

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

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

Chapter 2- The Doctrine of Sanctification **Jude 1**

6. Beloved in God the Father- Part 2

WOSM Monday 11/12/07; WPAS Monday 04/28/08

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 continue to look at what Jude taught about being the "Beloved in God the Father"- so let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 1** again together:

Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

Now on the last broadcast, we began our study on the Doctrine of Sanctification and about the purpose of Sanctification- which is what being the "beloved" means. Jude tells us here that he wrote this letter to those who are **beloved in God the Father**".

And last time, I told you that the Bible teaches that, in the larger understanding, Sanctification is a life-long *process and* not a one- time event. The Doctrine of Sanctification teaches that our Sanctification begins at the very moment the believer becomes justified by Grace through Faith in Christ alone and continues until that believer dies and goes immediately to Heaven.

The Bible also teaches that Sanctification involves both pleasant and unpleasant things. God sovereignly and providentially works blessings, victories, and other wonderful together with suffering, trials, persecutions, tumults, tests, and terrible afflictions to mold and shape the believer into the very Image and Likeness of Jesus Christ.

So, the Bible teaches that God will try us; that He will prune us; and that He will chastise us after we are saved. The Bible clearly teaches that while God will never tempt anyone- He will *allow* us to be tempted; He will *allow* us to suffer as Christians; and to be persecuted; and go through tests, trials, tumults, and afflictions for the express purpose of bringing us forth as pure gold.

Now the Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification is a very unpopular doctrine today, primarily because the modern Church has accepted the pagan teachings of human engineered psychology rather than divinely inspired Scripture- and even though it is enormously popular- human based psychology *always* fights against God and His Ways.

For example- many teach today about building up self- esteem; and promoting self- improvement; self- help and self- fulfillment with such passion and detail that you would think that these concepts are in the Bible- but they are not. And one of the biggest reasons that this humanistic therapeutic teaching is so wrong is that it in effect says that Suffering and trials are bad- even wrong- and that believers should never go through or suffer these things.

In fact, not only are these carnal concepts of “self” not Scriptural- the Bible teaches the very *opposite* of what these concepts teach.

Now we studied last time about what Jesus said about saved people being pruned by the Father in **John 15** and today, I want to look at an Old Testament man named, Joseph to get a real clear understanding of the Sovereignty of God in our sufferings. So, let’s look at **Genesis 45:7** to see what Joseph said about all that had happened to him. In this verse- Joseph sums up all his trials; all his hardships; all the unfair and hurtful treatment that he had received at the hands of his own brothers and through the Egyptian authorities by saying this:

God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.

Now many will read this verse and say, “*Amen*”, but we may not really understand what we are agreeing to. What we are saying, “*Amen*” to here is that we agree that God was Sovereignly at work in Joseph’s life as Joseph was betrayed by his own brothers; and as he was unjustly sold into slavery; as he was falsely accused; as he was unjustly imprisoned; and as he was left in prison to rot for twelve long years.

And some would say, “*But, Brother Blair- that was God’s Will for Joseph.*” And I would absolutely agree with that. But how many of us would think that God was at work in *our* lives if our brothers sold *us* into slavery? How many of us today would trust and know that God was very busy sovereignly accomplishing His Own Good Will in and through us if all that tragedy and injustice that happened to Joseph was happening to *us*? But that is the only reason that Joseph’s story is in the Bible.

Listen to me. If God chooses to glorify Himself through me by allowing me to become a multi millionaire and by me walking in perfect health and by me becoming famous and popular and attractive; and if God wants me to have a congregation of 5,000 people and have a huge mega- church with a world-wide television audience- then everyone would say that, by all means, I need to submit to the Will of my Father. No one would ever disagree with that.

But- what if God chooses to glorify Himself through me by me being faithful in rejection or by me being faithful in being ridiculed or by me being faithful in suffering or by me being faithful in being made a spectacle or by me being faithful in my preaching and teaching and my studying and my preparation and my service even if no one listens- then should I not with the same joy and gladness and with the very same earnestness of heart submit myself to *that* Will of My Father also?

We see so easily how much God was with Joseph because we see are able to see the *end* of Joseph's life. But as these things were happening- as one hardship after another began to unfold in Joseph's life- how many of us would have been able to say, "Amen"?

Is not the joy and pleasure and benefit of Christian service measured in our faithfulness to God- rather than in our popularity? And yet because we are fallen- we don't look at things like that. So, we have a great need to be pruned by the Lord; we a great need to be tested and tried; and yes, we have a great need to experience suffering as believers so that we may be changed from being carnal and selfish and greedy and lustful into being grateful and humble and obedient and faithful.

Now many would say that that is negative thinking or that God would never do that to a genuine believer- But I would suggest to you that true faith is measured in how we handle adversity- not by the *absence* of adversity and I would also say that manifestly God indeed did allow His people to suffer terrible things- all through the Bible.

