

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**

178 How to Combat Heresy Part 14

WOSM Friday 07/11/08

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 go over the way that Jude gave us to combat heresy when it comes to our Church. This way is based upon the inspired words that Jude wrote to us in verse 20:

Build Up Yourself on Your Most Holy Faith

And as we have already seen- there are 10 separate Biblical keys for every believer to build himself up in his most holy faith. So, let's go over the list:

1. Prayer
2. Bible Study

3. Godly Fellowship
4. Obedience
5. Being Filled With the Spirit
6. Confession
7. Love
8. Trust
9. Witnessing
10. Discernment

Now we have already gone over the first six items- Prayer, Bible Study, Fellowship, Obedience, Being Filled With the Spirit, and Confession, and today I want to look at the seventh way that will help us build ourselves up on our most holy Faith- and that is Love.

Now everything that we do as Christians should be based in Love- love for God; love for God's Word; God's Church; God's Ways; God's people; and love for the sinner. But we live in a time when the word "love" like a lot of other words in our day- have been changed to mean something entirely different from what the Lord intended it to mean. Let me give you an example of what I am talking about.

When Moses received the Law of God, carved into tables of stone with the very Finger of God- there were only Ten Commandments. By the time that Jesus walked the earth, the legal traditions of the rabbis totaled in the hundreds.

Now there is absolutely no way that a human being can keep thousands of laws perfectly. So, the Jewish leaders made a compromise with the people and divided all their rules into two groups: One group was called, "Heavy Laws"- those laws which were mandatory, and the other group was called, "Light Laws" which contained all the things that are good- but not mandatory.

Some rabbis even went further and taught that if a man selected just one great precept to observe- he was then free to disregard all the others.

It was in this setting that a lawyer came to Jesus in **Matthew 22:36** and asked the Lord,

Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?

Now we must understand that this lawyer was not trying to get Jesus to teach him great wisdom, no, this lawyer was trying to trap

Jesus into saying something that he could use against Him. But our Lord knew his heart and gave him this profound answer:

37 ...*YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.*

38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.

39 "The second is like it, '*YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.*'

40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

So, in this passage, Jesus Christ was establishing Love to be the greatest of all spiritual virtues. But please notice that it wasn't just any love because Jesus also, in this passage, divided one love from the other love and showed that not all love is the same. Jesus made it clear that not simply generic love- but love for God alone is the highest spiritual virtue that can be attained on earth and the second highest virtue is love for our neighbor.

Paul also echoed this Truth in **1Corinthians 13:13**, when he said,

But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

But once again, Paul made a distinction between love for God and other loves that we may have by clearly teaching that it is love for God Himself that is the superior love and one that we should all aspire to.

For example- we say today that we love certain foods and that we love certain clothes and love certain songs and certain people and certain movies and certain animals and certain objects. Then we say that we love our wife or our husband. But don't we love our spouses *differently* than we love those other things? Then we say that we love God- but do we not love God differently than we love even our spouses?

The point that I am making is that all love is not the same love. And Jesus said that love for the Person of Almighty God; love for God Himself is the highest spiritual virtue that we can attain in this life.

The Bible teaches that our Love for God should supersede the love that we have for anything else and everything else. Now this doesn't mean that we cannot love other things- but it *does* mean that

we are wrong if we love anything else; or anyone else more or even the same as we love God.

To love anything or anyone as much as we love God is, in Biblical terms, idolatry and that is a wicked sin. God must always come before anything or anyone in our lives. And by default- that makes the love that we are to have for God– an *exclusive* love- a love that is reserved solely and only for Him.

Our allegiance to God; our faithfulness to God; our devotion to God; and our willingness to obey and serve and follow God- especially in hard and difficult times is all based in this kind of *exclusive* love.

So that makes every other love that we have; every other category of love that we possess to be secondary and inferior to the love that we are to have for God and for God alone. No one else can share in our exclusive love for Almighty God.

It is this kind of exclusive love which will make you strong because this kind of love reserved only for God will not only make you love God- but it will also cause you to love and value and appreciate and respect the things of God- like God's Word and God's Ways.

