

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude** Chapter 2- The Doctrine of Sanctification **Jude 1** 5. Beloved in God the Father- Part 1

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Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse journey through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to begin a new section of our study and look at what Jude taught about being "Beloved by God the Father"- so let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 1**- again together:

Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

Now Jude says here that he wrote this Epistle **To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ**". Now the word that was translated into English here as "beloved" is the Greek word, hagiozo (hag-ee-ad-zo).

Now the people who translated the inspired Word of God into the King James Version and the New King James Version translated this word as "sanctified", and those who translated the New American Standard Bible, the English Standard Version, the Holman Christian Standard Version translated this word as "beloved". And rather than deal with this as a translation error or a translation difficulty- we simply need to understand that being sanctified and being beloved are the same thing.

Being sanctified is the process of God whereby saved people are being made holy or being formed into the Image and likeness of Jesus Christ. Being sanctified begins after we are justified in Jesus Christ and extends all the way unto the end of our lives here on earth. It is through sanctification that our love for God grows and our obedience to God becomes more fruitful and God receives more Glory from us and the way we live our lives.

Now normally, the Bible treats Sanctification as a Work of the Holy Spirit. But here, Jude says that God the Father is at work in our sanctification or the process whereby we are made to be the beloved of God. And Jude does this to bring to our attention that the Holy Spirit works our sanctification according to the Will of God the father and because of the finished Work of God the Son.

For the first 1,900 years of its existence- the Church of Jesus taught very clearly about Sanctification. But over the last 100 years or so, there has been much confusion about what Sanctification is and what it means and how it affects our lives.

All true and genuine believers are sanctified and made to be partakers of God's new creation state- the divine nature of God- which new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. And it is this sanctification that is the difference between those who are saved and those are lost. In fact, it is the transliteration of this Greek word from where we get our English word, "saints" or "sanctified ones" or those who are the beloved of God. And we should know that all genuinely saved people are sanctified by God and therefore- all *saved* people are saints.

Now the Roman Church and some other sects teach that the "saints" are those special people who have performed miraculous works during their lives, and which are designated to be saints at some point *after* their death by a church tribunal. The problem with teaching this is that this teaching is not found anywhere in Scripture and therefore should not be taught or believed by Christ's Church.

The Bible teaches that **all** those who have been called and chosen by God and who have been gloriously washed in the Blood of Jesus Christ are "holified" or sanctified or made to be the beloved by God and are "*made*" to be saints. That is why we can say that it is Christ Himself Who has made us fit for Heaven by virtue of what He alone has done for us.

So, in that sense, Sanctification is a one-time *event* that happens immediately after Salvation to all those who believe. But in the larger sense, however, Sanctification is the lifelong *process* by which God tests and proves and molds and shapes those that are His. Sanctification is only for those who are saved. Lost souls cannot be sanctified and are not the beloved of God.

The Bible teaches that this larger Work of God in sanctifying those who believe is a life- long process- and not an event. This trying

and proving and molding and shaping those who are saved begins at the very moment the believer becomes justified by Grace through Faith in Christ alone and continues until that believer dies and goes to Heaven.

So, because that is true- Sanctification *necessarily* involves suffering in this life. The Bible teaches that God will try us; that He will prune us; and that He will chastise us after we are saved. The Bible clearly teaches that God also will *allow* us to be tempted; He will *allow* us to suffer as Christians; to be persecuted; to go through tests, trials, tumults, and afflictions for the express purpose of bringing us forth as pure gold.

The Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification is a very unpopular doctrine today in our modern materialistic and self-centered culture- especially for those who have bought into the unscriptural teaching of the Health, Wealth and Prosperity Doctrine- but Sanctification is absolutely true; it is absolutely in the Bible and that makes it absolutely correct in spite of it being unpopular, so I will absolutely teach it. Jesus Himself said this in **John 15: 1-8**:

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples.

So, we can easily see that everybody is either going to be cut off from the vine because they bore no fruit at all or else they are going to be pruned when they do bear good fruit. So, our choices are that we bear no fruit and be cut off and become withered and have men gather us and cast us into the fire, or else we can bear good fruit and be pruned regularly. So, we can either be “cut up” or “cut off”. And those who are

“cut up” are those who have been truly saved and are being sanctified those who are “cut off” are those who were simply deceived about their conversion and were never truly saved to begin with.

And notice who Jesus said was going to do the pruning. Jesus said that His Father was the Vinedresser, and that God the Father would do the cutting; God would do the pruning. God would do the stripping off of the “sucker branches” that would divert the sap of the vine so that all the life giving sap would flow to the branches.

Now anyone who knows anything at all about gardening knows that pruning is not something that is done just one time. Pruning is done as often as the gardener deems it necessary. And our Sanctification is not accomplished just one time- but is a life- long process in which God cuts away from us those things that will rob us of our full knowledge and love and enjoyment of Him.

