

SERMON: AN OLD DOXOLOGY FOR A NEW YEAR

Jude 24-25

(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, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Introduction

A doxology, originally, was a poem written to praise a king. The term doxology literally means “praise words” or “glory words.” It was customary when one was allowed an audience with the king, to recite a doxology upon entering and another doxology upon leaving. It was a rare occasion and an honor to speak directly to the king; therefore, upon anticipation of the meeting, a subject would spend much time getting the doxologies “just right.” While reciting the exiting doxology the subject was not allowed to turn his back to the king and walk away. He had to walk backward away from the king, bowing repeatedly, as he recited the second doxology. He had to “respect” the king. To put it another way, he could not turn his back side to the king. That would have been insulting to the king and would have resulted in the subject being dragged off to prison or even executed. He had to keep looking at the king as he made his exit by backing humbly and adoringly away. Our English word “respect” literally means to look at continually.

There are many doxologies recorded in the Bible. Many have been set to music. In fact, The Lord’s Prayer, which is our model, ends with a doxology. Jude’s doxology is unique because it comes after a laundry list of sins, corruption, and heresies which were running rampant at the time. Many had crept in to the church congregations. Yet, despite these negative acknowledgements, Jude could still give God praise and adoration. His doxology did more than praise God. It also edified believers. In his praise he tells how God protects believers. This is the right doxology for such a time as this. We are joyful to witness a new year. We are also joyful that 2020 is gone, but science is predicting that the first half of 2021 will be a sequel to 2020. Our faith must not let us ignore the facts. Our faith must let us respond to the facts with reason, wisdom, and love. Again, the recurring ethical question: “How can love be best served at this time?” Jude’s doxology is a perfect example of how we should behave as we enter a new year in these difficult times.

Exposition

1. We Should Not Let Evil Intimidate or Influence Us.

(Pious Persistence)

(Jude Did Not Let False Teachers Intimidate or Influence Him)

(We Must Contend For the Faith with Love)

2. We Can Emerge Stronger Than Before.

(Patient Progress)

(Somewhat Different but Stronger)

3. God Will Keep Us From Falling Away From The Faith.

(Perpetual Preservation)

4. God Will Present Us Faultless Before His Throne with Great Joy.

(Profound Presentation)

5. All of This Gives Us Reason to Worship Him Right Now.

(Prioritized Praise)

Closing Thoughts

On Robert Frost's eightieth birthday, he was asked by journalist, Ray Joseph this question: "In all your years and all your travels what do you think is the most important thing you've learned about life?" Frost paused for a moment and replied: "In three words, I can sum up everything I've learned about life. It goes on!" As a preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ I am audacious enough to add to what this poet laureate said. Life does go on even after physical death. We can spend it in the right place or in the wrong place. Life goes on year after year. Life will go on in 2021 and beyond, but life is a whole lot better when we walk with Jesus. Let me say that again: Life is a whole lot better when you walk with Jesus. No wonder our fore parents sang: "I want Jesus to walk with me, I want Jesus to walk with me, All along my tedious journey, I want Jesus to walk with me." As you walk with Him make sure you give Him praise, honor, and adoration. Each of our lives can be a never-ending doxology. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scriptures

Matthew 6:13b

Romans 16:25-27

Ephesians 3:20-21

End Notes

1. Doxology comes from two Greek words. *Doxa* which means glory or praise and *logos* which means word. Doxology means praise word or glory word. For the nerds who want to dig deeper into church music history as it relates to doxologies, please Google the following terms:

Gloria Patri, Greater Doxology, Lesser Doxology, Bishop Thomas Ken, and the Old Hundredth Hymn Tune. Remember, nothing should supersede your study of God's Word.

2. You know I like to study the origin of words. If you remove the prefix “re” from respect you have the morpheme “spect” left. It is from the Latin word *specere*, which means to look. From this we get spectator, one who looks at an event; spectacular, which describes something exciting and worth taking the time to view; spectacles, which are eye glasses; and speculate, which is the mind’s eye viewing possibilities.

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