

# 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**

### 168 How to Combat Heresy Part 4

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WOSM Friday 06/27/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse study of the **Epistle of Jude** and we are continuing to go over what Jude taught about just how we are to combat heresy when it comes. So, let's read **Jude 17-21** again together:

**17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;**

**18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.**

**19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.**

**20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,**

**21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**

Now we have come to a point in this study where we must learn what we are to do about false teaching when we are confronted with it. We have studied at great length through this **Epistle of Jude** and hopefully you have found out that heresy is a long war against the Truth. And we have seen that heresy and false teaching are ancient—that they began in the Garden of Eden with the serpent lying to Eve and twisting what God had said. We have seen that in our day, false teaching is still a real and serious threat to the Christian Faith.

And we have also seen through this study that unless and until the weak and emasculated Church repents of her backsliding and

lukewarmness, and begins to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints, we are in for some rough times.

As I have mentioned often throughout this study- the best recipe for error is Truth. The best weapon against false teaching is correct teaching. The best option that we have to ward off false teachers is to raise the bar about what it means to be saved; and about who is qualified to lead in the Church; about what they believe and teach about Grace and the Character and Nature of God and the Person of Jesus Christ so that only Biblically qualified people hold positions of authority in the Church and the Church in general returns to her first Love and begins to teach and preach and love and obey the Word of God in the power of the Spirit.

The enemy of our souls is capitalizing on the fact that a vast majority of people in the Church today do not know what they believe, nor do they know why they believe it. We have become a people who are ignorant and distant of Biblical Truth due to our lack of time that we personally spend in our own Bible Study and due to the fact that the modern Church has almost completely abandoned the three pronged defense against false teaching of fervent and effectual Prayer; line upon line and precept upon precept Bible Study; and times of Godly Fellowship.

So, I have endeavored to treat the Scriptures fairly and give you the meaning of the words that Jude wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, so that your spiritual discernment will be lifted to new heights so that you may spot a heretic a mile off and not be fooled by smooth talking snake oil salesmen.

Judging from your phone calls and E-mails this Study has been a great blessing to many of you and I thank God for that. This Study has changed my life as well and that is exactly what a serious and deep Bible Study should do for us- change us and mold us into the very Image and Likeness of Jesus Christ.

And Lord willing, I will continue to teach the Glory and majesty of God's precious Word to you one verse at a time.

The Long protracted War against the Truth is so important for each of us to understand that I have tried to make sure that I didn't skip over any of these inspired verses, just so we could get finished with this Study. I firmly believe that the goal of a Bible Study is not

just to get through, but to learn what God has said and to learn what God *meant* by what He said and to learn how we all can apply what God has said to our own lives. So, although this Book is only 25 verses long, it has taken us nearly nine months to get to this point. And I pray that you don't think that I am just trying to talk for talk's sake.

As you know, I am a student of the Puritans and these men approached Bible Study this way. One Puritan took 21 years to go through **Romans**. Another Puritan wrote a book that is 225 pages long that gives a full exposition of just one verse of Scripture. And if any of you have ever read a Matthew Henry Commentary- you know that these men so highly valued what God said that this is the kind of effort they made to try to understand it.

And it is very hard today to even find a Bible Study that goes into that kind of depth- and we are all the poorer because of it.

In this study of Jude, we have spent 4 Broadcasts on the opening remarks by Jude; 3 Broadcasts of what it means to be Sanctified by God the Father; 10 Broadcasts on what The "Common Salvation" Jude was talking about in Verse 3 was all about; 4 Broadcasts on what Enduring Sound Doctrine means; 4 Broadcasts on what Loving the Truth means; 55 Broadcasts on The History of Heresy- in which we traced the history of the seven major heresies that plagued the Christian Church over its 2,000 year history.

We spent 12 Broadcasts on verses 5 through 10 which dealt with The Profile of the Heretics; 2 Broadcasts on the eternal woe that Jude placed upon these people in verse 11; 8 Broadcasts on what verse 11 meant when Jude said that the heretics were Going the Way of Cain; 11 Broadcasts on what Jude meant when he said that the false teachers ran greedily after The Error of Balaam for reward; and 4 Broadcasts about The Gainsaying of Core.

We then spent 24 Broadcasts about the 5 characteristics of the Heretics that Jude penned down under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in verses 12 and 13; and 8 Broadcasts about just what the Prophecy of Enoch was all about that Jude wrote to us in verses 14 & 15.

Just two weeks ago, we went into a 10 broadcast series on the Description of the Heretics in verse 16 and now we are on another mini-series on verses 17 -21, which deals with how we are to handle

the false teachers, who creep into the Church to pervert the right way of the Lord.

As Christians, we are commanded to defend the Truth against any and all who would seek to change or alter the Gospel. So, in these verses, Jude gives us clear instruction about what we are to do when we are confronted with false teaching.

