

# PRESERVED FOR HEAVEN OR RESERVED FOR HELL

## **TEXT: JUDE 1—25**

### **Introduction:**

1. I would like to draw your attention to two words found in the book of Jude. The first is the word “preserved” (vs. 1).
2. Those who are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are “preserved in Jesus Christ” (vs. 1).
3. This little epistle was written to Christians, those who are “preserved in Jesus Christ” (vs. 1).
4. The other word I would like for us to look at is “reserved” (vs. 13).
5. Those who have rejected the Gospel are described as “raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever” (vs. 13).
6. The same word “reserved” is found in verse 6. Here it refers to fallen angels. “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”
7. A similar statement is found in II Peter 2:4. In fact, the books of II Peter and Jude are very similar.
8. All lost sinners and fallen angels are “reserved unto judgment.”
9. According to the Bible, you are either preserved for heaven or you are reserved for hell.
10. The Roman Catholic Church invented a third place – purgatory. But this is not taught anywhere in Scripture.
11. Jesus said in Matthew 25:46, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
12. It is either “everlasting punishment” or “life eternal.”
13. Jesus said in Luke 16:22 that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom (heaven), and the rich man also died, and went into hell where he was tormented by the fire.
14. John 3:18 says, “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
15. John 3:36 says, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

16. First John 5:12 says, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”
17. In other words, you are either preserved for heaven, or reserved for hell. The choice is ours to make.

### **I. THE LORD PRESERVES THOSE THAT ARE TRULY SAVED**

1. The Bible is clear about this. Jesus said in John 5:24, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”
2. If you have have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, then according to the Bible, you have (“hath” means present possession) everlasting life, and you shall not come into condemnation.
3. Praise God, you have “passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).
4. The great evangelist, J. Wilbur Chapman, was reared in a good Christian home but as a young man he struggled with assurance of salvation. When the famous evangelist, DL Moody, called for an after-meeting Chapman was one of the first to enter the room, and to his great joy, Mr. Moody came and sat right down beside him.
5. Later on Chapman described their conversation this way: “I confessed that I was not quite sure that I was saved. He handed me his opened Bible and asked me to read John 5:24; and trembling with emotion I read: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.’”
6. “He said to me: ‘Do you believe this?’ I answered, ‘Certainly.’ He said, ‘Are you a Christian?’ I replied, ‘Sometimes I think I am, and again I am fearful.’ ‘Read it again,’ he said. Then he repeated his two questions, and I had to answer as before. Then Mr. Moody inquired: ‘Whom are you doubting?’ and then it all came to me with startling suddenness.
7. “‘Read it again,’ said Moody, and for the third time he asked: ‘Do you believe it?’ I said, ‘Yes, indeed I do.’ ‘Well, are you a Christian?’ and I answered, ‘*Yes, Mr. Moody, I am.*’ From that day to this I have never questioned my acceptance with God.”
8. Moody asked a good question – “Whom are you doubting?” If we believe God, then there should be no doubts!

9. Christians have long been divided over this doctrine. For example, John Wesley believed a person could be saved, but if he turned his back on God he would be damned forever.
10. For example, Mr. Wesley cited I Tim. 1:19 – “which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.”
11. Mr. Wesley said, “Indeed, none can make shipwreck of faith who never had it. These, therefore, were once true believers: yet they fell not only foully, but finally; for ships once wrecked cannot be afterwards saved.”
12. And, “They ‘made shipwreck’ of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.”
13. Unfortunately I have seen quite a few Christians make “shipwreck” of their lives. In some cases, the wreck was so awful they hurt many others also.
14. I have seen ministries shipwrecked.
15. I have seen marriages shipwrecked.
16. I have seen families shipwrecked.
17. I have seen churches shipwrecked!
18. But some of these shipwrecked believers have repented and gotten right with God. Regrettably, the damage has been done. Certain scars will never heal. Some relationships will not be restored.
19. But if a backslider repents he will go to heaven.
20. What about Paul’s statement in I Timothy 1:20 – “Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme”?
21. Paul made a similar statement in I Corinthians 5:5 – “To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”
22. The body would be destroyed, but the spirit saved.
23. Now let us consider Jude 1 – “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.”
24. The Scofield Study Bible says, “preserved in Jesus Christ” means, “Assurance is the believer’s full conviction that, through the work of Christ alone, received by faith, he is in possession of a salvation in which he will be eternally kept. And this assurance rests only upon the Scripture promises to him who believes.”
25. Jude 20 & 21 also teach assurance of eternal life.

