

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**

181 How to Combat Heresy Part 17

WOSM Wednesday 07/16/08

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. And the best defense that we have against the long and protracted "War on Error" is found in verses 20&21. And so, we are continuing to explore the first thing that Jude teaches will help us to combat heresy when it comes and that is:

Build Yourselves Up on Your Most Holy Faith

And as we have discovered- there are 10 Biblical keys for every believer to utilize that when combined will build himself up in his most holy faith. So, let's go over the list again:

1. Prayer
2. Bible Study
3. Godly Fellowship
4. Obedience
5. Being Filled With the Spirit
6. Confession
7. Love
8. Hope
9. Witnessing
10. Discernment

Now on the last broadcast, we were discussing the eighth key- Hope and today, I want to go into the ninth key- Witnessing.

When someone is sworn in to testify in a Court of Law in this country- the attorney asking the questions only wants to know three things from him:

- 1) What did you see?
- 2) What did you hear?
- 3) What do you know to be true?

What that individual thinks or feels is of little or no importance to the Court. The Court wants to deal with facts- not suppositions. The Court wants to know what happened- not what people *think* happened or what their particular spin is.

While sadly it is not true today, many years ago, our legal system was a sincere search for truth. All who were working in the Court- the attorneys and the judges all wanted clear, objective truth to come out so that they could see what actually happened. So, in order to arrive at the facts of the case- the witness was a very important part.

Therefore, in order for the testimony of the witness to be credible and reliable- it must be based upon three criterion:

1. The Truth
2. The Whole Truth
3. And Nothing But the Truth

Let's examine these three aspects of a witnesses' testimony for a few minutes. I think it goes without saying that the first aspect- the Truth- is vital from a witnesses' testimony because no lie is ever productive in helping anyone arrive at truth. People do lie, however- and the reason that people lie is because they do not want the truth to come out because the truth will condemn them. But anyone who is fully convinced that the Truth is valuable cannot bear a lie. So, all those who love truth- hate lies and do not engage in them. Those who lie are liars and they break the ninth commandment because they are guilty of bearing false witness.

If you didn't personally see something or did not personally hear something or did not personally read something- you cannot repeat it- because if you repeat something that someone told you about someone else and it turns out to be false- you have sinned horribly against God and against that individual and you are guilty of bearing false witness. This is one of the most common sins that is committed every day- but God doesn't take it lightly because even if we don't value truth and even if we do not value a true witness as highly as we ought- God does. And the soul who bears false witness shall not stand innocent before the Lord.

This is why this nation chose to make all witnesses in court take an oath on a Bible or say, "*So help me God*"- before they testify- because they know that God loves truth and that if we are to function properly as a civilized nation- Truth must be paramount. They also want to tie the individual to the fear of breaking the ninth commandment which this country used to uphold.

Christian friends- if you have fallen over this issue- I beg you to repent. How can we possibly think that God receives our worship when we tell lies? Christian minister, pastor, elder, deacon, steward, how can you possibly think that God will receive honor from your ministry when you live a lie and harbor secret, unrepentant sin in your life? Beloved, we all need to value truth and we need to raise the bar about guarding our tongue so that we may speak the Truth in love.

It is impossible for your testimony as a Christian to have any lasting effect upon anyone if that testimony contains even one lie. When we, who love and serve Jesus Christ, speak- the entire world must be able to depend on what we say. The saints who have gone on before us were willing to die rather than tell a lie. Many of them were horribly

tortured- and suffered unbelievable agony at the hands of evil men- but they chose that fate rather than engage in any false testimony. Do you value truth like that? I pray that we all may return to absolute truth in our statements and in our testimony that we may bring honor to Jesus Christ with our words.

But simply telling the truth in Court has been found through the years to not be enough, There is a second aspect to being an effective witness in Court that has proven itself to be very valuable.

The Whole Truth.

Of course, it goes without saying that a Court of Law cannot tolerate even one lie- but interestingly enough, neither can a half truth be tolerated. A half truth that is given as the whole truth in testimony frames people's minds in the wrong way- giving out false impressions and leads people to make false assumptions and leads them to draw false conclusions as much or maybe even more than a lie does- so a Court of Law looks at a half truth as being a whole lie. And so should we.

