

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

Chapter 18- God is Able to Keep us From Falling **Jude 24&25** 205 He is Able to Keep Us from Stumbling-Part 1

WOSM Tuesday 08/19/08; WA0Y Monday 03/05/07

Welcome again my beloved in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to begin to look at the last two verses of this great Epistle. So, let’s read verses 24 and 25 together:

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless 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.

Now I want to break verse 24 down into several parts and deal with each part one at a time. Notice here in verse 24- that Jude is saying that God is able to do two things. Jude says that God is able to:

1. Keep you from stumbling
2. Make you stand in the Presence of His Glory- blameless with great Joy

Now beginning today, I want to go over the first part of verse 24 and deal with what Jude is saying here. Jude says that God is able to keep us from falling. And he dedicates this Epistle to that keeping God. He says, “**Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling.**” So, we can see that Jude was dedicating this entire Epistle to our wonderful God who Sovereignly keeps those who belong to Him.

Isn’t it wonderful to know that God will keep us, dear friends? Isn’t it a very comforting thought that Jude brings to us here?

Jude says that God is well able to keep us by His mighty Power from stumbling and the *reason* that Jude put that in this Book is because

this Book is dealing exclusively with heresy and false teaching. So, Jude is reminding the faithful that even though they may do battle with heretics; even though they may have to confront people who are deceived; that in all this struggle- our great God is able to keep you and me from stumbling and to stay on course with God!

Now of course this is the great Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints or the issue of God Sovereignly overriding our human tendency to wander into sin and to keep us saved.

Now those of you who know me know that for over 30 years, I fought against this Doctrine. And like Paul- I did so out of ignorance. But even as I fought against this Doctrine- I was never trying to fight against God. I love the Lord- but nevertheless- I fought against what the Bible clearly teaches about this issue, and I am here on the radio to repent and to say publicly that I was wrong. I have repented to as many people as I know and have stood before my own Church and begged them to forgive me- and today I am on the radio with thousands of people listening to ask anyone that has ever heard me preach on this subject to hear me now- I was wrong about the Doctrine of Perseverance. Salvation is eternal and God will absolutely and wondrously and gloriously keep those whom He has saved!

Now one of the biggest reasons that I fought against this issue for so long is that the Biblical Doctrine of Perseverance was never presented to me correctly and I viewed it as just another excuse that allowed people to justify their desire to sin. In fact, the entire issue of Justification was not presented to me correctly and I was wrong about a whole host of issues from Salvation being a Sovereign work of God alone to Election to Atonement to Regeneration to Perseverance.

Brothers and sisters, since the day I was saved back in 1971- my policy has been what Jesus told the Church in **The Revelation 3:19**:

... be zealous and repent.

I study God Word diligently to learn the Truth- and then I speak that Truth with boldness and assurance that God's Word is right if everybody likes it and it still right if nobody likes it. And my biggest concern when I preach is that I am speaking exactly what the Bible says- not whether what I am saying is popular or not. But I am required by Scripture to get the Gospel right- so I diligently pray and

seek God's Face for strength and understanding. I consult with other men who are much wiser and older than I am. I also consult with the fathers of the Church from ages past through their writings and books and then I form my position on an issue based upon my honest understanding of what the Scripture says. But then I verify what I am doing.

For example, if I am the only person in the 2,000 year history of the Church who comes to a certain conclusion about a verse or a passage of Scripture- then I am probably wrong. So, I go back and repeat the process over again- until I can come to a Biblical conclusion. And by going through this process- I have seen where I have been wrong about some things. And this is how I saw that I was wrong about The Doctrine of Perseverance. So that is why I am repenting today and now I can teach what the Bible says about God keeping us.

By using this same process, I also see that I am right about things. You see, I don't want to be wrong about *anything* that I say. I am not *trying* to be wrong about one single thing that I say. But I am human, and I make mistakes- so when I realize that I have said something that is not pleasing to the Lord or not in accord with Scripture- I will quickly repent and step on top of that mistake and go again.

Now having said that- I must also say that many of the things that I have said- even in this study on Jude- are highly controversial. I can't help that. I am not trying to be controversial at all. I personally hate it when people get hurt or angry with me. I lose sleep; and I weep over controversy. But my friends- we have to understand that the Gospel is the single most offensive Book on earth and the Gospel is- by definition- insulting to many people and Jesus Himself is still- after 2,000 years- the single most controversial figure in human history. And we also have to understand that not all who say, "*Lord, Lord*" will enter in. We also have to understand that we are living in a day when Sound Doctrine is minimized or outright ignored, and we are also living in a time when most people who go to Church don't have a clue about what they believe or why they believe it.

Some people criticize my tactics, and they don't like it when I say some of the things I say. But you have to understand, beloved, I didn't create the problem that the Church is faced with today. I don't want anybody to be spiritually weak- I want people to be strong in the Lord

and in the Power of His Might. I don't want anyone to be ignorant about what God's Word says- I want them filled with all the knowledge of God. And I especially don't want anyone to go to hell- I want all men to come to repentance and to be saved. But I also know that there are no shortcuts to getting strong and there is no easier way to being filled. You can't wing this- you go God's way- or you don't go at all.

