

Jude 24-25

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[0 : 00] Good morning, CFC. Thanks, Chris. Go ahead and take your copy of God's Word and open up to Jude, verse 24. Jude, verse 24. We're going to be wrapping up our study in Jude this morning. I am getting over some sickness. I'm not contagious, so nobody be alarmed.

So I hope I'm able to remain standing by the end of this, that my voice will not give away. And I also just want to take a minute just to thank so many of you. I'm just very thankful to be in a church where I know that I'm loved and supported, and I've just had a lot of really great encouragement from so many of you as a young person who's growing as a preacher and trying to get this thing down.

So I'm very thankful for the opportunities I've had, and I'm sorry that you had to deal with me awkwardly saying okay whenever you were encouraging, because I'm just weird about receiving any kind of compliments. I blame it on my siblings, because I never really got many, but that's why I'm just a little awkward about these things. But I really do appreciate it, and it really has been encouraging in so many ways.

So our text today is Jude 24 through verse 25. As I said, it's the last bit of Jude. And this text is a doxology, and this one in particular is probably the most famous, or it's at least up there.

What is a doxology? Doxology is a compound word. It comes from the Greek. The first word is doxa, which means glory, and the second word is logos, which means word or saying.

[1 : 44] And so a doxology is simply a glory saying. Or you might say it is a statement of praise, worship, and adoration. So simply put, it is a statement that conveys something glorious about God.

Now I once heard a story about John Piper, a former pastor and seminary president in Minnesota. Piper was giving a speech to a bunch of incoming seminary students at his seminary.

And basically, Piper gave this whole speech about the glory of God, and how God is infinite and eternal, and therefore his glory is infinite and eternal.

And with this, he discussed how God as an academic subject, right, which we call theology, is the only academic subject that is inexhaustible.

So this simply means you will never fully know everything about God, because God is infinite, eternal, and inexhaustible, whereas we are finite.

[2 : 50] So the math does not work for somebody like us, right, creatures. Finite creatures to fully know and understand the infinite God.

And Piper then turned to his audience, and remember, his audience is a bunch of nerdy, geeky, know-it-all seminary students, right, who love theology, who love the Bible. And Piper said to that crowd of knowledgeable, studious types, he said, God will not be dissected.

He will be worshipped. So God is not a field of study like biology or chemistry, which are exhaustible. Have we exhausted those fields?

No. But anyone will tell you there is an end or a limit to those fields. Eventually, we can know everything there is to know about those studies, but not so with God.

God is one in essence, three in person, without beginning and without end. He cannot be dissected. There is no limit. And Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 10, he says, So this morning I have no points.

[4 : 20] I just want to walk through the text together so that we can understand what Jude is saying. And by doing this, my goal this morning is simple, that we would glorify God together in light of the doxology that Jude gives us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

So worshiping God is a demand that runs throughout Scripture. Psalm 150, verse 6 says pointedly, Let everyone who has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

And worship is not only the demand, but it is also the reward. So remember the psalmist we read a few weeks ago, Psalm 27, verse 4. David says, One thing have I asked of the Lord, one thing that I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and notice this language, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

That is worship language. David wants to adore God by gazing upon him and learning about him with him, with God.

So I invite you all now to read Jude 24 through 25 with me and to worship God with me. There is nothing greater, nothing higher, nothing more meaningful than what we are about to do, to reflect on the glory of God and worship him.

[5 : 48] So verse 24, Jude writes, to end his letter, 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. So Jude begins by saying now to him. And throughout the letter of Jude, he has switched his address numerous times.

He starts off by addressing the believers who are called, kept, and beloved by God the Father in verse 1 for Jesus Christ. But because of the occasion, as we've studied, of these false teachers who have wormed their way in, Jude had to switch plans and address them.

And so throughout the letter, we saw him say these, these, and these. But here, at the end of Jude's letter, he says now to him, to God.

And this doxology at first glance might seem oddly placed. We just spent weeks unpacking text after text that speak of false teachers and their damning threat to the church.

[7 : 09] We've talked about the dire situation that the church is in. Yet here, at the end of Jude's letter, he concludes not with some word on how to fight these people, nor how to contend for the faith.

That was last week. Nor does he offer any kind of further arguments to give, or anything like that, for the believers to defend themselves with. No personal greetings of any kind, as you might expect with Paul's letters.

Rather, he ends by worshiping God. Jude addresses God to worship God. So think of all the times in your life when you put worship to the side.

I have a lot of work this week. I better forget about prayer. Or I'm tired this week, so I better skip church. Or my spouse and I are getting into it again, so I can't afford to read my Bible this week. All these petty excuses, and many more like them, have dominated so much of our calendar far too many times. And you can imagine someone in Jude's church using a pretty good excuse.

[8 : 19] They might say, I'm going to have to put aside my relationship with God for now because of all these false teachers. This threat that is opposed to the people I love, my brothers and sisters of the faith.

I don't have time for all that stuff. I've got to contend with these guys. And yet, that's not what we see. We have an amazing example from Jude.