Beloved, in our Christian experience, we must speak and live our lives in the whole truth. If something looks to be true, but upon further examination it appears to be only a half truth- then we must view that as a whole lie. Something is either true or it is a lie. There is no such thing as something being almost true but not quite. It is either true or it is not.

Many times, we casually quote one or two verses of Scripture and put them together and then draw a theological or doctrinal conclusion about an issue or a particular topic. We then take that half truth and run off with it and formulate our prayer life around it and eagerly share it with others. Please hear me when I tell you that this is one of the most dangerous and one of the most common errors that is made today about the things of the Lord.

We do the same thing with a new bestseller by popular authors. A man can take one verse and twist it completely out of proportion and then write an entire thesis about it- causing those who read the book to draw false conclusions and to make false assumptions about very important spiritual matters.

I tell you that we need to do a much better job about our own witness and how we receive the witness of other people. I spent several broadcasts trying to expose the tactic by many today who have no real or genuine spiritual credibility and who artificially manufacture credibility with stories of elaborate dreams, visions, angelic visitations and with their so-called “new” revelations which are in fact false.

These people cause their followers to make false assumptions and to draw false conclusions based upon half truths which in reality are whole lies.

Brothers and sisters, we must become so familiar with the Word of God that charlatans like this cannot persuade us with their fantastic tales and we must become so intimately in tune with God’s Word and so acquainted with Sound Doctrine that snake oil salesman will not find a market with us for their new and improved liniment which they claim can cure everything from poverty to sickness to baldness to teeth fillings.

My friends, a half-truth is not accepted as being anything of value in a Court of Law and we should not view a half truth or an exaggerated truth to hold value in our lives either.

I was taught when I was first saved that preachers sometimes speak what is called “Evangelastically” which means that they tend to exaggerate and stretch the truth in order to make a point in their sermons. This statement is usually given with a wink and a smile indicating that we all know that preachers tell lies about their exploits. You may have heard someone use this term.

But we must view that expression as being a horrible testimony! If you cannot believe what the preacher is saying from behind the pulpit- then we are all in serious trouble.

These kinds of ministerial shenanigans are the result of our effort over the years as pastors to be likeable and to be looked at as being a funny and nice guy- rather than take the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ as a solemn duty and obligation and high honor.

We are not supposed to get up behind the pulpit and crack jokes and be a comedian- that is inappropriate for the House of God. When we stand behind the pulpit and preach God’s Word- hearts should tremble; conviction should grip the heart and the staff of pride, and the arrogance of man’s own importance should be broken, and people should

be devastated over their sin brought to a place of total surrender to Jesus Christ.

Only Truth can do that. But not just any truth- not your truth or my truth- not popular truth or accepted truth- but the whole truth; a holy, divinely inspired Truth that comes out of the very heart and mouth and mind of God.

A lie won't keep your children out of jail, my beloved. A fantasy won't change your adulterous husband; a half truth; a partial truth does not have the power to alter the human heart. But God's Truth preached rightly and fully and fearlessly with no regard for the consequences; preached from the lips of dedicated and consecrated and Blood bought men of God who actually live what they speak does have the power to change the world.

So be careful my fellow laborers, that what you speak and what you read and what you believe is more than just the Truth- make sure that it is the whole truth.

But we have to go even further than that because there is one more level to reach. We need the Truth, and we need the whole truth- but we also need a third element:

Nothing but the Truth.

There is only one source of absolute Truth in this world and that one single source is the Holy Bible. Everything else come in a distant second. This is why we must read and study our Bibles on a regular basis and by using a systematic method, correctly applying the proper rules of interpretation to our efforts.

What we hold in our hands is an English translation of an inspired, inerrant and infallible Book that was written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic over a fifteen hundred year time frame utilizing over 40 writers on four continents. God has supernaturally preserved the Scriptures and they are reliable and trustworthy today. But our English translations present us with challenges that are easily overcome if we learn and apply the correct interpretation to what we read.

This will take effort on our part, and it will take time. No one can every hope to clearly understand Divine Truth by quickly perusing or scanning over a verse or by trying to summarize what God has said.

You just simply cannot get there from here. God wrote the Bible on purpose so as to force anyone who hopes to be a student of the Word to spend time with it.

So, study your Word and get they Truth; the whole Truth; and nothing but the Truth so that your witness will be a truthful and effective witness for Jesus Christ. 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.