

# Jude - Glorifying God

by Mariano Di Gangi

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*We must put our confidence in God and do our part to stay clear of heresy and stand for the faith in order to navigate the dangers of the world.*

**Duration:** 24:24

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Philippians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, 2 Timothy 4:3, 1 Peter 5:8, Jude 1:3, Jude 1:24-25

**Topics:** "Glorifying God"

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## Description

The sermon transcript discusses the dangers of the world we live in, highlighting events such as the bombings in Lebanon and Sri Lanka, and the actions of the IRA. Despite the challenges, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a Christ-like life and having faith in God's ability to keep us from falling. The sermon also emphasizes the need to reflect Jesus in every aspect of our lives, including love for the truth, mercy, and willingness to suffer. The uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation is also discussed, with the speaker addressing the scandal of those who profess the Gospel but live contrary to its teachings.

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## Transcript

During these summertime Sunday mornings, we have been studying through the letter of Jude, the servant and brother of Jesus. It's essentially an epistle of warning, warning Christians to stay on course, because there are many pulls in various directions, moral deviation, doctrinal heresy. Of these we are to be aware.

From these we are to stay clear. We are to stay on course. That is the burden of the epistle, and now it winds up with a magnificent doxology.

Jude, verses 24 and 25. To him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy, to the only God our Savior, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore. Despite the fact that things have gone so well with our summer camping program, and the leaders have made it through safely and unscarred, and despite the magnificent things that have been happening down at the Sky Dome in the past two weeks, let me tell you that we live in a very dangerous world.

All you've got to do is scan the newspapers, or flick open the TV set at a time when we're not put to sleep by silly soap operas, and we are hit with the realism of contemporary events. We begin to understand that

our world is indeed a dangerous place in which to live. Lebanon, the battering of Beirut, militancy and bombings in Sri Lanka, the IRA proceeding with its nefarious, notorious work, dogging British soldiers even on the European continent, mass arrests of leaders in the protest movement for a greater measure of civil liberty in South Africa, the reign of terror by drug lords in Colombia, here at home the furor over the contaminating effects of PCBs, the spread of narcotic addiction and the violence that is bred by the drug business, decisions by judges who say that the Charter of Rights permits full freedom of expression even to hardcore pornography, which will only lead to further abuse of women and children and their exploitation for the profit of a few.

Ours is indeed a dangerous world in which to live. Christian standards are being constantly challenged and ridiculed. Whether you hold to the doctrine of Scripture, which is mainstream historic Christianity summed up in the Apostles' Creed, or you hold to the simplicity and the strength of biblical morality as given in the Ten Commandments that have been part of our Judeo-Christian tradition for centuries, you run the risk of being sniped at from one side and the other, of being blown about by every wind of doctrine, of being swept away by every immoral fad that strikes the landscape.

Ours is indeed a very dangerous world in which to live. Christian standards are doubted, denied, mocked, ridiculed, outraged. It's risky.

We're vulnerable. How can we cope with that kind of situation? Well, you might think of withdrawal, but we're not given the luxury of that option. We are in this present evil world.

God has not seen fit yet to call us home. We do not have the option of withdrawal. The only option that is given to the Christian is to withstand.

How can we do this? Jude gives us the secret. Put your confidence in God. He will enable you to stand and withstand.

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy. To the only God our Savior, be glory, majesty, power, and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before all ages now and evermore. Amen.

Faced with the danger of doctrinal deviation, faced with the danger of moral lapse, you and I must stand our ground and put our total confidence in him who is able to keep us from falling either to the left or to the right. And in this text, Jude speaks of the power of God and concludes with the praise of God. He speaks of the power of God.

God who is able to keep you from falling, that's negative, and positively God who is able to present you before his glorious presence without fault but with great joy. He tells us to put our confidence in the power of God. Negatively, he can keep us from falling.

