

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

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

### Chapter 16- Winning Souls in an Age of Apostasy **Jude 22-23**

### 190 Winning Souls in an Age of Apostasy Part 2

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WOSM Tuesday 07/29/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the **Epistle of Jude** and today we are going to continue to examine what Jude taught about "How to Win Souls in an Age of Apostasy". So, let's read **Jude 22& 23** again together:

**22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting;**  
**23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.**

Now as I mentioned on the last broadcast, these two verses are not general "soul winning" verses that we can use to win lost souls to Christ, but are *specifically* aimed at delivering people out of false teaching and heresy. God the Holy Spirit inspired Jude to say that there were two ways to help get people out of any heretical situation:

1. Use compassion
2. Use fear

I really don't think that anyone would disagree that using compassion is a good idea to bring people out of false doctrine. But the only thing that I need to say about this is that, like we discussed on the last broadcast, the definition of the word, "compassion" might be confusing to some.

There are two words that are used interchangeably today which are actually two different words. "Compassion" is used many times today along with "sympathy" to mean the same thing. The problem with this is that sympathy and compassion do not mean the same thing.

Sympathy or empathy comes from the Latin word which means: *to have harmony or agreement in something*. When you sympathize with a drunk man- for example- it means that you are in harmony or in agreement with that drunk man. When you sympathize with a wife beater- it means that you are in harmony or agreement with a wife beater.

My Christian brothers and sisters, the word, “Sympathy” is not mentioned one time in the Holy Bible and there is a good reason for that. Sympathizing with someone or something is to agree with it; it is to be in harmony with it. Jesus never sympathized with sinners. Jesus told sinners to repent. The best example of this is Jesus’ example with the woman caught in adultery in **John 8**. Now while it is true that Jesus did not allow the sinful men to stone the woman caught into adultery to death- to say that Jesus sympathized with this wicked woman would be false. He did not sympathize with her but rather told her in verse 11:

**I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more.**

Now listen very carefully to what I am going to say. If all that Jesus would have told this woman was:

**I do not condemn you, either**

If Jesus had just said that He didn’t condemn her and stopped- then Jesus *would* have been using sympathy and we could rightly come to the conclusion that Jesus had no problem at all with this woman or her evil sin. And if we stopped there and didn’t finish what Jesus said- we might conclude that when *anyone* commits adultery today - Jesus doesn’t condemn them either- and therefore- we would incorrectly reach the conclusion that to be like Jesus means that we never condemn anyone for anything that they do.

But that would be a false conclusion based upon an incomplete statement made by Jesus. Jesus said that He did not condemn this woman to death by stoning based upon her wickedness- but that she was in fact guilty of being a sinner and must now repent and be saved.

So, to rightly understand what Jesus said here means that we must realize that Jesus didn’t stop with just the statement,

## **I do not condemn you, either**

But that Jesus also added something else to that statement didn't He? Well, what else did Jesus say to the woman who had been caught into adultery? Let us finish verse 11:

### **... From now on sin no more**

The Son of God would not let men- who themselves were not righteous- stone this woman to death. That is the condemnation that He was talking about in verse 11 (**I do not condemn you, either**).

Jesus didn't condemn the woman in the sense that He wasn't going to kill her or allow her to be killed by other men who were as sinful as she was. But we must realize that Jesus was certainly not condoning adultery here. Neither was He saying that it didn't matter- because it *does* matter.

By telling this wicked woman to "**From now on sin no more**"- after telling her that He didn't condemn her- Jesus was saying four things:

1. Jesus was verifying saying that committing adultery was a horrible offense to a holy God and thus it indeed is a sin.
2. By telling her *specifically* to "**From now on sin no more**", Jesus was telling this woman that she was *personally* guilty of sinning and that part and parcel to her repenting as ceasing from this sin. (in other words, for her to continue to keep committing adultery was to prove that she really had not repented)
3. Jesus was also showing this guilty woman that because of Him, sin could be forgiven and washed away- but that it must be repented of and not participated in.
4. Jesus was showing this woman and us that the correct response to His wondrous forgiveness is for us to stop transgressing.

And this is the difference between compassion and sympathy. Compassion does not agree with sin, nor does it try to associate with sin like sympathy does. Compassion clearly identifies sin and demands repentance- but compassion also provides the mercy and grace necessary for guilty people to repent and cease from sin. Do you see the difference?

An example of sympathy is two drunks leaning on each other in a bar agreeing with each other about how unfair life is. Nothing is spoken that will help either one of them. Sin is not clearly identified; Guilt is not brought forth; Repentance is not demanded and expected; and therefore, the people remain in their sins.

Sympathy is about as useful as a piece of cotton in a snowstorm. It doesn't provide anything that will cause guilty people to repent and be set free.

When we sympathize with sinners- we doom them to hell. But when compassion is used- people correctly see their guilt and through mercy and grace the guilty soul can repent and be set free.