He begins this letter in verse 3 by saying he can't write about the gospel because of the occasion of the false teachers. So notice this.

This is an extremely important and dangerous occasion, so much so that Jude is unable to write about the gospel, our common salvation, as he puts it. Rather, he has to address the threat of the false teachers, these antinomian false teachers.

So wouldn't you also conclude that Jude has no time to write a doxology if the situation is so lethal, so important, and so consequential?

[9 : 22] That's where my mind goes at first. And yet, here Jude writes a long, beautiful, glory-saturated doxology to God.

So let Jude's example be a cue to us. No matter the life circumstance, we are to be a people characterized by worshiping God.

If any one of us should ever be written about in the history books, live in such a way that your biography would scream, one who worshipped God. So now Jude goes on to describe God in the doxology, and refers to him as the one who is able.

He is the one who is able. Just think for a moment about the power of this phrase, God is able. You cannot be confused about who this person is whom Jude is addressing, because there is no one

else who is able.

Able to do what? To save us and keep us from sin, which we'll see in the next two phrases. But do not miss the underlying point in this phrase. Jude singles out God as the only one who is able.

[10:36] There is no one like him. So God is the one who is able, verse 24, to keep you from stumbling.

So last week we discussed the reality of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. So yes, we are called to keep ourselves in the love of God, as Jude says in verse 21.

But as I said then, and as Jude reminds us now, ultimately it is God who keeps us from stumbling. The idea of stumbling is found throughout the Bible, especially in the Psalms, which I think influenced Jude's writing of this phrase.

Psalms 56, verse 13, the psalmist writes, For you, God, have delivered my soul from death. Yes, my feet from falling. There's the stumbling idea.

That I may walk before God in the light of life. In Psalm 66, verse 9, refers to God as the one who, quote, So the idea of stumbling, right, it usually connotes the idea of falling into sin in such a way that we apostatize.

[11:52] When someone stumbles, biblically, they are embracing sin and intentionally rejecting Christ. So here's part of the good news. God is able to keep you from stumbling.

Or you might say, Well, what about the false teachers? Aren't they a threat to us? And the Psalms have a wonderful prayer for you to use. Psalm 140, verses 4 through 5. The psalmist writes, Guard me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked.

Preserve me from violent men who have planned to trip up my feet. The arrogant have hidden a trap for me, and with cords they have spread a net. Beside the way they have set snares for me.

So the psalmist prays to God because he knows God is able. This is true of God over the devil too. 2 Thessalonians 3, 3. But the Lord is faithful.

He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. So no one will snatch us from the salvation of the Lord.

[12:59] So essentially, Jude is praising God for his ability to preserve his elect unto salvation. This is what we often call the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

This biblical doctrine teaches that those who are truly saved by God will never lose their salvation. Rather, they will persevere to the end by faith in Christ.

And again, this does not negate our responsibility to obey. As Paul so concisely describes the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility in 2 Timothy 1, 12, he writes, But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed.

And I am convinced that he, referring to God, that God is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

So likewise, we are entrusted with keeping our salvation, yet ultimately, it is God who guards us. And that is very good news.

[14:05] That news means we who are in Christ already have victory over any and all false teachers, any and all traps in this world.

So praise the Lord for his steadfast faithfulness to uphold us against any and all foes, any and all traps, any and all temptations.

And not only is God able to keep you from stumbling, but the second half of verse 24, he's able to present you before the presence of his glory with great joy.

So truly, this is an astounding statement. Jude is assuming the gospel underlying this statement. Otherwise, he would not be able to make such a statement.

And I guarantee you that Jude's audience who knew this gospel well, as we know from the earlier parts of the letter, that Jude's audience would immediately think of the gospel when they hear this phrase.

[15:03] We are not able to present ourselves before the presence of God. We are sinners. The Lord says in Exodus 33, verse 20, no man can see me and live.

This is because all of mankind has fallen in sin. We are unholy from the moment of our conception, and therefore, we cannot stand in the presence of a holy God.

Psalms 51, verse 5, David says, behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. And this is true of all of mankind.

We are totally depraved. And so we are told from very early on in the Old Testament that we need a priest to intercede for us so that we can come before God.

Numbers chapter 3, verse 10, God says to Moses, So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood. But the layman who comes near, near to the tabernacle of God, that is, for the layman who comes near, he shall be put to death.

[16:15] So no one can stand before the presence of God apart from a priest. We also need a perfect, spotless, blood sacrifice to atone for our sins.

And this also is apparent in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 17, verse 1 says, You shall not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep in which is a blemish, any defect whatsoever, for that is an abomination to the Lord your God.

In the New Testament, Hebrews 9, verse 22, echoes the need for blood atonement and says, Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.

But of course, the constant sacrifice of goats and bulls would never atone for sin. We needed a better sacrifice, a full and final sacrifice.

We needed a perfect priest and a perfect sacrifice because God's glorious justice demands it. Justice is an attribute of God and therefore it is part of His glory.