Positively, he can uphold us and present us faultless at the last conformed to the image of Christ. Negatively, he can keep you from stumbling and the word that is used here by Jude was used by the Greeks of the first century A.D. to describe the action of a horse that faced with obstacles stumbled. What he is saying is God will keep you from stumbling.

Despite all the impediments that you find, despite the fact that you're going to go through a moral and doctrinal minefield in this world, God will keep you from stumbling. He will make you sure-footed. He'll make you able to stay the course.

He will keep you from doctrinal lapse. He will keep you from moral falls. He is able to keep you from falling.

Well then, immediately we ask ourselves a question. Is this really true? Don't we know people who once professed the solid doctrine of the Bible who today have departed from it? Many of us know people who once preached the gospel and today teach what is the very opposite of the gospel. Did God keep them from falling into doctrinal error? Obviously not.

We have known people who have made a high profession of wanting to follow Jesus and then have been soiled, contaminated, and defiled by the moral refuse of this present evil age. We have seen people who profess Christianity and have used the media to spread their message who have not only departed from sound doctrine but become morally defiled and brought discredit upon the gospel and disgust into the nostrils of the world and dishonor to almighty God. Even preachers go to barbers and this week as I sat in the barber's chair and he worked his skills to do the best with a dwindling crop, he asked me a question and immediately all the other barbers stopped what they were doing and lunged in.

Did you see that televangelist on TV? Did you see him cringing in a catatonic fit? Did you see him putting on that big act? How can a man who claims to follow Jesus lead that kind of life and swindle people out of millions of dollars and have a flamboyant lifestyle that is opulent to the borders of vulgarity? They didn't say it that way but that's exactly what they meant and you could hear the hostility in their voices. What a scandal when those who profess the gospel deny it by the lack of quality in their lifestyle. Where was God? Why didn't he keep them from falling into doctrinal and moral error and heresy? After all, don't we read in Philippians 1-6 that he who began a good work in your heart will perfect it to the day of Jesus Christ? What happened to the faithfulness of God? What happened to him who is supposedly able to keep you from falling? When we only take part of the truth in the Bible and we neglect the other parts of the Bible, we end up with a distortion.

As one of my old professors used to say, if you take a text out of its context you make it a pretext for the silliest notion that ever entered the finite depraved mind of mortal man. The Bible not only tells us that God is able to keep us from falling, the Bible also tells us that we must do our part to stay clear of heresy and to stand for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. The Bible not only says that he is able to keep us from falling, it also tells us to shun the very appearance of evil and to have nothing to do with something that smacks of being questionable morally.

There's an old hymn, it's rarely sung these days, but it sums up both sides of this delicate matter. On the one hand, look to him who is able to keep you from falling, ask the Savior to help you, comfort, strengthen, and keep you. He is willing to aid you, he will carry you through.

But what is the verse with which that chorus goes? Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin. Each victory will help you some other to win. Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue.

Look ever to Jesus, then he'll carry you through. Do your part if you expect him to do his. Shun evil companions, bad language disdain, God's name hold in reverence nor take it in vain.

Be thoughtful and earnest, kind-hearted and true, then look ever to Jesus and he'll carry you through. To him that o'er cometh, to him that o'er cometh, God giveth a crown. Through faith we shall conquer, though often cast down.

He who is the Savior, our strength will renew. Look ever to Jesus, he'll carry you through. Sixteen hundred years ago, a theologian from North Africa named Augustine put it beautifully and powerfully for all time.

He said, without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not. Unto him who is able to keep you from falling, true, but we must contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints and steer clear of the moral contagion that pollutes the world in which we live.

In other words, he will preserve us, but we must persevere. That's the negative side of it, he will keep you from stumbling. Positively, he will present you faultless before the presence of his glory with great joy.

Here and now, you and I are imperfect. We may not always admit it, we get irritated when people point out that fact to us, but the truth is that we are imperfect. We are still under construction.

