

Jude 1:24-25 - Called And Kept

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I. Review

- A. Jude, brother of Jesus, no longer a skeptical family member, but now writing to fellow saints.
- B. A *reluctant* warning to “contend for the faith” in the midst of apostates operating within the visible church--Christendom.
- C. Compares the recent apostates with those of the past - having the same characteristics.
- D. Reminds his readers: apostates have predicted from the earliest times – don’t be surprised!
- E. Jude then instructed believers how we are to live in the midst of the predicted apostasy.
- F. In closing, reminds his readers that it is none-other than God who keeps us from stumbling and provides our righteousness in the day of judgment.

II. Jude 1:24-25¹

- A. Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, *Be* glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

III. Jude Now Returns To Earlier Theme

- A. Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, **To those who are called**, sanctified by God the Father, and **preserved in Jesus Christ:** (Jude 1:1)
- B. Letter of Jude as a “sandwich” - dark and ominous apostasy served up between two slices of God’s sovereign election and preservation of those who are truly His.
- C. Election and preservation are two important planks in the statement of beliefs of Mabana Chapel.

IV. Mabana Chapel Beliefs

- A. History
 - 1. Our fellowship is nearly 100 years old!
 - 2. “One Sunday, in March 1912, a small group of settlers met in a clearing in the woods near the Jay Brooks home. A large stump served as an altar. There Mabana Union Sunday School was organized by C. A. Dolph. There were no roads and the people used trails and skid roads. In 1913 they were given the use of a one-room cabin and in 1920 the Sunday School was reorganized under the auspices of the American Sunday School Union. In the 1960’s members led by Bernie Dallman began work on their own building

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and it was dedicated on Easter Sunday 1964. On May 6th, 1985, the name was changed to *Mabana Chapel*."

a) "The American Sunday School Union was founded in Philadelphia in 1824. Its missionaries established well over 70,000 new Sunday Schools during the nineteenth century." [Noll, 229-230]

B. Doctrinal Statement

1. Founder's held to be true almost 100 years ago.
2. American Sunday School Union held to be true almost 200 years ago.
3. Modern elders, who were not raised in the fellowship, see the same doctrines from the same Scriptures.

C. The Doctrine of Salvation

1. Point A. "God the Father planned it as He sovereignly **chose** some, apart from foreseen human merit or response, to be recipients of His grace from before the foundation of the world. God's election does not negate man's responsibility to believe, the Christian's responsibility to freely offer the gospel to every person, or the fact that God desires salvation to all men (John 1:12-13; 6:37-44, 65; Acts 13:48; Ephesians 1:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2:3-4)."

a) The "U" in Calvinism's "TULIP" : unconditional election.²

b) Calvinism: ". . . God elects those who are totally depraved and are not able to exercise their fallen wills to believe in Christ, God elects them on the basis of His sovereign good pleasure, conquering their wills so that they are made willing to exercise faith in Christ for salvation." [Beeke, 61]

c) Charles Spurgeon

(1) "I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite sure that if God had not chosen me I would never have chosen him; and I am sure he chose me before I was born, or else he never would have chosen me afterward." [Beeke, 60].

d) Election is a necessary corollary of Mankind's fallen condition of depravity

(1) Unwillingness to seek God (Adam and Eve hid).

(2) Inability to seek God ("free will" which is in bondage to sin).

(3) The "T" in Calvinism's "TULIP" : total depravity

e) Charles Spurgeon

(1) "From the Word of God I gather that damnation is all of man, from top to bottom, and salvation is all of grace, from first to last. He that perishes chooses to perish; but he that is saved is saved because God has chosen to save him." [Beeke, 62].

²The acronym TULIP is a helpful memory aid used to represent Calvinism's 5 points: (1) total depravity; (2) unconditional election; (3) limited atonement; (4) irresistible grace; (5) perseverance of the saints.

2. Point D. "Since salvation is by grace, it is **impossible for any believer to lose his salvation** (John 10:27-29; Romans 8:35-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:3-5)."
 - a) The "P" in Calvinism's "TULIP" : perseverance of the saints.
 - b) "The doctrine of the **perseverance** of the saints teaches that all who partake of the grace and power of saving union with Christ by faith continue in that union with its benefits and fruits. By the preserving work of the triune God (1 Cor. 1:8-9), they persevere in true faith . . . Thus, if by the Spirit of God you are regenerate, justified, adopted into God's family, and sanctified, you cannot lose that salvation (1 Peter 1:5). . . . This doctrine does *not* mean that believers are immune to sin . . . Though their faith won't die, there are times when, sadly, it will not be active." [Beeke, 116].

V. Joy In The Midst Of Adversity And Apostasy

- A. "exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24) because of three immutable truths:
 1. We will be kept because we are called.
 2. We will be seen as faultless before His Presence.
 3. Our Judge is our Savior

VI. Contrast With The Doom Of The Apostates

- A. Apostates – using the term in relation to those who are leading parts of the Church at large away from the truth.
 1. Not using the term to denote the defection of true believers from the faith.
 2. False believers in the midst of Christendom - although they themselves never were saved, they profess to be Christians while contributing to the drift of Christianity at large by undermining and eroding cardinal teachings of the faith.
- B. Jude illustrates the immense contrast of the condition and destiny of believers from their unbelieving counterparts.
 1. Not kept because never His
 - a) Crept in unnoticed, marked out for condemnation (Jude 1:4)
 - b) "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. "You will know them by their fruits. . . . Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. . . . Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' (Matthew 7:15-23)
 2. Full of faults
 - a) "brute beasts . . . corrupt . . . greedy . . . rebellious . . . serving themselves . . . shameful . . . lustful . . . boastful . . . ungodly"

3. Guaranteed judgment

- a) "marked out for condemnation . . . reserved for judgment . . .for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever . . . the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment on [them] . . . to convict [them]"

VII. Exceeding Joy Of Believers – Three Works Of God On Our Behalf

A. #1 - Kept because we are Called

1. Two of Calvinism's five points.

- a) Kept = perseverance in the faith.
- b) Called = election.