For example, this *exclusionary* love for God will cause you to respect and value and appreciate the *narrowness* of the path that God has placed you on. Lukewarm and backslid people despise this narrow path and always seek to find ways to enlarge the narrow path; they seek to make the narrowness of the path wider so that they can serve God on their terms and feel comforted about themselves even in their sins. But when you fall in love with Jesus, you do not seek to widen the path- but you appreciate its narrowness.

This special kind of exclusionary love for God will also bring you to a place of humble submission to the Word of God- because you realize that it is not the word of a man- but it is the inspired; inerrant; infallible Word of the living God that you love to the exclusion of all others. So if you really love God- you are very careful to submit yourself to the supreme authority of that which God has said and because you love God- you are then willing to read His Word; and study His Word and learn how to interpret His Word correctly; and then because you know that it is a terrible sin to know God's Word and understand God's Word and yet not live God's Word- because you love God- you prayerfully with fear and trembling apply God's

precious Word to your own personal life so that you will be sure to obey it.

My brothers and sisters, we must all realize that ultimately, talk is cheap and the only *real* way that any human being has of proving that he does in fact love God is by obeying God. Jesus put it this way in **John 14:15**:

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

Now I have said this many times on this broadcast, but it needs to be said here again. It is a false teaching which says that any of us can love God while we are living continually in abject rebellion to God. If you think that God receives your love simply because you periodically say the right words while your life is in direct opposition to Him- if you think *that* is the definition of this exclusive love- then you are deceived.

My fellow Christians, whatever sin we choose to participate in, is what we love more than God. Whatever thing or activity that absorbs most of our time and our devotion and our money and our concerns and our energy; and which gives us the most joy and the most satisfaction- make no mistake about it- that is what we truly love.

Now even though it is true that God never changes, over time, all languages go through changes. The English language is in a constant state of change. For example, when I was a little boy, the word “gay” meant “happy”. Today, it has to do with being sexually perverted. When I was a little boy, if someone said that something was “bad” they meant that it was “harmful”. Today, “bad” means “good” or “cool”.

So, because this is true, we have to be careful that when we use Biblical words, that we are using these words the *same* way that God used them when He inspired them to be written. Never has this been more true than with the word, “love”. Today, the word, “love” does not mean that exclusive type of devotion and submission to God alone, but the word “love” means almost anything except that.

Many use the word “love” when they do not want to have to stand up and be counted. Such as when people say that we do not need Sound Biblical Doctrine- we just need love. That statement is nonsense on the surface. True love, the kind of exclusive devotion and

submission to God alone *craves* Biblical Truth and hates anything associated with error. So true love always adheres to Truth and never joins itself to anything that diminishes Truth. God demands that we worship Him and Him alone and if we do not know Sound Doctrine- we cannot assure that we are worshipping God alone and are faithful to what He has said. So true love will cause us all to learn and believe and defend and teach Sound Doctrine.

But the word, “love” has been perverted in many other ways. Today, in the “name of love”, parents don’t discipline rebellious children and Church leaders don’t discipline unrepentant members. But that isn’t love- that is simply an abdication of parental and leadership responsibility. In the “name of love”, we pay strong, healthy young men not to work- but that isn’t love- it is promoting disrespect and laziness and lawlessness among young males. In the name of love, we have a 70% illegitimate birth rate among minorities and a 35% illegitimate birth rate among Caucasians. That isn’t love either- it is unfettered lust.

And beloved, we are told today that it is unloving and even unchristian to criticize anyone about anything concerning their teachings or their theology- even if that criticism is true. We are told that as long as someone is sincere or passionate, that it really doesn’t matter what they teach or if they are Biblically correct. But brothers and sisters, that isn’t love either- that is a lie. Some things are wrong, and some things deserve to be exposed and pointed out and condemned as lies and false teachings and incorrect interpretation of Scripture by those who do love and serve God.

So, we need love in our hearts and in our lives and in our ministries and in our Churches. But the highest, most supreme form of that love is not a willingness to allow sin to increase- but an exclusive devotion and submission to God with all our hearts and with all our souls and with all our mind and with all our strength and that we love our neighbor to the same extent that we love ourselves. And this is the kind of love that will make you strong in the Faith.

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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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.