

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**

188 How to Combat Heresy Part 24

WOSM Friday 07/25/08

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 discuss just how we are to obey verses 20 & 21 of Jude. These verses tell us that the best way for any of us to ward off heresy and false teaching is to "**build yourselves up on our most holy faith**" and to "**keep yourselves in the love of God**".

We all can see from these verses that God wants us to be strong- it is God's Will that we are strong in the Lord and in the Power of His might. But precisely how do we get strong? Exactly how do we obey the inspired words of Jude and build up ourselves on our most holy faith? Just how do we keep ourselves in the love of God?

Jesus gave us a great key that we have been examining lately. We can find this key in **Mark 8:34-38**. Let's read those verses again.

34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

35 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?

37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Now I think that it is safe to say that most all who name the Name of Jesus realize that our modern American culture is corrupt. But we need to really discuss this because for some strange reason- although we would all readily admit that our culture is corrupt and fallen- we, who love the Lord, have inexplicably chosen to adopt many of the tenets of this corrupt and fallen culture and brought them into our homes and into the Church and into our personal lives. Why would we do that?

We must surely believe that to follow the ways of the world is detrimental to our service and worship of Jesus Christ. Surely we would all agree that to adopt the ways of sinful men cannot bring glory to God. And I think it is safe to say that most everyone would agree that the Bible contains the answers for this dilemma.

So, if all of that is true- why would we ever do what we are so eagerly doing?

For example: We have more books; more video tapes; more seminars; more retreats; more information about how to have a godly home than any generation in history- yet we see more illegitimate births and more adultery and more sexually transmitted diseases and more divorces among believers than any generation in history. So, in spite of all the information about how to have godly homes- by anyone's measurement- we have fewer godly homes now than at any time in history. Why is that? Surely we do not lack information. No, we have information running out of our ears. We don't need more information- but what we do lack is power.

We lack miraculous, supernatural holy and godly power because we do not obey Jesus and deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Jesus. This isn't rocket science, beloved, but it is profound. We must understand brothers and sisters, that we cannot live lives of self indulgence and then expect to have God's Power at work in our lives. There are no shortcuts. Either we graciously and humbly bow to God's Word and go His way, or we don't go. Either we do whatever our hearts crave or else we obey Jesus Christ. Either we take up our cross and follow Jesus or we stay weak and ineffective.

Many modern ministries actually promote self indulgence; they actually teach us to become covetous. You will never gain spiritual power and strength by living like that.

As men, we must reject the Hollywood image and the American Corporate image of what a man is supposed to be like and submit to the authority of God's Word so that we can be the head of our Homes and love our wives like Christ loved the Church and not be bitter against our wives- but treat her as the weaker vessel.

We need to have this power to raise our children in the fear and nurture of the Lord so that we do not provoke them into the wrath of God. We need the power to never allow our children to disrespect our wives and we need power to guard what comes into the home and set the tone for what is allowed and what is not allowed in the home and lead our families in the ways of God.

Women need this godly power also to reject the demonic influence that feminism has offered them and to graciously submit to the authority of her husband and to submit to her God given calling to bear and raise children and care for them and to keep her home and love and support and follow her husband.

Children need this very same godly power today also to resist the carnal and sinful influence that carnal music and worldly pleasures and Humanistic Public Education has brought into their mind and heart, and they need power to love and respect and obey their parents and to serve God.

But that will never happen unless and until the man and the woman and the children begin to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Jesus.

We must realize that we cannot do whatever our hearts crave; we cannot follow every dictate of our souls and still have what we all say that we want to have. You just simply can't get there from here.

And what is true in the home is also true in the Church. If we are to have a Church that brings glory to God- we must not pattern the Church after the world. The Church does not belong to the Pastor; it doesn't belong to the Elders and Deacons; it doesn't belong to the pope or the Cardinals; and the Church doesn't belong to the people. The Church was bought and paid for by Jesus Christ. Jesus is the One Who shed His Blood and He is the Sole Head of the Christian Church. He is the Head of the Church and everything that is done in the Church; every service; every song; every program; every sermon; every activity; should be geared to bring glory to God and to bring believers into the very Image and Likeness of Jesus Christ.