2. Jude's salutation which opens the letter is written to those who are: (1) called; (2) sanctified; (3) preserved (Jude 1:1).

3. Calling and election in Peter

- a) Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your **call** and **election** sure, for if you do these things **you will never stumble**; (2 Peter 1:10)

4. His ability (not ours)

- a) "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling" (Jude 1:24)
- b) "Him who is able" = *dunamenō* – present tense participle: "Him Who is [continually] able, has the [ongoing] power"
- c) "to keep you" = *fulaxai* – to guard, protect, watch over, the activity of a watchman
- d) "from stumbling" = *aptaistous* – primary meaning is in regard to falling in sin
 - (1) Paul uses the same root word to describe Israel's sin of having stumbled by rejecting her Messiah (Rom. 11:11).
 - e) The context suggests that Jude is relating a ministry of God primarily in continually guarding the believer from stumbling due to the influence of apostasy.

B. How are we to understand election and perseverance in light of passages which contain conditions or warnings?

1. Example warnings (from among many):

- a) Therefore, brethren, **be even more diligent** to make your call and election sure, for **if you do these things** you will never stumble; (2 Peter 1:10)
- b) Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in **departing from the living God**; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ **if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end**, (Hebrews 3:12-14)

2. Interpretation

- a) Some passages which imply lack of security are generally less clear than those which strongly support security (e.g., John 5:24; 6:39-40; 10:28-29; Rom. 8:29-30; 2Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13-14; Php. 1:6; 1Pe. 1:3-5). When interpreting Scripture we always want to give priority to the clear passages when interpreting those which are less clear.
 - b) When examining such passages, we must always ask two important questions:
 - (1) Is this passage dealing with individuals who were ever truly saved?
 - (2) Is their resulting condition one of eternal damnation or merely loss of reward (1Co 3:15)?
 3. Scripture is purposefully designed to encourage self-examination and concern on the part of those who are not truly saved in order to bring about conviction leading to true conversion.
- C. #2 - Faultless before His Presence
1. "to present [you] faultless before the presence of His glory" (Jude 1:24)
 2. "to present" is *stēsai* – to stand, in intentional contrast with stumbling
 3. Not just "to stand," but "to stand . . . before the presence of His glory"
 - a) "before" is *katenōpion* – a word which is often used in conjunction with the idea of *sight* – believers will be able to stand before the *piercing gaze* of God himself!
 - b) Isaiah's vision of the throne in heaven
 - (1) So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts." (Isa. 6:5)
 - c) The apostle John was once in the presence of God's glory
 - (1) Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. . . . (Re 1:12–17)
 - d) Unlike Adam and Eve, whose knowledge of their nakedness caused them to hide from His presence, believers will be able to stand directly in His presence—before His piercing gaze!
 - e) Why? Because they will be seen to be faultless!
 4. "faultless" - *amōmous* – *a* (preposition, "without") *mōmaomai* ("fault")

- a) without: fault, blemish, blame, spot
- b) The reason believers will be able to stand under the piercing gaze of God's holiness is because they themselves have been given God's righteousness!
- c) The "great exchange" initiated by the death of God Himself on a wooden cross.
 - (1) For He made Him who knew no sin [*to be*] sin for us, that **we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - (2) Our sin placed on Him, His righteousness accounted to us.
- d) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law [*is*] the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even **the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.** . . . (Romans 3:19-22)
- e) But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, **not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;** (Php 3:7-9)

D. #3 - Our Judge is Our Savior

1. The piercing, consuming, sin-revealing gaze of the Judge of the universe will see the blood of Christ shed on the behalf of the believer.
 - a) "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. (Isaiah 1:18)
 - b) "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike [*you*]. (Exodus 12:23)
2. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined [*to be*] conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God [*is*] for us, who [*can be*] against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? [*It is*] God who justifies. Who [*is*] he who condemns? [*It is*] Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (Romans 8:29-34)
3. How can God condemn us when it is God Himself who saved us?

- a) God is the judge, but He has also justified!
- b) As Christian songwriter Michael Card eloquently wrote:
TO BE SO COMPLETELY GUILTY, GIVEN OVER TO DESPAIR
TO LOOK INTO YOUR JUDGE'S FACE AND SEE A SAVIOR THERE³

VIII. Summary

- A. The previously-skeptical brother of Jesus eventually came to describe himself as the bondservant of Jesus.
- B. Burdened with the need to warn his readers to contend for the faith.
- C. Warned of false brethren who will creep in unawares, but appear to be believers.
- D. Gave historical examples, described their characteristics, their sure judgment.
- E. Reminded the believers that this was predicted from the earliest times and is not unexpected.
- F. Exorted believers to: (1) build themselves up in the faith; (2) keep themselves in the love of God; (3) strengthen those who are confused or weak; and (4) cautiously attempt to rescue the enemies (when this is possible and only with great wisdom and care).
- G. Finally, he returns to an important truth with which he began his letter: the election and calling of believers. In closing, he reminds his readers that they are called and kept by God Himself and to rejoice because their destiny is radically different than that of the "brute beasts" whose judgment awaits them at the return of Christ.

IX. Pray

- Beeke Joel R. Beeke, *Living for God's Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism* (Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust, 2008).
- Noll Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992). ISBN:0-8028-0651-1.

³ *Joy in the Journey*