

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

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

Chapter 12- The Characteristics of the Heretics **Jude 12-13**

140 The Characteristics of the Heretics- Part 18

WOSM Tuesday 05/20/08

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the Epistle of Jude and today we want to continue to look at what Jude taught about “The Characteristics of the Heretics.” So, let’s open our Bibles and read verses 12&13 of Jude again together:

12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;
13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Now on the last broadcast, we were examining the third of the five characteristics of the Heretics that Jude spoke about. Let’s look at this third characteristic again by reading the last part of verse 12 of Jude. Jude said that the heretics were like:

... autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted

Now it is impossible to fully understand just what Jude was talking about here without first understanding how important fruit is to Jesus Christ. In our laid back culture- many today take fruit bearing as being optional. They look at bearing godly fruit as something that is better to do than not to do- but not really a big issue. This is a tragic mistake.

We must remember, dear friends, that Jesus doesn’t *request* that His followers bear fruit- He *demand*s that they bear fruit. Jesus doesn’t *ask* that some of His followers bear godly fruit while not requiring

others to do the same. No, Jesus Christ *expects* and *demands* that all those who have been bought with His Blood bear godly fruit.

You see, bearing fruit is the unmistakable proof that you are born again. Bearing fruit is not something that you *want* to do- but can't; it isn't something that you *wish* you could do- but fall short; and bearing fruit is really not something that you have to *pray* about doing. No, bearing fruit is the automatic response that we as human beings have to being born again and receiving within ourselves the new divine nature. In other words, bearing fruit is the automatic occurrence of abiding in the Vine.

You don't *try* to bear fruit; you don't *hope* and pray to bear fruit; you don't have to go to a seminar to *learn* about bearing fruit- no, saved, redeemed people just bear fruit!

Bearing fruit is not about human willpower; it has nothing to do with social status or financial where-with-all. Bearing fruit is in no way connected to your intellectual ability or your family or political connections. Bearing fruit has to do with two things: Who you belong to and where you live.

If you belong to yourself; if you live after the dictates of your own heart; if you are a child of satan- then congratulations- you are totally and completely separated from Jesus Christ and you are a lost soul and destined for eternal hell. People like that will never bear godly fruit because all fruit bearers are owned outright by Jesus Christ. They are now bond slaves of the Lord Christ because He has bought and paid for them. They no longer belong to themselves, and they have absolutely no right or authority over their own lives. They now live for God and are obedient to the revealed Will of God as recorded in Holy Scripture.

Let's read **1Corinthians 6:15-20**:

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!

16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body *with her*? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.**"**

17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

18 Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

And we can also see that it matters where a true believer lives. It matters where they set up house; where they abide; and where they call home. Let's read **John 15:4-6:**

4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

Now the word that was translated here into English as “**abide**” is the Greek word, *menoo*, which means: *to remain; to sojourn; to tarry; to continue to be present and not depart or leave*. So, to abide means: *to dwell continually*.

So, with that in mind- do you abide in Jesus continually, or do you just visit with Him periodically? Do you visit with Jesus every Christmas and Easter or every Sunday morning, but then pretty much live as you wish all through the rest of the week? If so, you must know that you are not abiding in Jesus and therefore you are a branch that is withered and that will be cut off and burned in the fire.

There is a phenomenon in the modern Church that we see every day. It is a strange perversion of what the Bible teaches about being saved. It is called many things by many different people- but I call it “Dating Jesus.”

When a boy goes out with a girl on a date- he dresses up and puts on the ritz. He borrows a nice car if he doesn't have one; he borrows money from his father- he doesn't have any; he cleans up and puts on his best clothes and tries real hard to impress the girl.

Likewise, the girl puts on a show for the boy. The boy is trying to make the girl think that he is something that he isn't and the so is the girl. The whole concept of dating as is carried out in modern America is really just a farce. And this is why I am against secular dating for

Christians. It is simply the single worst possible way to find the mate that God has for you in life.

But aside from that- the premise of dating is what many do with Jesus. They dress up and they go to Church on Sunday morning and put on a show and pretend to be what they are not. For a few hours on Sunday- they act like they believe what is spoken and they act like they really are a Christian.

But they don't remain like that because it is a farce. And because they aren't saved- they do not bear godly and lasting fruit- because bearing godly and lasting fruit is the result of being saved- and not simply sitting in a pew.

So, they "date" Jesus. They put on a show while they are with Him- but then when they get home- they revert right back to being who they really are. Beloved that is not Christianity and that is not what Salvation and abiding in the Vine and bearing fruit is all about. And the worst thing that anyone can ever do with these people is cause them in any way to think that they are saved and going to heaven- because they are not saved.

