

INTRODUCTION TO JUDE – THE CHRISTIAN’S IDENTITY

Jude 1-2

INTRODUCTION

- “Identity” has become one of the biggest issues in the modern world.
- Nowadays it is not important what you *are* but what you *identify* as, even it is completely contrary to what you actually are.
- Spiritually, many people are ignorant of what they truly are.
- The better I understand my identity as a Christian, the better I will be able to live the Christian life. (Ephesians 1:15-20)
- These opening verses of Jude give us a beautiful description of the Christian's spiritual identity.
- There are six “Judes” (same as Judas) in the New Testament.
- The most likely writer was the Jude who was both the half-brother of Jesus Christ (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3) and a brother of James, the leader of the Jerusalem church (Jude 1; Acts 15:13).
- Jesus’ brethren did not believe in Him during His ministry (Mark 3:21; John 7:1-5)
- After the resurrection, James was converted (1 Corinthians 15:7) and Jude may have been saved at the same time.
- He is found praying with the disciples prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:14)
- Paul mentions the “brethren of the Lord” among those who were married and ministering in the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:5)
- It has been called “The Acts of the Apostates”, and is a “call to arms” for Christians to defend the faith against the assaults of the enemy.

What does Jude’s introductory greeting teach us about the Christian’s identity?

I. THE CHRISTIAN IS A WILLING SERVANT OF GOD

- A. Jude described himself as the servant of Jesus Christ
 1. He could have claimed his physical relationship to Jesus Christ
 2. But it was his spiritual relationship to Christ that mattered
 3. *Doulos* – bonds slave

4. This word is used in the introductions of the epistles by Paul, James, Peter, Jude and John
- B. The slave of Christ serves Him:
1. Solely (Matthew 6:24)
 2. Obediently
 3. Heartily (Colossians 3:23)
 4. Cheerfully (Philippians 2:14)
 5. Perpetually
- C. Jude was content to take second place
1. James was the most prominent of the two brothers
 2. Few people are content to play “second fiddle” (cf. John 3:30)

II. THE CHRISTIAN IS WHOLLY SAVED BY GOD

- A. Called of God
1. There is a general call to all men in the gospel
 - a. The gospel is to be preached to every creature (Mark 16:15)
 - b. Salvation has been provided for all men (1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 2:2)
 - c. God is willing that all should repent and be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9)
 - d. However, many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14)
 - e. This call may be refused (Proverbs 1:24)
 2. There is a special call of the Christian to salvation
 - a. This calling is synonymous with *chosen* (Revelation 17:14)
 - b. The elect, according to God's foreknowledge, are predestined in eternity past, and in time effectually called to salvation (Romans 8:29-30)
 3. The Christian is called:
 - a. Into the grace of Christ (Galatians 1:6)
 - b. To be saints (1 Corinthians 1:2)
 - c. With an holy calling (2 Timothy 1:9)
 - d. With an heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1)
 - e. Out of darkness into His marvellous light (1 Peter 2:9)
 - f. To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:14)

- g. Into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Corinthians 1:9)

B. Sanctified by God the Father

1. The believer is sanctified by the Father, as the prime efficient cause of sanctification, which he works in believers by the Son, through the Spirit
2. Sanctified signifies here consecrated to God through faith in Christ. (John 10:36; Jeremiah 1:5)
3. Those who are called are set apart by God to be holy and fit for His service (2 Timothy 2:21)
4. The Christian's part in sanctification is to make use of the means of grace that God has given us
 - a. The word of God (John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - b. Prayer (Matthew 7:7-8; James 1:5)

C. Preserved in Jesus Christ

1. Greek *tereo* means "to guard, to hold firmly, to watch or keep,"
2. It is a key word in this epistle, occurring five times (1, 6 [twice], 13, 21).
3. The called and sanctified are *kept* by the power of God through faith unto salvation (1 Peter 1:5)
4. Christ is both the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)
5. Christ prayed for the keeping of His disciples (John 17:11)
6. It is impossible for the believer to ultimately fall from grace and lose his salvation (John 10:27-29; 1 Corinthians 1:8)
7. This is in stark contrast to the apostates who at one time professed Christ, but "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. (Jude 13)
8. The assurance of Christ's keeping power should be a comfort to the Christian in the midst of tribulation and apostasy (Psalm 138:8; 2 Timothy 1:12; 4:18)

III. THE CHRISTIAN IS WELL SUPPLIED BY GOD

A. God abundantly supplies His children

1. Not *added*, but *multiplied*
2. Peter used the same language (1 Peter 1:2 ;2 Peter 1:2)

B. Mercy

1. Mercy is the outward manifestation of pity
2. It is God not giving us what we do deserve
3. We are saved according to God's mercy (Titus 3:5; cf. Luke 18:13)
4. We need the mercy of God upon us as we fight temptation and endure trials
5. Those who receive mercy must show it towards others (Luke 6:36)

C. Peace

1. Through God's mercy in Christ, we have peace with God (Romans 5:1)
2. There is no peace to the wicked (Isaiah 48:22; Romans 8:7-8)
3. The believer may enjoy the peace of God (Philippians 4:6-7)
4. Only God's peace will sustain us through the storms of life (cf. Mark 4:39)

D. Love

1. *Agape* is the unconditional, sacrificial love of God (1 John 4:8,16)
2. Christ's death is God's demonstration of love for undeserving sinners (Romans 5:8)
3. The Holy Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Romans 5:5)
4. Nothing shall separate the believer from the love of God (Romans 8:39)
5. We are to seek to grow in our understanding of the unfathomable love of God (Ephesians 3:19)
6. Christ's love constrains us to live unto him and not ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; cf. John 14:21-24)

CONCLUSION

1. Can I truly call myself a slave of Jesus Christ?
2. Does my life demonstrate this?
3. Am I making sure of my calling and election, and walking worthy of this calling? (2 Peter 1:10; Ephesians 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:11)
4. Am I daily being sanctified and set apart unto holiness?
5. Am I daily relying upon God's mercy, peace and love to sustain me?