And from where I stand- we all- me included- have to get to a place where the things of God are so valuable; so important; so beautiful; so glorious to us that we are willing to cast aside anything that would hinder us. And until we do- we will remain weak and frail and unable.

Jesus said that we have to love God with all our hearts and with all our souls and with all our minds and with all our strength and we have to love God so much and with such an intensity that every other love that we know on this earth – the love of wife or of parents or children or possessions will look like hate in comparison. Some would call that to be radical. I don't call it being radical at all- I call it being faithful. I really believe that Jesus meant what He said. Do you?

Fervent Effectual Prayer Meetings; Intense, Deep, Serious, Line Upon Line and Precept Upon Precept Bible Studies and Times of Godly Fellowship these are the things that every human on earth needs to have in order to get strong in the Lord. These are not my words- these are the words of every man of God since the beginning of time.

Some have said that me telling people to return to the Bible is unrealistic- that most people simply are not going to read and study their Bibles very often- and that is just the way it is. But the fact that people do not read and study their Bibles is *precisely* why people don't know the Truth and you can spin this any way you want to- but until God's people are willing to humble themselves and serve God on *His* terms rather than on our own terms- we will continue to see a weak and effeminate Church become more and more irrelevant to American society.

I don't know how to get people to read and study the Bible any better than to get on the radio five days a week and plead with you with fear and trembling to read and study your Bibles.

I know that this may sound draconian to many of you- but I guess that all depends on how important you think that Words that came from God's Own Mouth really are.

Really and truly- you ought to read what people have said over the last 1900 years about the vital importance of reading and studying the Bible every single day. Forget about what I say about reading and studying the Bible daily- I'm nobody- but what did Augustine say about it over 1700 years ago as he watched the Roman Empire collapse? What did Martin Luther and John Calvin and John Knox and Jonathan Edwards say about it? What did Charles Spurgeon, the prince of preachers say about the need of God's people to hunger for God through the pages of Scripture? What did the Puritans say about daily Bible Study? The Pilgrims who came over here and dedicated this nation to the Glory of God- what did they say about this? What did George Washington and John Adams and James Madison and Patrick Henry say about their great fellowship with Christ through the Bible? I mean George Washington prayed two hours every morning after he read the Scriptures. Of course, George Washington wasn't as busy as we are today. He had plenty of time to read the Bible. All he was doing was waging war against the mightiest army on earth at that time with a rag tag bunch of patriots and wrote most of his prayers down on paper. Maybe that's why God used him so greatly- you reckon? And maybe God would use us today if we would just follow in his footsteps.

What did the people who wrote all the songs that we sing in Church every Sunday say about reading and studying the Bible? What did Fanny Crosby and Johan Sebastian Bach and Isaac Watts and John Newton say about the great need of every believer to know and to live what the Bible teaches?

When the song, *Be Thou My Vision* was written in the 700's, what do you think the man who wrote that song thought that the relationship to Bible Study and Prayer was to Jesus actually being our vision?

500 years ago, when Martin Luther wrote *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*- he staked not only his song- but his life on the premise that it was unconscionable for any Blood bought saint to be ignorant of the Word, so he risked his life and was excommunicated from the Roman Church for translating the Holy Scriptures into the native tongue of the German people so that the "average Joe" out in the fields of Germany could read and study the glorious Word of God.

What do you think John Wycliffe and John Hus would say about the current lack of desire on the part of Gods' people to bury their faces in Gods' Book? These men were tortured and killed for translating the Bible into the English language precisely so that we could read and study it. The Apostle Paul said that he was not ashamed of the Gospel. Are you ashamed?

And the truth of the matter is that the world is filled with people who don't know the Bible and because they don't know any better- they are trying real hard to earn their way into Heaven and that is precisely why we who are saved need to read and study the Bible so that we may minister to these souls the glorious Truth of God.

Our God is telling the whole world through the Gospel- just like Jesus told Nicodemus- that their effort to save themselves and all the hard work that they are going through to develop their own personal righteousness is nothing but a waste of time. That is the Gospel, beloved, and it highly offensive to many people.

God is telling every human on earth who is trying to earn his own Salvation through doing good deeds or through keeping Church Sacraments or through obeying moral laws that their actions are not noble or even pleasing at all, but they are in fact an insult to the Cross of Jesus Christ. That is the Gospel, and it is patently offensive.

But that kind of offense is good, and that kind of insult is godly because until they can understand that no man can work his way into heaven- they will never look for a Savior to wash their sins away.

So, while I am quick to repent when I find that I am Scripturally wrong- I will not repent just because someone got offended at something that I said because they may well have been offended at the Truth- and I must never repent for speaking the Truth- no matter who gets offended.

We live in such a laid back and tolerant society today that anyone who seeks Biblical holiness and Biblical Christianity will appear to many to be harsh; cruel; mean spirited; unloving; and even unchristian- but Biblical holiness is not cruel- it is right and the fact that anyone who says that they are saved getting offended at what the Bible clearly teaches just shows you how far we have all fallen. And that is why we need to know what God said and that is why we all need to earnestly contend for the Faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. Well, I have 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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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.