

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude** Part 18- **Jude 24&25** 208 He is Able to Keep us from Stumbling- Part 4

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Welcome again my beloved in Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse “journey” through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to continue to look at what Jude taught about “God is Able to Keep Us from Stumbling” So, let’s read **Jude** verses 24 and 25 again 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 on our last broadcast, I was trying to show just how what Jude says here in verse 24 is true even though we are sinners. Verse 24 says:

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,

This precious Promise that God gives us here through the pen of Jude is designed to encourage and strengthen all of those who are genuinely saved and who are engaged in serious battles with heretics and false prophets. Jude is comforting the believer by saying that even though we are dealing with serious threats to the Christian Faith by evil and wicked men who are ordained for condemnation- we ourselves are safe and will be kept by God and will be presented faultless before His Throne.

Now that is absolutely good news! Praise God- God is able to keep us from falling and will present us faultless before the Throne of God! But precisely how does this work? How does this work seeing that we

all are still sinners even after we are saved? You see, beloved, we have a very real problem with this being true- because we are still sinners. We sin every day- even though we are saved. Being saved didn't change the fact that we still sin. But if we sin- we are stained and if we are stained- how does God present us before His Throne faultless? This is a very important question that we must understand properly and Biblically.

You see, after we are saved- because of our new divine nature- we don't want to sin anymore, and we don't even mean to sin- but because our fleshly bodies were not saved- we still sin every single day of our lives. John said this in **1John 1:8**:

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

So, we can see that the Bible says that we sin- even after we are saved. So I repeat my question. How does God present us faultless if we still sin? How is it possible for God to keep us from falling if we sin every day? Doesn't the fact that we sinned mean that we have already fallen? How does God present us faultless before the throne when we still sin?

This question goes to the heart of the Protestant Reformation. The issue of a person being both righteous and sinful at the same time is the greatest issue that ignited the Protestant Reformation over 500 years ago.

The issue of how a Man becomes Righteous before God was the "material" cause of the Reformation and was expressed by the Latin phrase- Sole Fide- which means- "By Faith alone". And this one single issue brought forth the greatest revival of Biblical truth and holiness the world has ever seen. So, let's examine Sole Fide and how it ties into what Jude was saying here in verse 24.

The phrase, "By Faith Alone" means that the vehicle that brings the Righteousness of Christ to us is faith- not works- and it is not faith plus anything else- it is faith alone- absent any human works that allows human beings to become Righteous before God and be able to enter into Heaven.

Now if that is true- if we are made Righteous by faith alone- then Salvation becomes a Sovereign Work of God alone and not a cooperative

effort between God and Man. So, we need to dissect this very carefully. Every religion on earth agrees that we have to be righteous to go to Heaven. Pagans believe that; Mormons believe that; Buddhists believe that; Muslims believe that; Jews believe it; Catholics believe it; and Protestants believe it. We do not differ in that respect.

Where we do not agree is just how we obtain that Righteousness. Biblical Christianity teaches that we sinners are made Righteous instantly at the moment we are washed in Jesus' Blood through the vehicle of faith alone. Every other religion and philosophy on earth believes that in some form or fashion that man either has to *earn* righteousness himself outright or that man cooperates in some way with God to obtain Righteousness.

Now all this is very nice and interesting- but what does any of this have to do with the average Joe on the street in our day? Here's how. What you believe about how you obtain righteousness will dramatically impact everything else that you believe about Salvation including whether or not God can present you faultless before His Throne as Jude says.

Let's investigate. First of all, we have to understand that God is holy, and we are not. We are sinners and God is perfectly and continuously holy and righteous. Nothing and no one is more holy and more Righteous than God- and so anyone who is going to spend eternity with this holy and righteous God must be just as holy and as Righteous as God Himself is.

Brothers and sisters- Sin cannot and will not dwell with God. God cannot look at sin. God cannot bear sin. God cannot accept sin. God does not whitewash sin. God cannot allow one single sin into heaven. So, the only way that anyone can go to Heaven is that he has to become as holy and as righteous as God is. Jesus put it like this in **Matthew 5:48** when He said:

Therefore, you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

The expression of God's requirement for Heaven is best illustrated in what we call The Ten Commandments listed in **Exodus 20: 1-17**. In these verses, we can see God Own personal Character and nature illustrated in Commands. In order to be able to go to be Righteous in God's Eyes and go to Heaven- a person has to keep each one these

commandments perfectly every minute of every day for as long as he lives in thought, word, and deed- which of course is not hard but is impossible for human beings to do. But it gets worse. Let's look at **James 2:10:**

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all.