Beloved, the greatest gift that God can give to Mankind is not a car or a boat, nor is it even long life, or money or possessions, or health or even a good spouse or a fine home. No, the greatest gift that God can give to mankind; the single most important thing that God can give to us is Himself. God is the greatest Possession. God is the Prize. God is the One Whom our soul loves. David said in **Psalms 63:3** that God’s loving Kindness was better than life itself. So, to know God in fullness and to worship God in the manner in which He is entitled to be worshipped and to enjoy God forever is the only reason that God made Man to begin with.

So therefore- Salvation is not about us feeling better, or about us getting a load lifted off our shoulders, or about us being reunited with our loved ones who have died. Salvation comes to fallen Man so that saved Man can have the high honor and the distinct privilege and the wonderful opportunity to know and love and enjoy and worship God in the manner in which God deserves to be glorified.

To be sure, when you are saved- you will absolutely feel better. To be sure, when you are saved- you will have the heavy load of sin lifted off your shoulders. To be sure we will be reunited with all of our loved ones if they were Blood washed before they died. But that is not the main reason that God saves us. Salvation is not about us. Salvation is about God. Salvation brings the ultimate Glory to God. Salvation is the highest form of glorifying God. Lost people cannot give the kind of glory to God that He deserves- their lost condition prevents them from

doing so. Only saved people can give the glory to God that He deserves to receive.

So, since God is Himself the greatest Gift that God can give to us- God is certainly not interested in giving us anything that will rob us of our opportunity to love and honor and worship and obey and know and touch and obtain and possess and enjoy Him.

The devil, however, is *very* interested in giving us *anything* that will rob us of God. So, God will never give us anything that will rob us of enjoying the fullness of Himself- but be sure that the devil will.

And unconverted eyes don't see this. Unconverted minds don't understand this. And unconverted hearts cannot perceive the glory of Sanctification. Those who are lost and unregenerated think that "good" things are from God and "bad" things; "painful things" "hurtful things" must be from the devil.

But God is so good, and God is so great and God is so powerful that He can use seemingly hard things; painful things; bitter things; traumatic things; hurtful things, and even bad and terrible and wicked and evil things as instruments to mold His people and shape His people into the very Image and His Likeness of His dear Son so that we will know and love and enjoy God forever.

So, God is faithful to prune us. He is proper to chasten us. He is correct to allow us to be tried and tested and proven and He is honored and glorified in that He allows bad things to come into our lives. God loves you so much that He Himself will allow you to be hurt and disappointed and disillusioned and God will allow the vanity or the uselessness of this life to affect us terribly- not to destroy us- but so that through these things- we may be changed and then serve God out of genuine love; and so that we can become faithful and fruitful and holy and- in so doing- our faith is made strong and our weaknesses turns into power and our failures are turn into victories and our reproach turns into honor and through the fire of our trials, we can be molded and shaped and formed into the very likeness and image of Jesus Christ- so that two things can be done- God can be glorified and our joy will be full. **(Romans 8:15-23)**

Now I fully understand that many of us have not been taught this- and I also realize that flesh will not like this at all- but this is what God says in His Word. For example- look at what the Bible says in **1 Peter 1:7:**

so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is

perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

So, in reality, we, who are saved really only have one single trial. We *say* that we are being tried with our finances; or that we are in a trial over our children; or that we are being tested about our jobs- but in reality all of these tests and trials are really about our faith- how we trust God and trust God's Word- and so the trial- that problem that was either orchestrated by God Himself or was allowed by God- is designed very specifically to expose our weaknesses to us so that we see it and so that we may correct that which is lacking in our trust of God and the confidence we have in His Word.

Now it has been said many times by many people- and I used to say this myself- that God allowed us to go through that trial so that *He* would see what we would do- but I have found that statement to be unscriptural. God is Omniscient and He already knows how we were going to handle that trial before we ever experienced it. So, the purpose of us going through that sanctifying trial was not so that **He** could see how we would handle it. No- we need to go through the trial so that **we** can see how we handled it. **We** need to see exactly whether we are in the faith or not. **We** need to know just how much we really trust God. **We** need to know just how strong we are in God and where our weaknesses are so that we may repent and do that which will add strength to our faith and take away the weaknesses.

And we also need to remember that the trials and afflictions of our Sanctification that God brings into our lives is *not* the result of God being angry with us- no- on the contrary- the Bible says in **John 15** that God prunes those that are actually doing good; those who are serving God; those who are actually bearing good fruit and God prunes them so that they may bring forth *more* fruit- thus glorifying Him. So we can see that the entire foundation of Sanctification is for the purpose of giving us the honor and privilege of being able to bring to God the Glory that He deserves.

Well, I've got to stop right here but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

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