So, if it is true that I can only bring full glory to God by my faithful obedience to God; and if it is true that I can only be faithfully obedient if I begin to love God and the things of God more than I love myself and my own things; and if it is true that I can only love the things of God if God changes me; and if it is true that I can only be changed through the process of Sanctification; and if it is true that, by definition, Sanctification necessarily involves unpleasant things- then because I desire to bring God full glory (the Glory that He deserves)- I

will rejoice in my sufferings; and I will graciously bow my knees to the trials; and I will humbly accept God's Will for my life- because I know that only through the fiery process of Sanctification can I be changed and because I am changed, I will be able to obey God; and because I obey God, I will then be able to bring to God the Glory that He deserves and by giving God Glory- my own joy will be fulfilled.

My friends- being in God's good Favor has nothing to do with how large the Church is or how many people are on my mailing list or how many best sellers I have or how many people follow me or how much money I have or what kind of car I drive or how healthy I am.

Being in God's good Favor is only determined by God in sovereignly changing me to where I know and love and enjoy God infinitely more than I know and love and enjoy myself. And only by being sanctified can I do that.

We have been taught for several years now that only good things come from God and that all the bad things come from the devil. But that is not what the Bible teaches. God Sovereignly brought about horrible things in the earth all throughout time and God *allowed* His Own people to be hurt and to be falsely accused and to be thrown in jail and to be beaten and to be scorned and to be ridiculed and to be rejected and even to be killed. But the difference between these godly saints in the Bible and us- is that they knew that God was Sovereignly in charge of both their blessings and their sufferings and trials, and we don't seem to know that anymore.

After being sold into slavery by his own brothers, the Old Testament Joseph was falsely accused and was thrown into prison where he languished for twelve long years. He was then forsaken and forgotten and yet in one day, God took him from the prison to the palace. In one hour, Joseph was made to be the Prime Minister of the greatest nation on earth.

But as we study the Scriptures carefully- we find that it wasn't by being *delivered* that made Joseph prepared to rule- no, no, it was precisely because he suffered that prepared him. Joseph was made ready; he was prepared; he was formed for service precisely *because* of his sufferings- not in spite of them. He was equipped; he was tested, tried and made able precisely *because* he went through his temporary torments.

The glory of the Truth about genuine Biblical Sanctification is that not only did his afflictions *not* destroy Joseph; not only were these

problems *not* a hindrance to his spiritual well being- all of these unfair and hurtful aspects that God allowed to come his way were the chosen instruments of God by which Joseph was made able to minister effectively.

The Biblical teaching on Sanctification flies in the face of modern theology because modern theology is centered around Man being exalted and not centered around God being exalted. Far too much of modern preaching and teaching is focused on Man being blessed and safe and prosperous and healthy and not focused on God being magnificent and glorious- and that is a tragic mistake.

And because modern theology teaches incorrect and unbiblical things about the Purpose of God that trials and persecutions and general suffering (Sanctification) play in the development of believers- and because we are so off base about Biblical Sanctification- it is hard today for many in the Church to see God in their troubles and to understand why God would allow them to hurt- even after they are saved. So much unnecessary torment and anguish goes on because believers today are not taught correctly about Sanctification.

So, in many areas of modern, American Church life- we have traded the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ for a *therapeutic* “gospel” that seeks to give men therapy rather than bring them to repentance; a *man made* “gospel” that seeks to teach men to love *themselves* rather than teach them to love God and turn from sin; a *human* “gospel” that seeks to lead men through psychological musings rather than bring them into a right relationship with God.

Psychology teaches that unsaved Man is fine *internally* and that it is Man’s *external* environment that needs to be changed in order for Man to reach his “full potential”. We are told that we need to think positively about ourselves in order to release “the giant” or “the warrior” that lives inside us. But the Bible says that what is *wrong* with Man is *internal*- in his wicked heart and depraved mind and fallen nature that is all evil- all the time and that what happened *externally*- in Jesus Christ dying on the Cross- is what will redeem fallen Man.

So, psychology teaches that to be redeemed- we need to develop or strengthen the internal “self” of Man- while Scripture teaches that in order to be redeemed- we need to die to self and live unto Jesus Christ.

When he had the power to enact vengeance on those who had betrayed him and sold him and who had falsely accused him and who had forgotten him- this is what Joseph said in **Genesis 45:7**:

God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.

So, Joseph knew that God had been in complete charge of all his misfortune from the very beginning and that God was being glorified in his suffering and that Joseph himself was being sanctified by God allowing him to suffer. And this is why there is no record at all in Scripture of Joseph ever even complaining about his plight. Joseph had a God centered theology and he knew that God was in charge of his Sanctification and Joseph knew that whatever means God had chosen to bring glory to Himself was just fine by him. He knew that God was pruning him, and he knew that by yielding to the trial- God would get all the glory. O God, please give us insight that we may see like they saw and help us to know that we have a great need to be sanctified.

Well, I've got to stop right here- but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our Journey of the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

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