And these people date Jesus because they do not wish to marry Him- they do not desire to abide with Jesus. They date Jesus and spend a little time with Him periodically, but they do not abide inside of Him all the time. They date Jesus rather than actually set up their dwelling place inside the Lamb of God and they date Jesus to appease their own guilty conscience that says that spending a little bit of time with Jesus periodically and paying lip service to Him and tipping Him a quarter is better than not spending any time with Him at all.

But abiding with Jesus is not like dating Jesus. Being saved is more like being married. You live inside Jesus and He lives inside you. He goes with you- everywhere you go; and He sees what you are looking at and He hears what you are listening to. So, to abide in Jesus means that you are dwelling inside Him all the time. There are no "time off's" to let your hair down; no "vacations" where you can just get real good and carnal every once in a while- no, to abide in Jesus is a full time deal.

And the truth of the matter is that only saved people love Jesus enough to dwell with Him continually.

That is why I tell people all the time if you think Sunday Morning Service goes on a little too long; if you start watching your watch

because you wish that the preacher would hurry up so you can go eat or go watch the game; if you see absolutely no sense in earnest and fervent prayer; if the Bible bores you; if you have no desire at all to seek God's Face and spend time in His Presence- then why in the world would you ever want to go to Heaven? A person who feels that way about Church would be absolutely miserable in Heaven.

In Heaven- those who go- will be in the literal and the continuous Presence of Almighty God without any filter of flesh forever. We will behold Jesus Christ in His Glory and we will join with the millions as we sing praises to the Lamb forever.

So, I really believe that those who get antsy in Church would be miserable in Heaven. Just think- no ballgames on Sunday; no fishing trips to take you out of Church; no gardening; no rock and roll music; no fast cars; no business to run; no internet porn; nothing to take you away from Jesus. Heaven will be all Jesus- all the time- and if the thought of that disturbs you and doesn't thrill your heart- don't worry- you're probably not going.

Now what is amazing to me is that people actually think that they are going to think differently in Heaven. They think that God is going to change their minds when they get to Heaven- so even if they don't want to praise God or serve God or obey God now- even if they don't have any desire at all to abide in Jesus down here- they think they will suddenly have that desire when they get "up there". But that's not the way this works.

God changes our minds and hearts down here- on earth- *before* we get to Heaven. The only thing that the Bible says is going to change in Heaven is your body and your name. Our minds must be converted now- down here or we won't go to Heaven at all. Our thoughts must be brought into captivity now- or we won't enter in. Our ideas and our dreams and our ambitions and our loves and our desires must all be brought under subjection to King Jesus down here- or we will never get to Heaven to begin with.

This is what being saved and serving God is all about. Serving God is not just about attending Church- although saved people do go to Church. But serving God is about dying to self; it is about crucifying your own flesh; it is about bring into captivity every thought and every imagination to the authority of Jesus Christ. Being save is about doing those things that will make you strong in the Lord and in the power of

His might and about not doing those things that bring dishonor to Jesus and which allows you to remain weak.

So being saved and bearing fruit is all about denying yourself daily and picking up your cross and carrying it with joy and gratefulness.

Serving God is telling your friends that you love them, but you can't go with them to the places that they go because you now belong to Jesus. It is about not laughing at nasty jokes; it is about not listening to music that dishonors Jesus and that promotes sin; it is about not putting before your eyes any evil thing; it is about walking on the straight and narrow path and shunning the broad way.

Bearing fruit is about desiring God to show you where you are wrong instead of hoping that He doesn't find out. Bearing fruit and abiding with Jesus is about asking God to reveal anything in your life that displeases God- so that you can see it and repent of it.

When a person is living unto themselves and is still in his sin- he gets angry and offended when a brother points out something in his life that is wrong. But a saved person doesn't want to do anything wrong- although periodically- he does do things that are wrong. So, a saved person rejoices that the brother loved him enough to talk with him and that God loved Him enough to show Him where he is wrong.

I tell you that lost people can go to Church; they can sit in a pew, and they can sing in the choir. Lost people can even stand behind the pulpit and preach. They can dance and raise their hands when the music is playing; they can fall of the floor, and they can speak in tongues. But lost people cannot bear godly fruit long term. They cannot abide in the Vine; they cannot dwell continually with Jesus, and they cannot enter into Heaven. Only saved people can do that.

Serving Jesus and obeying Jesus and following Jesus is all about loving Jesus and only those with a new nature can love the Son of God. And this is why we all need to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. Well, I've got 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.