

PP Jude: Becoming a Contender - Part 4

Part 15-Jude 24-25

2/8-9, 2014

Illus *Parade* magazine featured a story on self-made millionaire Eugene Land, who greatly changed the lives of a sixth-grade class in East Harlem. Land had been asked to speak to a class of 59 sixth-graders. What could he say to inspire these students, most of whom would drop out of school? He wondered how he could get these predominantly black and Puerto Rican children even to look at him. Scrapping his notes, he spoke to them from his heart. "*Stay in school,*" he admonished, "*and I'll help pay the college tuition for every one of you.*" At that moment the lives of these students changed. For the first time they had hope. Said one student, "*I had something to look forward to, something waiting for me. It was a golden feeling.*" Amazingly, nearly 90 percent of that class went on to graduate from high school.

We've been closing out the book of Jude learning how to contend for the faith

PP Jude instructed us to **Look back and Remember** that false teaching will relentlessly attack

PP So **Look in and Remain** in the faith that we are fighting for

By building ourselves up in that faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in God's love, and waiting and hoping for the mercy that will surely come from Jesus Christ

PP But a good defense must generate offense, so **Look out and Rescue**, showing compassion to those who doubt, urgently reaching out to those who drift and showing cautious pursuit of those who depart

PP Today, we are going to see that Jude's final instruction is to **Look up and 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, 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 1:24-25** (memory verses!!)

It turns out that Jude could not resist returning to his original intent for this letter after all: *'our common salvation'* 1:3

PP A benediction is a blessing from God onto His people: *"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace."* **Numbers 6:24-26**

But in a doxology, the writer or speaker exalts or blesses God

PP Psalm 103 is a good example: *"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits,"*

Psalm 103:1-2

Doxologies, praise utterings, or words of praise, remind us that all, not some or most, but every bit of credit and glory and majesty and awe belong to God

None of us can claim even a portion of it!

Jude's heart erupts in worship, as he closes with pure praise and adoration of God

PP 1-The Preserving Power of God

'Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling'

PP The fearless reformer Martin Luther once wrote, *"it is a great comfort to us to hear that great saints, who have the Spirit of God, also struggle. Those who say that saints do not sin would deprive us of this comfort. Samson, David, and many other celebrated men full of the Holy Spirit fell into grievous sins. Job and Jeremiah cursed the day of their birth; Elijah and Jonah were weary of life and desired death. No one has ever fallen so grievously that he may not rise again. Conversely, no one stands so firmly that he may not fall. If Peter and Paul and Barnabas fell, I too may fall. If they rose again, I too may rise again."*

God's contenders may fall, but they will not stay down, they will endure until God raises their hand in victory

God **'is able to keep you from stumbling'**

Grab hold of the promise that Jude offers to these hope-struggling believers who are in this battle. Jude wasn't saying that Jesus *might* keep us from stumbling, or that he *potentially could* keep us from stumbling, rather that God *will* keep us from stumbling.

Look with me for a moment at the word **'keep'** in verse 21, where we are to keep ourselves in the love of God.

There the word means to *watch* that we stay obedient to God's commands abiding in His love.

PP Here, **'Keep'** is a military word to guard, protect or care for.

We watch that we stay close to God in obedience, but God will stand guard over His people, protecting and staying vigilant.

Christian, do you fully understand Who it is that is guarding us?

PP *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."* **John 10:27-30**

PP And if that wasn't incredible enough, Paul writes, *"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."* **Ephesians 1:13-14**

The Holy Spirit seals us as a guarantee of our inheritance, Jesus and our heavenly Father keep us in their unbreakable grip!

The entire Godhead keeps us for eternal life, the very power of God guarding our salvation!

God cannot make a promise and renege on it, and the human will is not more powerful than God.

PP God is **'able'**, a word that gives us our word *dynamite*.

PP God has unconquerable power to keep us **'from stumbling'** or surefooted as a horse.

PP Something Jesus assured us of: *"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day."* **John 6:39**

PP But how do we balance this promise with what **James** tells us, *"For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body."* **James 3:2**

PP Or with Peter's promise, *"Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall."* **2 Peter 1:10**

How can we then believe in Jude's assurance that God is able to keep us from stumbling?

Take the word ‘stumbling’ and let the connector word ‘and’ show us its meaning, what the NLT captures best... ‘**God, Who is able to keep you from falling away**’

Jude’s promise is not that God will keep true believers from ever sinning, it is that God will guard true believers from committing apostasy and abandoning the faith once for all. He will never let us fall *out of our salvation*, for God is able **“to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy”**

God is working to preserve our faith so that we will one day stand in His presence **‘blameless’**

PP That word means without spot or blemish as a lamb fit for sacrifice

On that day will you face the record of your sins, Christian??

Will you see the wrathful, disapproving face of God and hear His righteous gavel pound?