I didn't set the standard my dear friends- Paul and Peter and James and John and Jesus set the standard for how to set up the Church and how to operate it- and then they set this standard down on paper so that we could read it and so that we could acknowledge that the Bible isn't just a good idea- it is the very inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of the living God.

So, because this is true- it is impossible to bring glory to God in the Church if we adopt carnal methods and fleshly tactics. Beloved, God has already told us what the primary function of the Church is to be- The Church is to be the Light of the World; a Candle sitting high atop the candle stick; a City set on a hill; a beacon of Truth in a world of error; an oasis of Love and Mercy and Purity in a fallen culture. The Pillar and Ground of the Truth in an age when truth is being trampled

Nothing that comes from the lost world promotes God's agenda. Flesh cannot bring forth spirit. Carnal and human tactics cannot bring forth the glory of God. The lost world is in hostile opposition to God's agenda. They always have been and always will be. The culture cannot be redeemed unless people get saved. It is impossible to have a godly culture without having godly people who live and function in it. The reason our culture is more ungodly today than it used to be is because we have more ungodly people who live in our culture than we used to. We have more people who do not deny themselves; who do not take up their cross; and who do not follow Jesus than we used to and until these people get saved- they will never do what Christians do. They will

never vote right; they will never live right; they will never act right. They act like they act because they are lost and all the political and social activism in the world won't change them. Only Jesus Christ can change the human nature. Only God can transform the human soul.

But the Church operates and always has operated outside the culture. We are not dependant on what the culture does. We serve Jesus because we love Him and the reason that we love Jesus is because God put that love inside us when he saved us. We didn't posses that love before we were saved- that love for God and the desire to serve God is all part of the new nature that God gives to those He has chosen.

So, as we see the culture go down- it is all the more important that the Church be the Church and not adopt the ways of the fallen culture. When no one wants to serve God- that is the time that we must serve God. When no one wants to follow Jesus- that is the time that we must follow Jesus. When no one wants to submit to the authority of the Bible- that is the very time that we must submit to the authority of God's Word.

So, when we see that very few people desire to study the Bible- the Church needs to have more Bible Studies- not less. When lukewarm and backslid people have no desire to pray- the Church must be sure that it is calling people to payer.

Let me give you a clear example of what I am talking about. It is absolutely unconscionable in a day when we are seeing a 50% divorce rate among Gods' people and when we are at war for the very soul of our nation that Church after Church is cancelling their evening services this Sunday so that the people can stay home and watch the Super Bowl. Beloved, this is not a sign of our liberty in Christ- putting a sporting event ahead of God on the Lord's Day is a sign of our backsliding. It is a sign of our idolatry. It is a sign of our unwillingness to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Jesus.

The thought of the Church of Jesus Christ bowing to the whims of unsaved men and cancelling Sunday Services would have been unthinkable 50 years ago- but today only silly men like me will cry out against it. But this is just another part of what I am talking about- the Church adopting the ways of the world. It is things just like this that has made the Church weak and ineffective and effeminate and unable to obey Jesus Christ.

Unless people are saved- they don't want the things of God. So, the effort of the Church is not to change the culture; our primary function is not to influence legislation or to pack the Supreme Court or to sign petitions or to boycott stores. The main thrust of the Church of Jesus Christ is to preach the Gospel of Jesus rightly and fully and fearlessly to every creature so that lost souls will get saved and then they won't want the sin of this age. Once these lost souls are saved- we are commanded by the Lord Himself to teach them to observe everything that He spoke- it's pretty hard to do that during the Super Bowl.

Brothers and sisters in Christ- we do not have the right and we do not have the authority to run the Church the way that we see fit. The Bible tells us very clearly how to run the Church and unless we go God's way- then we are no different from the world.

God is glorified when we and His Church are humbly submitted to His Authority. God is glorified when we obey Him. God is honored when we do things His way. God is blessed when we follow Jesus.

Denying yourself is nothing more than living in humble submission to God by obeying God's Word. But how can we obey God's Word if we do not know God's Word? How do we know if what is being taught is true or heresy if we do not know the Bible?

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.

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