

Contend for the Faith

REVIEW: Today we will finish up our series on the book of Jude. It is one short little book that is as relevant today as when it was written. Jude's contention from the beginning is that there are people out there that are teaching false ideas based on the fact that they are perverting the grace of God into license for immorality and deny Jesus.

Jude has continued on through most of the book describing in more detail the kinds of things these false teachers were doing. Last week Jude gave us a look at how we should handle those that have been affected by false teaching and varying levels - those that are being drawn to the ideas, those that have fallen for the ideas, and the false teachers themselves.

INTRO: This morning, we finish the book. Truth be told I could have rolled these verses into last week's message, because our passage is so short. That would have made for a very long message last week however. So today's message will be fairly brief, but these verses are still extremely important.

Jude 24-25

I. A Doxology

A. Most of us know that we sing "The Doxology" here at church when the ushers bring up the offering

1. Which I find the title of the song, "The Doxology" to be a bit of a misnomer
 - a) It's as if to say that is the only doxology
 - b) There are several in Scripture alone, much less others based on Scripture that people wrote or sang
2. Unfortunately, some of us just stand up and sing out of rote, rather than relationship
 - a) We know that part of the service is coming so we stand up when we hear the music
 - b) We can be the human analog for Pavlov and his dogs - hear the bell and expect to be fed

B. But just what is a doxology?

1. It gets its name from the Greek word for glory - doxa
 - a) God's glory is normally a central theme in a doxology
2. The early Christians most likely borrowed the doxology formula from their Jewish roots
 - a) Jews often used doxologies
 - b) However, benedictions "blessed be God..." were even more common
3. NT doxologies usually followed a similar pattern

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- a) The person praised - usually God
 - b) The word of praise (usually glory)
 - c) An indication of time - usually forever
 - d) And concluding with “Amen”
- C. Jude’s doxology is one of the longest in the NT, and perhaps one of the most popular
- 1. Jude adds things to his doxology that are in keeping with the letter he has written
 - 2. I love Jude’s doxology, and it is completely appropriate to be used on its own in worship, but we should never forget how it ties in with the rest of the letter

II. The doxology itself

- A. Doxologies were often used to close out sermons, and so it is fitting for Jude to close this letter this way, because it has quite the feel of a sermon
- B. One of the reasons the letter has such a strong flavor of a sermon is because typical items that would be found in a letter are missing
- 1. Greetings
 - 2. Prayer requests, etc.
- C. All of verse 24 is talking about the One to whom glory is due
- 1. This One is able to keep you from stumbling
 - a) Keeping has been a theme in the book so far
 - (1) God keeping people in his love
 - (2) God securing sinners for judgment
 - b) Once more Jude brings this theme up of keeping us from stumbling
 - 2. This keeping from stumbling could mean either of two things
 - a) It could mean preservation from sin
 - b) It could also mean that God is keeping us from the ruin of the final judgment - this seems the more likely of the two
 - (1) The idea being that what God has done through Christ is sufficient to keep us from perdition
 - 3. Jude then refers to the Day of Judgment that the Bible talks about
 - a) The reference is subtle in that he talks about how we are in His glorious presence faultless
 - b) That is a means of referring to the Day of Judgment
 - c) And it means that because of God’s keeping or sustaining power, we are delivered to the Day of Judgment faultless because of Christ
 - (1) This then results in great joy
- D. Verse 25 identifies the One, and describes Him
- 1. Some of you may have been expecting the phrase “only wise God”
 - a) The problem is the word “wise” was added

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- b) Most likely brought over by a scribe from Romans 16
- 2. The phrase “only God” is normal in Judaism and not put in to push against the Gnostics - remember this letter was written before Gnostic heresy came into full swing
- 3. One oddity is that God is called our Savior
 - a) We are used to Jesus being called our Savior, but not usually God (although it has occurred seven other times in Scripture)
 - b) How is God our Savior?
 - (1) Jesus, through His death and resurrection is our Savior
 - (2) God is the One that started the process - in fact Jesus was being obedient to death - so in that sense, God is our Savior
- 4. One thing you will not get in the English is the fact that there is no verb in Greek - one must be added
 - a) The verb “be” is added in the NIV, which gives the verse the sense of expecting these attributes of God to be ascribed to Him
 - b) The verb “are” makes just as good a sense, in which case the meaning is about who God is, rather than ascribing these attributes to Him
 - c) Because there is no Greek verb, we can never have resolution on the matter
- 5. The four virtues listed are all associated with God
 - a) His glory - it is a word that is difficult to fully describe with just a few words - the best statement is to awe inspiringness of the total of who God is
 - b) Majesty - A reference to God’s greatness
 - c) Power
 - d) Authority
 - (1) These last two stress His might and sovereign freedom
- 6. The phrase “through Jesus Christ our Lord”
 - a) It can be taken that it is through Jesus that we ascribe these things to God
 - b) Or it can be taken that God is our Savior through Jesus
- 7. The time notation “before all ages, now and forevermore”
 - a) It indicates that these attributes suffer no change
 - b) Because of this, His divine plan will surely be carried out
 - c) In other words, salvation is completely secure because God’s purpose stands and He can do all that He wills
 - d) In context of the letter, even though the false teachers are pulling people away, believers position in the Lord is secure, and He has the power to preserve them