The answer is **‘No’**, you will stand there innocent and righteous because of Christ

PP **“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Rom. 8:1**

In this life we fall into moral lapses, but the keeping grace of God will not let us fall out of faith. This is the good news called the Gospel; that Jesus died to take away the sins of those who place their faith in Him, and we stand forgiven and free and welcome before God!

No condemnation, no guilt, no shame, and all praise and all glory, every bit of it, goes to God!

Did you catch the way Jude phrased this... **“present you blameless before the presence of his glory”**

PP He will **‘present’** us meaning He will enable us to be able to stand before Him spotless, righteous

This is all a work of God through and through!

And Christian, when we stand before Him, instead of fear, we will have **‘great joy’**

Jesus will pull you into His arms, He will wipe your tear-stained face clean and radiant, and He will say to you, ‘Welcome to your eternal home that I have built for you!’

Friends, in that instant, we will forget how great our earthly struggles were in comparison to what lies before us

Our hearts will soar in joy like never before, and they will for all eternity without end!

What motivation this is to serve him now with every scrap of energy we possess

The great work of God’s redemption, taking sinners like you and I and saving us, preserving us, glorifying us, is the greatest power of God in display

And Jude’s heart is erupting in wonder and joy at contemplating our great salvation, and he cannot help but ascribe glory to God in his great doxology

“to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority...” Jude 1:25

PP 2-The Pre-eminent Person of God

God saves His people through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus His Son

He is the only God, denying the gnostic belief that there are a series of gods, and their belief that each enlightened person is a god

And He is deserving of all titles of excellence, and Jude gives God 4 of them

PP i. He is the God of all **‘glory’**

I really love this word, but I cannot seem to comprehend the full meaning of it

It appears to have endless depths in it, and so every time I come to the word, it seems my shovel of studying hits a new layer, deeper down
 Glory, as one person defined it, refers to the public reputation or fame of someone
 When we give God glory, we give Him credit for His works that are deserving of public praise
 God, You are magnificent, You are amazing, You have saved me, You are keeping me, You will one day make me stand before you sin-free, having endured in my faith until my
 You deserve all recognition, all applause goes to You, the spotlight is only on You
 I deserved none of what You have given me, and I deserve no recognition or praise!
 That is glorifying God, honoring Him, directing all praise to Him, and it serves as the foundation for the descriptions that Jude pens in his doxology of praise

PP ii. He is the God of all *‘majesty’* which declares God’s greatness, as He is the most magnificent Person in the Universe

He is not simply our King, He is the King of kings, and Lord of Lords
 People have referred to the African Lion as majestic, the king of the beasts
 Majesty is God’s *forever-above-us* quality
 We will never be His equal, He will always dwarf us in transcendent power and beauty

PP iii. He is the God of all *‘dominion’*

God is sovereign and has complete control over all things, and able to bring all things under conformity to His will
 There is no corner of the universe or person or power outside of His sovereign will and power

PP iv. He is the God of all *‘authority’* which means He has the right to use His power as He sees fit

He has that right because all things are made by His hand, for His glory and purposes
 He is the owner, the Master, the Creator of all there is and every part of creation owes Him their allegiance

PP This was an anchor for Job, who, in the suffering he endured said, *“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:21*

Try and sense the heart of Jude which is captured up in the highest, and most rapturous of praise
 How do you end a letter when your praise could go on forever?
 Jude does just that by writing about the...

PP 3-The Perpetual Promise of God

I recall two vivid, dueling feelings I would have when I returned home for college breaks
 Annoyance that nothing back home ever changed, and at the same time, relief that it didn’t
 My life was changing so quickly at college that the unchanging nature of home provided a rest, a refuge, an eddy in the river out of the current
 Jude’s final words provide that same rest and assurance: *“...before all time and now and forever. Amen.”*

Catch what Jude just taught us...time had a beginning, and it was at creation
 But even before time began, in eternity past, as well as right now, and forever into the future,
 God has been all-glorious, all-majestic, completely sovereign, and omnipotent

God *'is the same yesterday and today and forever'*, what theologians call His immutability
 He is simply without end or beginning, His nature perfectly constant!
 This mind-blowing truth used to bring my young mind waves of dizziness when I thought on it

And Jude underscores this truth with his final word, a common word for the end of a doxology,
'Amen'

PP *"For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we
 utter our Amen to God for his glory."* **2 Corinthians 1:20**

The word acts as a seal, a signature guaranteeing that what was written is not only true but it
 should find agreement in our hearts

PP When we say, 'Amen' we are saying, *'Yes before God I agree with that, I believe that to be
 true, I want that to be so'*

Recall what Jude has done in his little book

He has warned the church of a serious and threatening outbreak of false teaching

He has exhorted Christians to get out of the bleachers, off the sidelines and into the arena to
 contend for the faith

He has taught us how to contend for the faith and reminded us of the power and faithfulness of
 our God to take care of us in the midst of the battle!

Friends, be governed by love, and armed with biblical knowledge

Get in the ring and fight for the faith!

Amen?

Pray