Sympathy will cause people to buy the alcohol for their drunk uncle. The sympathizers will reason within themselves that if they don't buy it, the uncle is going to get it anyway- so better that they buy it than he buy it. They say that if they don't provide his booze for him- he might go into DT's and have a bad time.

But compassion will clearly and firmly confront the uncle with his sin of drunkenness to his face and refuse to contribute to his sin- but will also cause the nephew to bathe him and hold him and pray with him as he goes through the physical withdrawals caused by the demon of alcohol leaving his body.

Sympathy will cause parents to allow their daughters to commit adultery in the back bedroom of their own house- because sympathy reasons that at least the girl is safe and not out on the street.

But godly compassion will cause the parent to confront the daughter to her face and refuse to allow her to sin under their roof but will also cause the mother and father to demonstrate mercy and grace as they discipline their daughter.

Sympathy is weak; compassion is strong. Sympathy offers comfort to people *in* their sin and provides opportunity for them to *continue* to sin; while compassion offers comfort to people only after they repent and removes any opportunity to continue to sin. Sympathy is human; compassion is godly. Sympathy is carnal; compassion is heavenly. Sympathy is after the flesh; compassion is after the Spirit. Sympathy can be accomplished by anyone; compassion is only brought forth by strong godly people. Sympathy takes no courage at all; compassion takes great courage. Sympathy doesn't help anyone; compassion helps everyone.

Sympathy in the Church will cause us to turn our head and pretend that we don't see. Compassion will make us look right straight at sin and confront it. Sympathy will confuse us about what to do. Compassion will clearly show us what to do. Sympathy will allow people to continue to sin without guilt. Compassion always and rightly brings guilt to the guilty and then provides the mercy and grace so that the guilty party can repent. Sympathy will give Christians license to allow sin to go on; Compassion will compel us to confront people about their sin. Sympathy will never provide anyone the opportunity to repent. Compassion always brings everyone the opportunity to repent.

Sympathy tells people who are enslaved by the demon of alcohol or drugs or lust or food that they are "addicted" or that they have a "medical problem" or a "chemical imbalance" or a "psychological disorder".<sup>1</sup> Sympathy will tell these people that they are "good" people who "suffer" from a "disease" or an "addiction" and that it isn't their fault.

But the Bible doesn't mention addictions anywhere- and the Bible doesn't call sin a "disease". So Biblical compassion will not call sin an addiction or a disease either.

The Bible says that people who engage in sin are sinners and the answer to sin is to be confronted with it and admit it and repent from it and beg God for forgiveness and beg Jesus to wash your heart in His holy Blood and then by the power of the indwelt Holy Spirit- to turn from that sin and engage in it no more. And the miraculous and supernatural power of the risen Christ will give the saved soul the ability to overcome what one time enslaved him.

Alcoholics Anonymous; Narcotics Anonymous and most all of the "12 step programs" use human and fleshly methods to try to solve a sin problem and you simply can't get there from here. Using psychological sympathy to deal with sin will not save one soul but today our rehab centers and our halfway houses and our jails and our morgues are filled with millions of people who have bought into that lie that sympathy delivers from sin.

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<sup>1</sup> For further reading about Biblical sin being renamed as "disease" please consider: *Deceptive Diagnosis* by David Tyler and Kurt Grady (Focus Publishing Bemidji, MN 2006); *The Useful Lie* by William Playfair, M.D. (Timeless Texts, Stanley NC, 1991) and *Whatever Became of Sin?* By Karl Menninger (1974).

Jesus Christ *never* used sympathy, but He *always* used godly compassion and He has a two step program that works every time it is tried- Get saved and go free; go and sin no more!

Remember, beloved, that true compassion will never make excuses for sin- but will speak God's Truth into a sinful situation. Compassion forces us to do something that we cannot do on our own without God intervening. When Jesus used compassion, He told the cripple man to walk and a blind man to see. When Jesus went to the man who had lain by the pool for years, He didn't sympathize with that man- Jesus told that man to do something that the man couldn't do in himself. But through the power of God- He told that man to take up his bed and walk. So, when Jesus used compassion on the woman who had been caught in adultery- He didn't sympathize with her- Jesus told her to go and sin no more.

Please remember, beloved, that compassion always leads to repentance and sympathy always allows people to remain in their sin.

So, when Jude tells us to go to the some of the people who are deceived and use compassion, he is certainly not telling us to use sympathy. He is *not* telling us to agree or "relate" with the false teaching that deceived these people in the first place. Neither is Jude telling us to find "common ground" with those who have been led astray. Neither is Jude saying that Doctrine doesn't matter or that it really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere.

No, Jude says that false teaching is evil and those who are deceived are in serious eternal trouble and that we who love God and who love them must not use sympathy to reach them- but we must use compassion.

So beloved Jude is telling us here in verse 22 that one of the ways to rescue souls who are trapped in false teaching is to tell the Truth. Speak it clearly. Show proof. Live your life; obey Jesus Christ; study your Bible so that those who are deceived will know that you know what you are talking about.

Then when the one who was led astray come to his senses- use mercy and grace and gently but firmly lead them back into Truth.

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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