III. Applications from a famous statement of glory

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- A. One of the most important things to remember is that when we recite these words in worship, they do not become thoughtless words that cross our lips
1. This is a part of the worship experience that we need to guard carefully
 2. We need to take time and reflect on the words
 - a) And not just these, but any words
 - b) When we do not put thought into what we recite in worship, we really in a sense become hypocritical
- B. The second thing to consider in this passage is the wonderful security that is promised
1. God is able to preserve us so we can stand before Him blameless and with joy
 2. This brings up the age old debate of Calvinism versus Arminianism
 - a) I will only take enough time to describe in general the tenets of each “ism” that apply here
 - b) Calvinism teaches that God is sovereign over all, but particularly salvation
 - (1) When God saves us, He is powerful enough to keep us
 - (2) To deliver us to heaven and present us before God blameless - just like the verse says
 - (3) The short statement is “Once saved, always saved”
 - (a) We do not jump in and out of salvation
 - (b) Nor do we lose our salvation
 - c) Arminianism says that yes, God is sovereign, but man has say in salvation
 - (1) Man can say “yes” to Jesus but then return the gift of salvation
 - (2) So man can lose their salvation if they are not careful, or if they flatly refuse to follow God
 - (3) The implication becomes that God may be strong enough to pay the price for our sins, but He is not in control or strong enough to in regard to keeping us
 - d) According to these verses God is able to keep you from stumbling
 - (1) If we are right, the stumbling referred to is stumbling that refers to something leading to eternal damnation
 - (2) Even if that is not correct, we are still correct
 - (a) If it is simply a statement that God keeps us from stumbling into sin
 - (b) Sin is what would separate us from God
 - (c) If God is keeping us from sinning, than it would stand to reason that God is keeping us from eternal damnation
 3. More than that, God promises to present us faultless before His presence

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- a) We have talked many times that the faultlessness comes not from us
 - b) It comes from the great exchange - our sins for Christ's righteousness
 - 4. What this is not, is a promise that God removes all worries of life
 - a) We still have worries in this life about health
 - (1) Money
 - (2) Our children
 - (3) Our jobs
 - b) What God does here is take away our greatest worry - what happens after death - where will we spend eternity
 - 5. The question this raises for all of us is do we live this confidence out?
 - a) Do we realize that earthly worries are fleeting
 - (1) Not that they are not important
 - (2) Not that they do not cause stress or have genuine merit
 - b) But in light of God's strong promise of eternity, they really are small
- C. Another phrase that bears serious reflection - "the only God"
- 1. I doubt there is anyone here that would theologically deny our One True God
 - 2. But practically?
 - a) Do we live our lives as if there is, if we are serving just the One True God
 - b) Are there things that are competing for our attention?
 - (1) Those things are called idols
 - (2) Do we recite these words yet harbor idols in our hearts?
 - c) The idols could be bad things: like sinful habits
 - d) But the idols can also be good things too: like our family, or friends, or possessions
 - e) Before we recite these words, we need to seriously think about, pray and ask God to reveal any idols that we may have set up
 - (1) And this is not a one time thing
 - (2) As if we get rid of the idols and never again will we need to search our hearts
 - (3) This is a common occurrence, even a daily occurrence
- D. The final area I want to bring out to you is the descriptions of God
- 1. Jude pulls out four attributes of who God is
 - a) Glorious
 - b) Majestic
 - c) Powerful
 - d) His authority
 - 2. These are things that describe who God is
 - 3. They are things that we should dwell on

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4. One of the things we teach the teenagers on the mission trips is a form of prayer called ACTS
 - a) Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication
 - b) Confession is self explanatory, supplication means asking for things
 - c) The two we usually confuse are adoration and thanksgiving
 - (1) Thanksgiving is thanking God for what He has done - His actions
 - (2) Adoration is adoring God for WHO HE IS
 - d) This is one area that I think all of us need to work on seriously - focusing on and adoring God for who He is
 - e) So one of the things that I have done is to include a list of the names of God in the bulletin
 - (1) Most describe a portion of who God is - such as God is the Almighty
 - (2) My desire for all of us is that when we meet with the Lord personally, we will pull out the list and take time to understand God better - to adore Him for who He is
5. There is another way to adore God as well
 - a) There is an author that I will recommend to you
 - b) He has written many books, and he had a passion for knowing God
 - (1) His famous quote is, "What you think about when you think about God is the most important thing about you."
 - (2) He had a drive to know God
 - c) His name is A W Tozer
 - (1) Anything he has written will be beneficial for you but allow me to recommend two books especially
 - (2) *Knowledge of the Holy* is a book that walks through about 17-18 different attributes of who God is
 - (a) If God is our goal - Him, His glory
 - (b) Then it only stands to reason that we seek Him
 - (3) The second book is called *The Attributes of God*
 - (a) There is a volume one and volume two
 - (b) It is a daily devotional that you can read each day which will take you as long as it takes to read the daily bread
 - d) I recommend him to you for reading because his passionate pursuit of God is infectious
 - (1) If we want to know God and meditate on these amazing attributes like Jude has presented, then we need to get to studying this amazing God that we love, and serve, and that keeps us to present us faultless before His presence