

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**

165 How to Combat Heresy Part 1

WOSM Tuesday 06/24/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to begin to look at what Jude taught about "How to Combat Heresy." So, let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 17-21** 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 over the last seven months- you and I have carefully examined the first sixteen verses in **The Epistle of Jude**. And I want to thank you for all the phone calls and letters that you have sent in, and I pray that these broadcasts have been a great encouragement to you.

As you know I never make any mention of support on the radio, but I spend every second of radio time preaching and teaching the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. We are sending out about 150 CD's each month to people all over the country- free of charge because I want to be very careful not to make merchandise of the Word of God. There is truly only one goal to this radio ministry and that is to allow

the glorious truth of God's Word to be revealed to you- one verse at a time.

In each of these broadcasts- I seek to ask and answer three questions:

1. What did God the Holy Spirit actually say?
2. What did God mean by what He said?
3. How can we apply this eternal truth to our lives in the 21st Century?

Now there are only 25 verses in the entire Epistle of Jude, and some of you have wondered why I am taking this long to go over 25 little verses. The reason is that the goal of this Bible Study is not to simply get finished- but to actually learn what God said so that we may know. Jude is the only Book in the Bible that deals exclusively with false teaching and heresy, and this is a subject that is very important to us today because bad unscriptural doctrine abounds in our day.

I have honestly tried to go over each verse carefully with you so as to treat the Scripture fairly. I have an enormous respect for the Word of God because I believe that it is the single most important Book that we have on this earth. So, I do not believe in skimming over any of the holy Words of the Bible in order to get to parts that we deem to be more important.

I believe that every single Word in this Book is inspired, and I believe that as God's children we have a duty and an obligation to study them and know them and love them and obey them and honor them. So that is why I conduct my studies like I do.

There is absolutely no way for us to know God in fullness, dear friends, and there is no way that we can exercise spiritual discernment in our lives without a clear and precise understanding of the Scriptures.

And I am a simple man and I believe that if it looks like a duck; and if it walks like a duck and if it quacks like a duck- then it is probably a duck. So, if someone bears a resemblance to attributes that Jude describes in this Epistle; if he teaches things contrary to Sound Doctrine; if this person bears the bad fruit that Jude clearly laid out for us in this Epistle- there is a real good chance that that person is a false teacher; a heretic; and someone that we should avoid and reject.

So, I have worked very hard to give you a clear and precise understanding of exactly what Jude was talking about. It is up to you to receive this or reject it- and you can get offended by what I have taught here- but no one can say that I have not made the Epistle of Jude clear.

Now we are entering into a very important part of this study. Jude spent the first sixteen verses of this Epistle giving us a description of who the heretics are in their own personal lives and also the bad things they will teach. And so now that we have learned who the heretics are; now that we know what their attributes and characteristics are- we can now begin to learn what we are to do about them when we meet them and what we are to do when we are confronted with what they teach.

Now one of the most common questions that I get is, "*What do I do when my Church is teaching heresy?*" Many people are earnestly trying to serve the Lord, but they are having a hard time finding a Church that actually teaches the Bible and doesn't simply teach what is popular.

So, Lord willing over the next several broadcasts, we will explore the answer to that very important question.

So, let's read verse 17 again together:

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

Now here in verse 17, Jude exhorted his readers to remember the Truths they had already heard—the words that were spoken beforehand by the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ- who predicted the coming of these false teachers. Now it was the Lord Jesus Himself Who was the first one in the New Testament to warn against false teachers. Let's read **Matthew 7:15-20** together:

15 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?

17 "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Also, when the disciples wanted to know about His Second Coming and of the end of the world, Jesus did not begin the discussion by telling them about the Mark of the Beast or the Temple in Jerusalem, or the antichrist, but was very clear about what sign was preeminent. Let's read **Matthew 24:3&4:**

3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

4 And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.

Now many people in the modern Church do not view heresy or spiritual apostasy as being a big deal. Sound Biblical Doctrine is viewed today by many people and even by many leaders as being kind of "in the way;" a "troubling" and cumbersome aspect of Church life and something that is somewhat important- but certainly nothing to emphasize. In fact, one of the most popular statements that can be made today is for someone to say that Doctrine is not nearly important as personal relationships.

I guess the biggest applause that I ever heard given to anyone in any Church was when a visiting Evangelist said that the trouble with the modern Church was its Doctrine and the best way to have a real move of God is to throw Doctrine out the door. I couldn't disagree more.

In my own research, I have found that Bible knowledge is at its lowest ebb since the Church was founded in the Upper Room some 2,000 years ago. And I see that as being deeply and profoundly disturbing and in fact I see that as being one of the signs that we are living in the last days. Lets' read **2Timothy 4:1-5:**

1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

2 preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

So while the biggest and most popular leaders in the Church today are routinely praised and applauded for denouncing the study and comprehension of Sound Biblical Truth- the Apostle Paul, who I believe penned down words that came directly out of the Mind and Heart and Mouth of Almighty God- instructed young Timothy to teach Sound Doctrine and to study the Scriptures to show himself approved and to pay close attention to his teaching and to avoid those who didn't.

So, I see the willingness of so many today to so easily be fooled by ancient heresies as being a natural outflow of God's people not knowing what God has said. Truly God spoke the Truth when He told the prophet in **Hosea 4:6a**:

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...

And so, I see heresy as a real and serious modern day threat to Christianity and I see those who reject the Bible as being modern day heretics and I see those who denounce Doctrine as being part of the problem and I see the lack of willingness on the part of Church leaders to obey the Scriptures and to promote and teach Sound Biblical Doctrine as being in direct rebellion to what we are commanded in Scripture to do.

And I think it is unconscionable for any Church not to hold regular and serious Bible Studies and Prayer Meetings. I think it is sinful and a sign of our backsliding that Prayer Meetings and Bible Studies are the least attended services of almost any Church. I think it is a reproach to Jesus Christ that fewer people today know Church Doctrine than they did 2,000 years ago when most people couldn't even read.

Jesus warned His disciples that people would try to deceive them right before His Second Coming. And I believe that we are living in that day. So that is why I am being careful to go through each verse one at a time in this study 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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