

Jude 24-25
November 21, 2021

Today, is our final trip to the diminutive book of Jude. As we've seen, this little book packs quite a wallop punching way above its weight class. If you haven't been with us over these five weeks—or even if you have—let me try and summarize.

Much like labels on many medicines, Jude a book full of frightful warnings.

You know what it is like to read those warning labels on Medicines?

- Take this with food, or you could die.
- Don't take too much, or you could die.
- You may get dizzy and die.
- You could lose all touch with reality and die.
- Your symptoms could disappear because you died.

Jude is a warning label for the Christian life. He has been regaling us of all the perils to our souls that prowl about in the valley of the shadow of our lives. Remember the warnings?

- Don't be like the faithless Israelites or you will die.
- Don't be like the fallen angels, or you will die.
- Don't be like the immoral citizens of Sodom, or you will die.
- Don't follow the selfish false teachers, or you will die.
- Don't go the way of Cain, Balaam, or Korah or you will die.
- Don't be an enemy of the Lord or you will die.

It is possible—even understandable—maybe even expected to walk away from Jude a little shaken. Or more aware of the threats to your soul than the promises for your soul. Listen, we shouldn't—we can't—we mustn't be MORE aware of threats than promises.

Are the threats real? Yes.

Are they threats hyped? No.

But.

Are the threats to our souls greater than the promises for our souls? NO.

And so. Jude knows this and he wants to leave us MORE aware of the help for our souls than the threats to our souls.

PROP: Your God is Greater than the Threats you face.

This needs to put steel in our backbone. Our God is greater than our Threats.

Today, Jude is going to remind us that HE who is with us is greater than he who is out there. We are going to remember again that there is none like our God.

“A man (or woman) with God is always in the majority.” John Knox

We are going to recall that our God is able to keep from stumbling despite how perilous our way.

Why? The one with YOU is greater than those against you.

We are going to recall that our God is able to present us blameless despite how ungodly our past.

Why? The one with you is greater than your past sins.

We are going to recall that our God is our ONLY savior rescuing us despite how far we’ve wandered.

Why? The one with you is greater than your current rebellion.

PROP: Our God is Greater than Our Threats.

Jude is not going to ask us to strengthen ourselves, he is going to remind us that the one who is with us has strength enough for all of us.

“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.”
Jude 24–25

PRAY

He Keeps
He Presents
He IS

1. He Keeps

Even the newest Christian knows our way is difficult. We are opposed by the devil who prowls about on the hunt for prey. We are opposed by ourselves and our disposition to sin that we still carry around in our hearts. We are opposed by the hardships and trials of life.

In other words, we have opposition without and within and all around.

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...”

We must look away from all of those threats and look to him. He is not one of many who can keep you from stumbling. He give you tips so you can keep from stumbling. He is the one and only one who is abler to keep us all from stumbling.

Here, stumbling means falling into grievous sin or error. He promises that he will never those who are his stumble and fall away into oblivion. Does this mean that we can willfully run from God and live counter to his will and think that because we—

Prayed a prayer
Raised a hand
God baptized
Went down the aisle

We will be okay? No. Certainly not.

Remember, we must be those who—how did verse 21 say it? **Keep ourselves in the love of God.** In other words, work hard to remember that God is altogether good and loving toward you. That he withholds no good gift. That he is able to use even our heartaches for our good. That his highest and best gift for us is his Son Jesus Christ.

That might seem like a contradiction.

You might be wondering is God able to keep me or do I keep myself?

Do we keep ourselves in the love of God OR does he keep us from stumbling?

We must stay close to the Lord, but only he can keep us safe until the end. Only he can preserve us and keep us from falling away. As we stay close to the Lord he promises that he will guard us or keep us until the end.

He promises that we will not stumble and fall into the irretrievable abyss of apostasy and falling away from following the Lord. Does this mean we hear this promise and say—I’m fine, I don’t need to obey or confess sin or love the lost or follow Jesus? No.

It means we **MUST** stay close to the Lord but only he can keep us so that we don’t stumble. At the end of the day we cannot keep ourselves. He promises and commits to keep all those who are his.

We alone cannot keep ourselves.

Only he is able to keep you from stumbling.

Our God is Greater than Our Threats.

He is able to keep us from stumbling but he also does something else. Something that is unexpected but amazing.

What is it?

He keeps he also—Presents

2. He Presents

He promises not just to guard you until the end, but ALSO he presents us how?

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless

Blameless.

I don't know about you. But I'm blame worthy. I know me, I know the inner workings of my heart. I know that thoughts that I see that no one else does—I'm not blameless. I'm far from blameless.

That is true for all of us.

And yet.

Here we have in verse 24,

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless

That word “blameless” is a Biblical word used in the OT of animals without blemish. Under the old temple/sacrificial system animal sacrifices had to be the best of the best. A shepherd could not get the malformed, three-legged lamb, with one eye and offer that as a sacrifice. The Lord required the best. The shepherds took their most prized sheep—the ones who would fetch the best price. The ones who had the finest wool.

The ones without faults/the blameless ones.

Jude is saying here that one day he is going to present all of us blameless.

How that possible?

Only because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

When John the Baptist saw Jesus approaching the shore of the Jordan River to be baptized, he proclaimed,

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

The writer to the Hebrews says it this way—when compares animal sacrifices to the sacrifice of Jesus:

“[14] how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”
Hebrews 9:14

Jesus was the sacrifice without blemish—and yet he died. But—and this is the miracle of the good news—his spotless record, his blameless life is reckoned to guilty sinners. This is why Jesus is so amazing.

In dying, took upon himself all my blameworthy actions, thoughts, words, intentions—and died. He was presented before God as blameworthy.

Did he do wrong? No.

But he was presented as blameworthy because of me and you.