Now I want to mention again something that I have consistently said all throughout this Study on Jude. In order to be faithful to the Scripture, it is sometimes necessary for me to name names in order to illustrate a point about what I am talking about. The Apostle Paul did the very same thing. He named names and got very specific about the issue so that the people would understand what he was talking about.

For example- in **1 Timothy 1:19&20**, Paul said this:

**19 ...which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:**

**20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.**

And in **2 Timothy 4:14**, Paul said

**Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:**

The Apostle John also thought that it was appropriate to name names at certain times because in **3 John 9**, John said:

**I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.**

Now some people today feel that to give out specific names is wrong and unloving and even unchristian, but I believe that both Paul and John were loving, and wonderful Christians and they saw the need to periodically give out a specific reference when the situation called for it.

Now I would never betray a personal trust that someone has placed in me, and I would not mention a name out of envy or jealousy or vengeance. But we have to come to grips beloved, that heresy is real,

and it is eternally damning, and it is a premeditated attack against the one true living God, and it is alive and well today and to whitewash this issue out of fear that someone might get their feelings hurt is being totally irresponsible.

I am not being wrong, unloving, divisive, or unchristian when I say that a particular Doctrine is not Scriptural and is therefore ungodly as long as I am telling the Truth. It is the people who teach false Doctrine who are wrong. I am simply reporting the facts. That is the correct thing to do. I wish that everybody taught Scripture properly- but they don't and so since they don't- since it is true that some people insist on teaching things that are not in the Bible- many of them for their own personal gain- it is appropriate at times to name names and warn people to not accept what is poison.

We who are in ministry have a God given duty and obligation to warn people when we see that they are accepting false teaching and so it is mandatory for anyone who preaches the Gospel to be able to clearly articulate what is right and what is wrong.

This is why Doctrine is so important. If our understanding of the Scriptures is based upon our own private interpretations; then we could have five hundred different meanings to the very same verse of Scripture and some of those interpretations would contradict the others.

And any time that happens- Truth becomes clouded and obscure which is the very reason why God gave us the Bible to begin with.

If anything is true about God it is that He is not wishy washy; he is not contradictory; He is not vague; He is not glib of tongue; and He is not obscure in what He says.

God spoke one time, **“Let there be light”** and He has never had to talk to the light again and six thousand years later the sun still rises and sets on time very day.

God gave nine moral absolutes in the 20<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Exodus and those absolutes are set in stone and they are the one true eternal standard of righteousness for every person; from every country; and in every culture; who has ever lived.

When God spoke through His Prophets and His Apostles He moved upon these men and what they wrote was special and unique from everything else that has ever been written from every other man. The Words of Scripture did not come out of human reasoning or human

development or fleshly wisdom. These words, these special and unique words are “God breathed”- they are inspired, and they came from the very Heart and Mind and Mouth of Almighty God and therefore- it is wickedness for anyone to *change* these words; it sinful for anyone to *alter* what they mean; and it is the highest form of arrogance and pride for any man to put their own private interpretation upon them.

Our solemn and fearful duty as sons and daughters of the Lord Christ is not twist the Scriptures to make them fit our culture and our own ideas; but our duty is to study real hard and spend as much time as it takes and research and pray and fast and seek to find the one single true meaning of these inspired words and then to humbly and willfully submit to their divine authority by applying that one true meaning to our own personal lives.

Christian friends, anything less than that is saying that these Words are not that valuable.

When some yahoo prances around on television and mangles the Holy Scriptures so he can raise money and to attract a following- He is not doing anything any different than satan did when he asked Eve, “*Hath God said?*”

When Paul and John and Peter and James and Jude wrote what they wrote- they wanted to make sure that our generation would hear the pure unadulterated Gospel, which alone is the power of God unto Salvation. They wanted to assure that what we preach today is the same thing that they preached nearly 2,000 years ago.

So, the duty of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church is not to re-invent the wheel; we are not told anywhere in Scripture to try to come up with some new thing; we are not authorized to bring forth new revelations. No, our duty and that which we will be held accountable for is that we all work real hard to learn the *first* thing; the true Gospel; and that we are faithful to proclaim that very same Gospel in the very same way.

We are not responsible for how large or how small our Churches are. We are not held accountable for how many people listen or how many people rebel against God. We will not be judged based upon how much money we collect or how many books we write. We are not examined by how many people come or how many people leave. Only God can change a human mind. Only God can save a soul. Only God

can convert the human heart. And Only God can keep us from evil. We don't have any control over those things- that is God's Business.

But what we *are* responsible for and what we *will* be held accountable for and what we *will* be judged by is how obedient and how faithful we are to Scripture; how fully we preached God's Word and how sincerely and faithfully we actually live that which we preach and teach. Those are the things that we *can* control and those are the things that we will be examined about when we stand before God.

So, although it is very unpopular today, we must cry out against false teaching and false prophets and heresy and heretics regardless of what the consequences for us personally is and we must be good ministers of Christ Jesus and faithfully warn the sleeping soul that the enemy is at the gate so that their blood will not be on our hands.

And this is why we must be sure that we are all earnestly contending for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. May God help us all.

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