

26.1 Jude

Introduction, 1-4, Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: ² May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. ³ Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

1) What insight do we get into the biblical doctrine of calling from v. 1b?

God's call is His word to us by which He introduces Himself and makes Himself known to us. You call out to someone and get their attention; by His call, God secures our attention and brings us into fellowship (1 Cor. 1.7); every person God calls believes and receives salvation (Rom. 8.30, the called are justified). In this context, what does Jude 1.1b add to the doctrine of calling when it literally describes those who are called in this way: he writes "to the beloved by (KJV) God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ called ones"?

We can see that calling has its roots in the love of God (as election has its roots in forelove, Rom. 8.8.29-30) and its goal is the keeping of the saints (set apart ones and called ones) for Jesus Christ. Thus, effectual calling extends beyond bringing into fellowship but keeping in fellowship over the ups and downs of the road to glory.

2) What did Jude want to do in this letter and what did he end up doing (v. 3)?

Jude wanted to write about salvation, but found it necessary to encourage contending for the faith.

3) Why, according to v. 4, is this task significant and what makes for danger and calls for vigilance?

One thing for sure stands out: ungodly people have "crept in unnoticed"; they are subtle like the father of lies. They pervert the grace of God and deny our Master. Thus, contending for the faith is important, dangerous, and demands vigilance.

4) How can we fill out what it means to "contend for the faith" (v. 3)?

It surely has to include refuting error, which includes being aware of it and knowledgeable about its teachings and applications. Cf. 1 Tim. 2.24-25 that teaches the need for patience hoping God will grant repentance, but also the need for separation, 2 Cor.6.14-18

5) What principles help us keep our balance in contending for the faith given that we may turn from the straight path to the left or to the right (how would it look if we did not contend and how would it look if we did contend but with overkill? Cf. separating from those who do not separate)?

Perhaps, we can at least state the principle that we must contend without being contentious.

6) What is Jude's strategy that gives us some general guidance as to how to carry out this task today?

He describes their teaching and conduct (we have to be informed about them): vs. 9, 19, and 16.

He assures the church of their condemnation: v. 4.

Thus, he draws from OT examples (we have to be informed biblically).

a) The unbelievers who were delivered from Egypt, v. 5

b) Disobedient (non-elect; cf. 1 Tim. 5.21 regarding elect angels) angels, v. 6

c) Sodom and Gomorrah, v. 7

d) Cain, v. 11

e) Balaam, v. 11

f) Korah, v. 11

Thus, Jude describes them as **blemishes on your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, looking after themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever (12-13).**

Exhortations to believers:

He fills out what it means to “contend for the faith”: ¹⁷ **But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.... ²⁰But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith**

He calls for prayer, love, patience, and mercy: **pray in the Holy Spirit; ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.**

Closing doxology: ²⁴**Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.**