So that in dying, rising, ascending, and returning he might be able to present us blameless.

Think of it.

God does NOT hold your sins against you. Indeed, we must say, God CANNOT hold your sins against you.

Why?

Because he has already held them against Jesus Christ.

How can he hold us blameless for what we did?

It is not that our sins are not serious. They are.
It is not that our sins are not vile. They are.
It is not that our sins are not horrific. They are.
It is not that our sins are not toxic. They are.

He already blamed Jesus.

So we can be rendered—blameless.

Blameless—NOT

in comparison with others.

But we are rendered blameless—where?

before the presence of his glory with great joy

Before the presence of his glory. In other words, before God himself. This is remarkable—we will one day be presented before God as blameless. The reason this is not more remarkable to us today is because we have never been in the presence of his glory.

Not like this.

When people find themselves in the presence of his glory—they feel anything but blameless. When Isaiah was transported to the spot that we will one day be presented blameless he had a very different experience.

[4] And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. [5] And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” Isaiah 6:4–5

In other words—Isaiah was keenly aware just how blameworthy he was.

But not us.

In that moment we will not cry—woe is me! We will cry, “Praise to Jesus most high.”

Why?

Because on the cross God poured out woe upon Jesus. He was treated as if he were lost and a man of unclean lips as he died for a people of unclean lips. The king, the LORD of hosts smote him and turned away from him.

Why?

So we might be presented blameless before his presence.

WITH GREAT JOY!

This is no cold, somber event full of long faced people who have sour faces. This will be a raucous, rambunctious joyful occasion. Like never before.

You will have great joy, but so will he. In fact, if you are a Christian he has great joy over you right this very moment. Some of us in this room need to be more aware of that than we are. Our God rejoices over us. He rejoices over you. Because you are his, because you have been purchased and redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and because you are IN Christ—united to him—he rejoices over you.

We can sometimes be so aware of our present failures that we can think that God has a low-level of anger toward us. But that is not true. He is rejoicing over you now. On that day when we are presented blameless before the presence of his glory—you will see the joy he has in you.

It won't be for the first time that he has this joy.

But it will be the first time you SEE this joy. What a day that will be!

You will rejoice.

God will rejoice.

Angels will rejoice.

Everyone will rejoice.

All of Creation will rejoice.

“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

“present you”

Might better be rendered, “Stand you up.” In other words, not only is able to keep you from stumbling but he will by his own power stand you up blameless before God.

Do you see the picture?

NOT only will our Lord NOT let us stumble, he personally will stand us up in the presence of God with great joy.

What a day that will be.

In these uncertain days it is helpful to our souls to look forward to this certain day. You can know for certain that the Lord has taken a personal interest in you. He will protect you and keep you from stumbling and not just that, he will stand you up before his father.

Our God is Greater than Our Threats.

We've seen that

He Keeps
He Presents

3. He is

We see how great he is in vs. 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."

These two little verses are what are called a doxology, and that differs from a benediction. A benediction pronounces blessing on us, a doxology calls out praises to God. We can see this especially in verse 25 as Jude even further focuses our attention away from ourselves and upon God.

But in this doxology the praises we call out to God are blessings that he has given us!

Who is he?

He is the only God who is also our savior. Most of the time in the New Testament the title savior is ascribed to Jesus, but here it is spoken of about God. It is a reminder that God is the source and fountainhead of our salvation.

Of all the wrong ideas that trot around and wreak havoc is the idea that God the Father is a tyrant of epic proportions with a smoldering, uncontrollable anger. He is eager to destroy, but along comes Jesus, the kind and gentle one who in love comes and absorbs the reckless anger. That is not the case.

God is the source of our salvation.

God is our deliverer.

God is our rescuer.

God is our champion.

God is our savior.

How did he save his people?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

And Jude says the same thing—

to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Salvation only comes through Jesus Christ.

We know God the savior through Jesus Christ.

And to this God—the only God the God who saves any who come to him by Jesus Christ—to this God

be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

In saying these words, we are not granting God glory, majesty, dominion, and authority—no he has always had those things. We are recognizing the reality of things. This is who God is and what he has always had—

Glory: this is the honor that is and must be ascribed to God for all of his works in the world but especially for redemption. His fame will resound with God NOT just because he created and sustains all things BUT also because he has redeemed rebellious humanity.

Majesty: this means that he is great beyond all reckoning. Great and powerful beyond all imagination. He is King. And he has eternal right to rule over all things. There is no rival throne or authority.

Dominion: (Power) He control of all things. He is the absolute, unquestioned, sovereign over all things. There is no corner of the universe that he does not control and direct. There are no conquests for him to lead—he has conquered all.

Authority: He is no usurper who led a coup that happened to be successful. No, the government shall rest on his shoulders. He has all authority and will exercise all authority for his own purposes.

Do you see what end of this doxology does? It turns our eyes and our minds away from ourselves.

“God’s glory, not ours; God’s status, not ours; God’s control, not ours; God’s power, not ours.”
Ligon Duncan

And this is the way it has always been, is today, and will always be—

before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

Amen.

But not to be crass, but so what?

You might say—God sounds powerful, that future day sounds wonderful but these days, the days I'm in right now are insufferably difficult. What about these days? What about now?

What about now?

This doxology points us NOT just to that distant day—but to today. What is God up to today in your life?

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

He is watching over you, keeping you from falling away. We end where we began. There are many different threats to our souls.

But our God is greater than our threats.

What threats are you aware of?

- Past Sin: your sin is serious, but does not define you. Look away from your past failures and

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Current Failure: maybe you have made a mess of things, and pushed people away. Look away from current failures and

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Disappointment

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Aimlessness

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Hopelessness

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Weak

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Tired

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

- Disappointed

to him who is able to keep you from stumbling...

