are really not saved.

Now how do I know this to be true? What is the defining element in Scripture that all save people possess and yet not one single lost person possesses on an ongoing basis? Obedience. Beloved we have got to raise this element of Christian life back up where Jesus put it. Obedience is looked at today as something that is optional. Sure, most people would say that being obedient to the Lord is better than being disobedient- but the reality is that we have downplayed obedience so much and so often for so long that we tend to look flippantly at it and say, "*no biggie!*"

But obedience *is* a real big deal to Jesus. The Bible clearly teaches that obedience to Scripture is the only way that we can prove our love for God. It was Jesus Himself Who said that if we do not obey Him- we really don't love Him. And if a person does not love Jesus— how could that person be saved?

Now before you think about coming after me- let me say that when I am talking about obedience, I am not talking about sinless perfection. No man is sinless- except Jesus Christ. We all sin; we all deal with our sinful desires and we all periodically fall short- but the major difference between the lost and the saved is that saved people do not *remain* in sin; they do not *continue* in sin; they do not make sin their abode.

If you will just realize that being saved means that you have received within yourselves the new divine nature- then you can

understand that it is that new nature- which is created in righteousness and true holiness- that new nature- that God gave to you without any help from yourself- that new nature- which will not allow you to continue on in your sin. A saved person feels horrible when they sin. The agony and internal turmoil is unbearable when a redeemed soul fails God.

And that is a good thing. That guilt and horror is God the Holy Ghost convicting our hearts so that we will get strong and stop repeating the same things over and over again.

Any attempt by anyone to minimize that guilt or to ignore that horror is of the devil because the answer to sin is not by psychologically overcoming guilt- the answer to sin is true, genuine, heartfelt repentance. Brothers and sisters, we who belong to Jesus are *supposed* to feel terrible when we sin. We who do study the Bible know that sin is a horrific insult to the holiness and purity of Almighty God and when we sin, we justly deserve God's eternal Wrath. So, when God grants us Mercy instead of Wrath- the last thing that we should think is that our sin or our disobedience didn't matter.

It is true that being justified of our sins and being born again is a Sovereign work of God alone. It is also true that Salvation is by Grace alone through faith alone by Christ alone. But it is equally true that everyone who is truly saved by Grace has the new divine nature and so the result of their new birth is that they will change. If they do not change- it is because they are not saved. If they are born again- they will hear Jesus; they will love Jesus and they will follow Jesus. It was Jesus who said in **Matthew 16:24**:

If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

And our Lord also said in **John 14:21**:

He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

It is a heresy- a false teaching to say that you can be saved without obedience. Those who teach that we can go to Heaven

without obedience are false teachers and should be rejected- no matter how popular they are. We have got to come to grips with the Truth that obedience to God and His Word is part and parcel of belonging to Jesus.

We must also stress that, in the Bible, accepting Jesus' Words was equivalent to accepting Jesus Personally and rejecting Jesus' Word was equivalent to rejecting Jesus Personally.

Therefore, if we do not believe and teach and obey what Jesus said as recorded in the Gospels- we are rejecting Jesus Personally. And if we do not teach and preach and love and obey the words that were inspired through the Spirit of Jesus in the rest of the New Testament- then we are also rejecting Jesus personally.

So, we who have been justified through His Blood no longer belong to ourselves. If we still do belong to ourselves – if we still live in disobedience- then Jesus has not bought and paid for us. So, either you are already paid for, or you are still for sale. Either you belong to Jesus, and you follow Him or else you are living in rebellion to His Word, and you are yet in your sins.

Before we were saved, we used to live according to the dictates of the god of this world and the carnal desires of our own flesh. But now that we are bought and paid for- we no longer have the right or the authority to live as we see fit. We are now compelled by virtue of Who owns us to follow Jesus and to submit ourselves to the authority of Scripture and to live by every Word that proceeds out of the Mouth of God.

So, for believers- obedience is the only game in town. We have no other options. We deserved hell and instead we got mercy. We rightly earned God's displeasure- but instead of His just Wrath- God sent us Grace so to those of us who know who we really are- obedience is simply our duty; our responsibility; and our privilege.

Well, I have 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.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse- by- verse Journey through the **Epistle of Jude**.

You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.