We don't yet correspond in every detail to the blueprint of him who is the maker and builder of our renewed character. The outline may be there, but the details certainly haven't been pulled in. We profess faith in Christ, but are we Christ-like in every respect? I can only answer for myself, as you must for yourself.

But the time will come when the God who is able to keep us from falling will present us faultless in his glorious presence with great joy. Finally, to be like Jesus in his love of the truth. Finally, to be like Jesus in the richness of his mercy.

Finally, to be like Jesus with that love that is willing to suffer long to bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endure all things. Finally, to reflect my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ down to the smallest detail. That's my destiny, to be with him and to be like him.

And so it is the destiny of everyone who professes to be a Christian, that someday he who is able to keep us from falling will present us without fault, without blemish, and without spot, in total conformity to the likeness of his beloved Son Jesus Christ. And that's a goal for which life is worth living. A goal which demands striving and sacrifice, but is everlastingly worth it.

The power of God. Then he concludes with a note on the praise of God. Probably the greatest composer who ever lived, and who was a mighty organist, and a super excellent choir master, and improviser, was Johann Sebastian Bach.

He was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart. And time after time when he would complete the outpouring of his genius, he would ascribe everything to the praise of God. And over and over again the works of that great man were signed with these words, to the glory of God alone.

How he must have rejoiced in this doxology. Unto him who is able to keep you from falling, unto him who is able to present you before his glorious presence without fault, and thus with great joy, to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority. This is our God.

The only God. All other gods are the figments of men's imaginations. All other gods are idols fashioned by their own hands and their own likeness.

This God, the true God, is the one who makes and remakes us in his likeness. He is the creator and redeemer, the only God. He is the saving God.

The God who banishes the darkness of our ignorance and gives us truth. The God who liberates us from the penalty and power of sin and sets us free to be men and women in his likeness. The God who offers us life that is endless and the resurrection of the body.

This is our God. He is our Savior, and he is our Savior through Jesus Christ. Think of an hourglass.

You've got the sand up here, the narrow neck in the hourglass, and then widening out to receive what comes from above. God the Father is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He bestows salvation upon us down from above, but before it gets to you and me who are on the earth beneath, it's got to go through that narrow neck in the hourglass, the only mediator, Jesus Christ.

Our salvation is from God through him and him alone. One of the greatest battles in theology and missiology that's going to be fought out in the last decade of this century has to do with the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only one through whom we can be saved. For there's a growing tendency in an age of increasing pluralism to make him just one mediator out of many.

God forbid. There is no other name given among men under heaven whereby we must be saved. There is but one mediator between God and men, and his name is Jesus Christ.

God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. The only God we know, said Martin Luther, is the God who has revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ. Our salvation comes down from above through him to us.

No wonder Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me. And to this God we ascribe glory, majesty, power, and authority.

Glory, brilliance, radiance, excellence, the moral excellence of the character of God, his perfection, his glory. Majesty, royal magnificence belongs to him. Dominion, that spiritual is the perfect comment on this.

He's got the whole world in his hands. And authority. He alone has the right to legislate.

He alone has the right to judge. Judges may strike down legislation. Parliaments may prove themselves spineless to pass legislation on crucial moral issues in our day.

They may take it to themselves with unmitigated gall to repeal those things which have to do with the sanctity of life. But authority belongs to him and ultimately to him alone. Glory, majesty, power, authority.

All this belongs to our sovereign savior God who was able to keep us from falling and to present us at the last conformed to the likeness of his son. To him be praise and glory before the world of time and space were ever made. Now in these days of turbulence, tears, trials, and temptations, and forevermore till Jesus comes again, all glory, all praise be unto him.

Let us pray. Lord, you are a great God. Help us ever to be mindful of your greatness, of your glory, of your majesty, of your power, of your authority, and to praise you not alone by the songs we sing and the words we speak, but the consistently Christian quality of the lives that we live.

We ask it through our mediator, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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