

Loved and Kept

Jude 1-2

Tonight, we begin a new series from Jude's letter to the early Christians. Jude was a brother of James (half-brother to Christ), an apostle (Matthew 10:3), and a leader in the early church. This is one of the shortest books of the New Testament (along with Philemon, II John and III John) but it is filled with wonderful truth, practical exhortations, and strong admonishments.

Jude is a catholic book . . . "catholic" means "*general*" or "*universal*." Jude is not writing to a specific person (like Philemon), or to a specific people (like Ephesians or Philippians), but he is writing to all Christians in the early church. This is why it is called a general epistle.

Jude is a cautionary book . . . in that it contains warnings. Jesus warned of false prophets coming (Matt. 24:11-13). Paul foretold of many who would be drawn away (Acts 20:29-30), and Peter warned about the rise of false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3). By Jude it is happening!

Jude is a comforting book . . . in that God will sustain His people. Regardless of the chaos or apostasy taking place in the world around us, God will keep His people from falling. This is where we begin our study. With a comforting look at the work of God within His people.

I. God Has Set His Eye Upon You . . . "*to them that are sanctified by God . . .*" (v.1).

A. He has "*set you apart*" . . . (hagiazo) translated "*sanctified*" (KJV). It's the idea of God choosing you for a special purpose. The choice of God in setting His people apart from all other people is a sovereign one. In other words, He "*sanctified you*" for "*the good pleasure of His will*" (Ephesians 1:5). The NIV says God has "*loved*" you (agapao), but whether it is "*love*" or "*setting apart*," the root idea remains the same. God grasped you. This word is in the perfect tense --- "*a past act having present and permanent results.*"

B. He has "*preserved you (in) Christ*" . . . the word preserved is translated kept in the NIV. It has the idea of "*guarding or holding firmly; to watch or to keep.*" Again, the perfect participle is used. Those chosen by God are kept by Him perfectly and permanently. The word "*in*" is better translated "*for*." So that God preserves us **for** the sake of Christ. In other words, God will not let one person for whom Christ died ultimately be punished.

C. He has "*called you*" . . . referring to the effectual call of the Holy Spirit in bringing the people of God to faith in Christ and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We are "*called.*"

II. God Has Placed His Love Within You . . . "*mercy, peace, and love be multiplied . . .*" (v.2).

A. Mercy . . . (*eleos*) the removal of misery with the idea that the misery is deserved.

B. Peace . . . (*eirene*) to join what has been separated, thus fellowship with God.

C. Love . . . (*charis*) divine love (without conditions) which is shed abroad in the heart.

May these three things be multiplied within your heart. In other words, Jude's prayer is that we might enjoy greater comfort, fellowship, and love in our walk with Christ.

III. God Has Put His Boundaries Around You . . . "*it was needful for me to write to you*" (v.3).

A. God's people will not abuse grace . . . by turning grace into a license to sin (v.3).

B. God's people will not be like the world . . . by being controlled by sin. (v.10).

C. God's people will not pursue their own lusts . . . by turning away from Christ (v.18).