

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

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

### Chapter 11- The Gainsaying of Core **Jude 11** 121 The Gainsaying of Core- Part 3

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WOSM Wednesday 04/23/08

Welcome again my brothers and sisters in Christ. We are continuing to go over our verse by verse study of the Epistle of Jude and today I want to go on further into verse 11 to look at the three Old Testament people that Jude was comparing the heretics with. Let's read **Jude 11**:

**Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.**

Now on the last broadcast, we saw that what Korah rebelled against was the Divine Authority that God had given Moses. So, Korah rebelled against Biblical Order and Biblical Authority. And Jude tells us here that this concept of defying Biblical Authority and Order will be one of the profiles of the heretics *personally* and will be included in what they teach.

Now in his book, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, Brian MacLaren speaks of the rebellion of Korah in the modern Church. MacLaren is one of the leaders in the so-called "Emerging Church Movement" which is determined to undermine Biblical Authority and Absolute Truth and to transform the Church into a social club.

MacLaren tells us that what is wrong with the Church is "authoritative preaching out of an authoritative Book by a man standing behind a pulpit in authority in the House of God". MacLaren would like to end preaching as we know it and replace it with what he calls, "sharing". Instead of a man standing behind a pulpit declaring the Word of God in an authoritative manner- MacLaren wants to see the pulpits of our churches thrown out and replaced with bar stools.

The pastor in MacLaren's world would be replaced with a "facilitator" who wouldn't have any Divine Authority- but would simply "moderate" the sharing meeting. Preaching would be done away with in Maclaren's Church and people would simply be able to give what he calls, "life lessons" which are anecdotes and personal experiences. And as each one shares his own personal view of God and his own slant on Divine Truth- the moderator would simply be there to keep the meeting flowing.

In this new Emergent Church- no one would be convicted of sin; no one would feel guilty because of their transgressions no one would have any need to repent and thus no one could ever be saved. The glorious Power that is in the Blood of Jesus would be replaced with a "change of thinking"; Salvation would become "proper mental health"; the Divine Nature would become "healthy psychology" and Heaven would become health, wealth, and prosperity here on earth.

But the main thrust of MacLaren's book and the main thrust of the entire Emergent Church movement as well as the so-called "Seeker Sensitive Church" is to do away with the Authority of the Word of God. In their view, preaching is not the means to deliver the Gospel so that sinful Man can be saved- no, in their view- Biblical Preaching is the problem. To these people- Bible Study is not the means by which people come to learn what God has revealed about Himself and us and Salvation and Holiness- MacLaren says that Bible Study causes people to feel bad; it causes them to feel guilty; it weighs them down with outdated hang-ups and facilitates bad things like "guilt" and "sorrow" and leads to a very ugly word- "repentance".

Now of course MacLaren and the entire Emergent Church movement as well as the Seeker sensitive Church is nothing new- it is simply nothing more than spiritual liberalism. But what we can see in their attack against Scripture is the fulfillment of what Jude cautions us to watch for- the rebellion of Korah.<sup>1</sup>

We live in a time where it is very difficult to find a place where the Word of God is honored and studied and loved and obeyed on an ongoing basis. All around us, Churches are cancelling Bible Studies and replacing them with yoga classes; weight loss seminars and far too many are willing to study the latest book by a popular author than they are to actually study the Bible itself. A recent phenomenon is where Church after and Church and pastor after pastor are

capitulating to the normalization of sexual perversion and the acceptance of homosexual marriage in the House of God- all for the sake of staying in the good graces of unsaved and lukewarm people at the expense of staying in right standing with God.

But this is a tragic mistake. This minimization of the importance of the Word is hurting us all very badly. And the lack of serious discussions about deep spiritual matters is appalling. For example, when is the last time that a Scripture troubled you so deeply that you began a study of what it means? When is the last time that you lost sleep over the fact that the Bible condemned something you are engaged in? When is the last time that you radically altered your life based upon something that you discovered in God's Word and when is the last time that your children came to you to show you what they had found out in God's Word.

The average church member today has no idea what he believes or why he believes it. We have become content to sub out what we believe to the pastor and that is why so many are so naïve and gullible when it comes to false teaching. Sound Doctrine and Biblical Truth is the last thing on most people's minds and that didn't used to be.

It used to be that people didn't fall for snake oil salesmen because they knew that they were hucksters because they had been in God's Word, and they exercise spiritual discernment. It used to be that every Church had classes in Theology and Doctrine, and they taught important matters that God inspired men to pen down in Scripture.