Now this verse tells us that if you break one commandment even one time in your entire life- and if you break it in thought, word, or deed- you are guilty of breaking all the commandments- because breaking any one commandment even once makes you a transgressor of the Law and when you become a transgressor of the Law- you are not righteous in God's Eyes and thus- you cannot go to Heaven.

For example- if you kept nine of the Ten Commandments perfectly, which nobody does- and broke only one- what would breaking that one single Commandments make you? Well, you would be *almost* righteous- but not quite; you would be *almost* perfect- but not quite; and you would be *almost* holy- but not quite.

But what does it mean if you are *almost* righteous, perfect and holy- but not quite? Well, almost is not good enough. Because in God's Eyes- we are either perfect, righteous, and holy or we're not. Close doesn't matter and this is not horseshoes- where "leaners" count. Being almost perfect, holy, and righteous- but not quite only means that you are unholy; unrighteous; and not perfect, doesn't it? And being unholy, unrighteous, and not perfect only means that you are a transgressor of the Law and a sinner.

So, if Salvation was dependant on human beings becoming perfectly sinless- then nobody would be saved.

So, do you see what God is doing here? By making the requirement for Heaven impossible for people to obtain through their own ability and power- they will then seek after a Savior to do this for them. Because human nature is so corrupt- we will try anything; go to any length; start or stop anything to try to earn our own Righteousness. So, God set the bar so high- no one could ever reach it- except One Man- Jesus Christ.

And God further complicated this by saying that no one has the ability or the power to earn this level of Righteousness by and through

his own power- not even wealthy people. Look at **Matthew 19:23-26**:

23 And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 "Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

25 When the disciples heard *this*, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"

26 And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Now this was the last straw! During this time in Palestine, wealthy people were considered to be in good favor with God by virtue of their riches. So, when Jesus told his disciples that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it was for a rich man to go to heaven- they blurted out- **"Then who can be saved!"** This is when Jesus made one of the most profound statements in all of the Bible. Jesus saw their utter frustration over how impossible it is for a man to earn his own salvation and replied, **"With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."**

With this statement Jesus was taking away the last vestige of human achievement from Salvation that we had left- leaving lost man utterly helpless to save himself by developing his own personal Righteousness. Jesus didn't say that it was *hard* for a man to save himself; Jesus didn't say it was *difficult* for a man to raise his own personal righteousness to a level that would qualify him for heaven- No, Jesus said it was *impossible* for a man to do so.

But then He also quickly said that what was impossible for man- is possible with God.

Now why did Jesus do this? Doesn't God want more people to come to Him? Why would God make it harder for man to come if He wanted more to be saved? Why set the bar so high that no one can reach it?

The answer to this is one of the greatest answers in all the world. God did what He did in Salvation so that He alone would receive all glory. Man cannot go to heaven on his own power; man cannot raise his own personal righteousness high enough to earn heaven- so God wrapped Himself in human flesh and came down and was born of a

virgin and Jesus Christ lived a natural life and was tempted just like we are in all points of life and yet unlike all of us- never once did Jesus sin. You see, Jesus perfectly obeyed all of God's Commandments continuously and so by living a sinless life here on this earth as a man- Jesus Christ literally earned his Own personal Righteousness.

It is that Righteousness- the sinless, spotless Righteousness of Jesus Christ that God imputes to sinful man at the very moment that the Blood of Jesus washes away our sins and at that very instant- the greatest miracle in the history of the world takes place and a lost sinner is declared righteous by a holy God and by virtue of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ being draped over him- that lost vile sinner is made fit for heaven!

So, because that Righteousness is not our personal righteousness; because the Righteousness that allows us to go to heaven is the sinless and perfect Righteousness of the Lamb of God- it is solid, and it is permanent; and it cannot fade away and it cannot be taken away and it cannot be destroyed, and it can never ever be tarnished or diminished.

And this is why Jude can say in verse 24 with all confidence that God is able to present us before the Throne of God faultless. And this is why Jude can say that God is able to keep us from falling.

Now here's the catch. This is only true if it is Christ's sinless spotless Righteousness that is imputed to us by faith alone. If we are working in any way to earn our own righteousness; or if we are cooperating with God in any way to develop our own personal righteousness by trying to keep commandments or by participating in Church Sacraments or by speaking in tongues or by being baptized or by any human work whatsoever- then that human righteousness that we are developing like that will not be sufficient to keep us from falling and that human righteousness will not be sufficient to present us faultless before the Throne of God.

So, take heed, beloved and make sure that the Righteousness that you are trusting in is not yours but Christ's because if it is yours – it will fail you but if it is Christ's it will save you to the uttermost.

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.