

Called, Beloved, and Kept

6.6.10

What is this and who wrote it? An ‘epistle’ - a letter written to a group of Christians to encourage them in their faith by Jude, a half-brother of Jesus.

When was it Written? Mid 60’s AD. During a time when Christianity was under severe political attack from Rome and aggressive spiritual infiltration from gnostic-like teachers. Except for John, all of the other apostles had been martyred, leaving Christianity extremely vulnerable. This explains Jude’s tone.

Why was it Written? To encourage an unnamed group of (likely) Jewish Christians to stand strong against the false teachers that have infiltrated their community and begun to undermine and threaten their faith.

What Are Some of its Key Themes:

- *There is true teaching and false teaching about the Christian faith. (all)*
- *Followers of Jesus need to stand upon and defend true teaching about the Faith. (v.3)*
- *False teachers can be identified by their immoral character (v. 4, 8, 10, 12-13, 16,18-19) and God will judge them for their false teaching. (v.4, 5-7,11, 14-15)*
- *True Christians persevere in their faith and God grants grace to ensure that they do. (v. 17-23,1-2,24-25)*
- *God shows mercy to us, therefore, we should show mercy to others. (v. 2, 21-23)*

What Are Some of Its Unique Key Features?

- *Its brevity. The entire book is only one chapter.*
- *Its tone. Only one passage in the NT surpasses Jude’s filleting of these false teachers (Matt. 23).*
- *Its illustrations. Jude leans heavily on the OT (Exodus, Satan’s rebellion, Sodom and Gomorrah, Moses’ death, Cain, Balaam, Korah, Enoch and Adam)*

“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” Jude 1-2

“Called”

A term used for an urgent call to a particular task--to be an apostle (Rom. 1:1), the life of a Believer (Rom. 1:6-7, Eph. 4), the call to preach the Gospel (Acts 16:10). Here, refers both to a call to salvation and to live godly lives in faith hope and purity. What is true for them is also true of us.

Three Things to Consider:

1. That this call came to us at all - God’s grace.
 - a. We often act like God “owes us something.” God was under no obligation to call out to us at all.
 - b. This should lead to a great humility on our part.

Have I responded to God’s call to me to turn from my sins and trust in Jesus? If not, why? When is the last time I stopped to marvel at the fact that God has called me to Himself?

2. When this call came - we were dead in our sins (Eph. 2:1).

Do I recognize the true state of my soul before I responded to God’s call? (The more we understand our condition of our condition before we knew Jesus, the more we appreciate our standing now with Jesus.)

3. This calling should impact the way that we live. (Eph. 4:1)
Is this calling bearing itself out in my life? If not, what needs to change?

“Beloved in God the Father”

Word is a form of *agapao* (agape) highlighting the special relationship between God the Father and His people. This word was used of God’s relationship with Jesus and now applied to Jesus’ people.

What Difference Should This Make?

1. Thanksgiving and humility. (Once aliens and enemies, now sons and daughters).
2. Changes the dynamic of our relationship with God.
 - a. Religion: We obey to be loved by God. Gospel: We obey because we are loved by God. We don’t seek to obey simply because we know we will be disciplined if we don’t. We don’t want to hurt the One we love. Caution for us: Intellectualism.
 - c. Recognizing that we are loved changes everything.

Do you know that you are loved today? How is this knowledge changing the way you live?

“Kept for Jesus Christ”

Word means guarded or preserved. This would have been a great promise in light of the fact that so many around them would have been falling away. God’s keeping power is emphasized in 2 ways in this book. 1. It is “of God” (Jn. 17:11, 1 Pet. 1:4-5). 2. It must be responded to by repentant, believing humans (v.3, 20-21). It has both *passive* (given by and maintained by the Spirit) and *active* dimensions (faithful effort on the part of the individual).

Three Things to Consider:

1. All *true* Christians will persevere in their faith (1 Cor. 6:11, Jn.6:37, Jn. 10:28-30)
 - a. No matter what happens in life, if we are truly “in Christ,” our salvation cannot be shaken. This should bring us great hope.
 - b. Caution: Our country is filled with people who are not *true* Christians.
2. This is not a “go do what you want” pass (Rom. 6:1-2).
 - a. If you are living as if it is, you are probably not a Christian. Repent and believe.
3. We rest in the fact that God is keeping us for Jesus. We exert ourselves toward the end of knowing and serving Jesus.

All of these come together in the Cross.