The reason that the Jehovah's Witnesses are growing by double digits ever year is because people don't really know and haven't been taught about what the Bible says about the Person of Jesus Christ. The reason that the Mormon Church is exploding in growth is precisely because the average Church member has never been subjected to a line upon line study of the Character and Nature of God and they honestly think that Mormons are our brothers and sisters in Christ. The reason that people are willing to pray to dead people and ask Mary to bring them to Jesus is precisely because they don't know what the Bible teaches about either Prayer or Salvation. And the reason that millions of people are working real hard trying to earn God's Favor and trying to earn their Salvation is precisely because no one has ever taught them what the Bible says about Grace.

Korah rebelled against God's Authority and today we have legions of people who do the very same thing. They are perfectly willing to serve God – but only on their own terms. These people will not submit to *anyone's* authority, and they do not feel obligated to answer to anyone and so they are a law unto themselves.

Now America celebrates rugged individualism as a virtue- but we must know that the Bible condemns it as rebellion. When a person is saved- he is bought and paid for by Jesus Christ. At that point- he is now a bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. God then takes that saved soul and places him into the Body of Jesus Christ as it pleases God and then God *requires* of that individual and makes *demands* upon his life. There is no such things as “doing your own thing” in Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as worshipping or serving or studying or living for God on your own terms and in your own way in true Christianity. Acting like that is not liberty, beloved- it is spiritual anarchy. It is rebellion.

The name of the game in genuine, Biblical Christianity is submission and conformity- not individualism. Every Blood bought saint of God is commanded to submit to Christ and the leadership that God has placed over the Church, and we are all commanded to conform- to be molded and shaped and formed into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. Let's read **1Thessalonians 5:12-14:**

**12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,**

**13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.**

**14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.**

And Hebrews 13:7&17:

**7 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.**

**17 Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.**

Thomas Manton the Puritan theologian of the seventeenth century wrote this about the rebellion of Korah in his commentary on Jude:

“The idea that everyone should be equal is no new thing in God’s Church. Korah said, to Moses, **“Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to have us die in the wilderness, but you would also lord it over us?” (Numbers 16:13)**”

Manton goes on to say,

“This is like saying: ‘All the Lord’s people are holy, so why should anyone be set over us?’ Let us beware of the parity that some people desire. There must be rule and superiority, or all will come to nothing. God made the world of both hills and valleys, and in the Church and State there must be both governors and the governed, teachers and the taught. It is Korah’s sin to invade offices without a call, and to destroy the holy order that God has established.”<sup>2</sup>

Now beloved, those who have heard this broadcast or who know me know that I have preached long and hard that men who stand behind the pulpit should be godly men of integrity and worthy to follow and emulate. But what is good for the goose is good for the gander and the Bible is clear that not only does God make demands of His ministers- He also makes demands of the individual members of the Church.

And the people of God are *commanded* in the New Testament to submit to Spiritual Authority, and they are *commanded* to obey and to honor and to listen to and to follow and to emulate those who have or who bear spiritual rule over them. That is exactly what the Bible teaches.

And any attempt to change this dynamic and any attempt to alter this godly order is not a new revelation of freedom but is, in fact, a modern day manifestation of the very same rebellion of Korah that God destroyed.

So, if you are saved and you are staying home and you are not actively engaged in a Church- you are in rebellion to the Word of God and are operating outside the authority of Scripture. If you are going to Church but yet are not submitted to the Authority of that Church,

then you are in rebellion to the Word of God and are operating in opposition to the Scriptures.

The Bible is clear- there is no such thing as “going it alone”. God does not operate through individual people who are not joined to the Body and who are operating outside spiritual oversight and who are not submitted to spiritual authority. Refusing to submit to authority is not freedom, dear friends – it is anarchy, and it is the rebellion of Korah. And rest assured that God doesn’t use renegades; God doesn’t use spiritual mercenaries; God doesn’t use people who are so rebellious that they are going it alone- doing God’s business in their own way.

The fact of the matter is that everyone is *not* created equal. The Declaration of Independence says that God made all men equal- but the Bible doesn’t teach that. God has given different gifts to different people and uses all men differently- not the same. And God has created a holy order in His Church that should be honored and followed. Let’s read **1Corinthians 12:28-31**:

**28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.**

**29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not *workers of* miracles, are they?**

**30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?**

**31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.**

So, we can see that it is *not* God’s Spirit that leads us to act with individualism and not conformity in the House of God- it is our corrupt and rebellious and fallen nature that causes us to do that. Gods’ Word says that individualism in the Church is sin. We do not have the license to go it alone and we do not have the license to rebel against the clear teaching of Scripture about Biblical Authority. And Jude promises here that to do so will lead to destruction.

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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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.

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Maclaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Zondervan, 2004) various

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Manton, *A Commentary on Jude* (Crossway Books, Wheaton, Ill, 1999) page 163