## II. TWO SIDES TO THE DOCTRINE OF PRESERVATION

1. There is the divine side and the human side.
2. We see the divine side in Jude 24 – “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”
3. We see the human side in verses 20 and 21. We are to be building up, praying, keeping, and looking (Jude 20, 21).
4. Keeping ourselves in the love of God does not mean that God will ever stop loving us. The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:35, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”
5. God not only saves us; He keeps us (Jude 24). Jude 1 says we are “preserved (kept) in Jesus Christ.”
6. First Peter 1:5 says we “are kept by the power of God through faith.” God keeps us – that is the divine side. “Through faith” – that is the human side.
7. When the prodigal son ran off and wound up in a hog pen, his father never stopped loving him. But the prodigal son did not keep himself in the love of his father...until he climbed out of the hog pen and returned to his father.
8. HA Ironside says keeping ourselves in the love of God means “to keep in the conscious enjoyment” of the love of God.
9. Our Lord said in John 15:9, 10, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.”
10. Some Christians talk about the doctrine of “the perseverance of the saints.” This means that those who are truly saved will persevere to the end and cannot lose their salvation. It doesn’t mean that a person who is truly saved will never backslide; but that they will ultimately persevere and go to heaven.
11. I prefer to use the word “preserve” because it is more Biblical (Jude 1). However, the two words are similar in some ways.
12. Certainly those who are preserved will want to persevere (Jude 20, 21). Those who do not want to persevere are probably not genuinely saved.
13. The prodigal son did not want to stay in the hog pen. Those who remain in the devil’s hog pen were never born again (cf. II Peter 2:22).
14. The Bible teaches the security of the born again believer, but not the security of the “make believer.” And there are many, many “make-believers” in our churches today.

15. In fact, there are many make-believers who do not even bother to attend church but they still claim to be saved. They are deceived.
16. So how are we to “build up” ourselves in our most holy faith? (Jude 20). By studying God’s Word, and hearing God’s Word preached. This strengthens our faith. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).
17. Studying God’s Word daily, and putting into practice what we have learned, is essential. Paul said in Acts 20:32, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up.”
18. In addition to reading the Bible, we are to be “praying in the Holy Ghost” (Jude 20). AT Pierson said, “As the Word of God supplies the truth to be embraced by faith, so prayer supplies the energy and force to appropriate truth and incorporate it into your life.”
19. Bible reading and prayer go together. When we have daily fellowship with God through reading His Word, the Holy Spirit develops in us the spirit of prayer.
20. Communion with God through Bible reading and prayer keeps us from sin. I have dealt with many backsliders, but I have yet to meet a backslider who was reading his Bible and praying.
21. Obeying the Word of God, and communing with God through prayer, will keep us “in the love of God” (Jude 21).
22. There has to be what Thomas Chalmers called, “the expulsive power of a new affection.” Worldly affections need to be replaced by the power of the Gospel.
23. I have spent much time speaking about being preserved for heaven, and now must say a few words about being reserved for hell.

### **III. THE LOST ARE RESERVED FOR HELL (JUDE 13).**

1. Jude is referring specifically to false teachers – people who profess to be Christian but are not. Five metaphors used in verses 12 and 13 point out the selfishness, the uselessness, the fruitlessness, the shamefulness, and the hopelessness of apostates.
2. But these warnings should not be restricted to apostate false teachers. Psalm 9:17 says, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”
3. Since reservations are being made for hell, let me explain what the Bible has to say about these reservations.
4. First of all, there is no possibility of hell being full. Sometimes we hear about convicts getting out of prison because of overcrowding, but this will never happen in hell.

5. Proverbs 27:20 says, “Hell and destruction are never full.”
6. Isaiah 5:14 says, “Therefore hell hath enlarged herself.”
7. Furthermore, hell is a place of eternal torment. Jude 7 says sinners suffer “the vengeance of eternal fire.”
8. In Luke 16, our Lord used the word “torment” four times to describe the suffering in hell.
9. Revelation 14:10 says lost sinners will be “tormented with fire and brimstone.” And Revelation 14:11 says, “And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.”
10. Notice Jude 13 refers to “the blackness of darkness for ever.”
11. Three times in the Gospel of Matthew, our Lord warned of “outer darkness.” In Matthew 8:12, He said sinners “shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
12. In all three instances (Matthew 22:13; 25:30), our Lord also warned about “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
13. Oh sinner friend, this is one reservation you ought to cancel!
14. The great evangelist, RA Torrey said, “I wish that I could believe that there was no hell. That is, I wish that I could believe that all men would repent and accept Christ, and that hell would therefore be unnecessary. Of course, if men persist in sin and persist in the rejection of Christ, it is right that there should be a hell. If men choose sin, it is for the good of the universe and the glory of God that there is a hell to confine them in. But I wish with all my heart that all men would repent and render hell unnecessary. But I cannot believe it if it is not true. I would rather believe unpleasant truth than to believe pleasant error. As awful as the thought is, I have been driven to the conclusion that there is a hell.”

**CONCLUSION:** “The Horrors of Hell”

Hell, the prison house of despair,  
 Here are some things that will not be there:  
 No flowers will bloom on the banks of Hell,  
 No beauties of nature we love so well;  
 No comforts of home, music and song,  
 No friendship of joy will be found in that throng;  
 No children to brighten the long, weary night,  
 No love nor peace, nor one ray of light;  
 No blood-washed soul with face beaming bright,  
 No loving smile in that region of night;  
 No mercy, no pity, pardon nor grace,  
 No water, Oh God, what a terrible place;

The pangs of the lost no human can tell,  
Not one moment's ease – There's no rest in Hell.

Hell, the prison house of despair,  
Here are some things that will be there;  
Fire and brimstone are there, we know,  
For God in His Word hath told us so;  
Memory, remorse, suffering and pain,  
Weeping and wailing, but all in vain;  
Blasphemer, swearer, hater of God,  
Christ-rejector while here on earth trod;  
Murderer, gambler, drunkard and liar,  
Will have his part in the lake of fire;  
The filthy, the vile, the cruel and the mean,  
What a horrible mob in Hell will be seen;  
Yes, more than humans on earth can tell,  
Are the torments and woes of Eternal Hell.