[17:22] So it is astounding that Jude is saying we are presented as blameless before the presence of His glory because we should die in the presence of His glory since we are not blameless in and of ourselves.

So how can that be? Who is our priest and who or what is our sacrifice? How could we possibly stand in the presence of God?

And as Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 19, verse 26, He said of salvation with man, this is impossible. There is no one worthy to be a priest on our behalf who is among us nor any sacrifice that we can make that will save our souls, that will atone for our sin.

But Jesus goes on in Matthew 19, verse 26, and says, but with God all things are possible. Or as Jude puts so simply, to Him who is able.

God Himself is able to present us before Himself through the God-man, Jesus Christ. That is in the next phrase of Jude's doxology.

[18:32] He says in verse 25, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So there it is. God is our Savior. Somehow and in some way, God is the one who is able and the one who is desiring to save a people to Himself because He is a Savior.

It's in His nature. And because He is Lord, He has the authority and the means to accomplish such a task. And so we know, like Jude's audience, we know the gospel.

This is not some mystery to us in the fullest sense. We know Christ is our high priest who intercedes on our behalf.

Paul says in 1 Timothy 2, verse 5, there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man, Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 3, verse 1 says, therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession.

[19:37] So God the Son intercedes before God the Father on our behalf. Christ is also our perfect sacrifice. Hebrews 9, verse 12 says, Christ entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Hebrews 10, verse 14 says, for by a single offering, He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. sanctified. So notice the language here.

We are perfected for all time. Another way of saying we are blameless. The author of Hebrews is speaking in a judicial sense in which we are declared righteous in a court of law, though practically we still give way to sin.

But he also speaks of a practical righteousness that we partake in as we are being sanctified, as the author says. It's an ongoing process. So, though we sin, we are growing in real obedience every day.

So, through Christ, you might say, on account of Christ, we are saved. Now remember, worship is not only in demand of God, but it is also the reward of God to the elect.

[20:59] We are so blessed because we alone, who are spiritual, by God's grace, are able to worship God. And it is all of grace. And I think Jude primarily intends that when he says, through

Jesus Christ.

Notice verse 25, Jude is readdressing God more explicitly in the doxology and says, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ. In other words, Jude is saying, we are able to offer up this doxology on account of or through Jesus Christ.

Only through Christ could we approach God and worship him without being slain where we stand. Because Christ has interceded for us.

Because Christ has made the once and for all sacrifice that seals our salvation in him. So only through Christ can we approach God who sits on the throne of grace.

And to think that Christ died not only to save us from hell, which we deserve, but then we are rewarded to be able to worship him. Why on earth are we rewarded?

[22 : 08] We did nothing. The only thing we contributed to our salvation is the sin which made it necessary as somebody once said. And all this stuff we're talking about is captured so well in 1 Peter 2, verse 9.

Peter writes, but you believers are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may, so there's a purpose statement in what Peter's about to say, that you may proclaim the excellencies of God who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

We are saved from death, from hell, and we are saved to worship. And don't miss this. Go back to the end of verse 24.

Jude says, we will be presented with great joy. So in your English translation, you kind of assume that Jude is saying that God himself presents us with great joy, which is theologically true and wonderful.

But the Greek indicates that Jude is saying we will be with great joy in the presence of God. And for obvious reasons, right? We are spared eternal torment and give an eternal life dwelling with our all-glorious God, whom we get to enjoy forever by worshiping him.

[23 : 33] No longer ashamed to be in the presence of God as Adam and Eve were when they hid in the garden. No longer afraid to be in the presence of God as Isaiah was and the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration.

But with great joy we will be in the presence of God because Christ has removed all of our guilt, all of our shame. Praise the Lord.

And Jude goes on. He says, to this Savior God, he says, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority. So be glory. This term glory you might say is shorthand to describe all of God.

God. Again, we can't know God exhaustively, but because he has revealed to us that he is all-glorious, we can know that in his totality he is glorious.

Not one aspect of his three persons, of his one divine essence, not one aspect of his attributes or anything else about him is not glorious because he is all-glorious.

[24 : 39] And this serves as a statement to undermine the false teachers whom Jude writes against. They attempt to profane the glory of God by teaching their wicked lifestyles, but that does not add up when you worship an all-glorious God.

And Jude says, be majesty. And this term follows glory in many ways. It captures the grandeur and awe of God. So majestic are his ways and so glorious are his ways.

Jude cannot help himself but find a synonym to double down on the majesty and glory of God.

Again, what a counter to the false teachers who want to pervert everything.

How could they possibly worship such a God with their teachings and their living? And Jude says, be dominion and authority to this God.

Again, Jude uses two similar words to give a description to a general idea, to give a general idea much weight. And the idea is simply God's sovereignty over all things.

[25 : 52] Everything is within his dominion. And dominion is another way to say his power in this context. God has power to do what he wills.

And rightfully so because he has the authority to carry it out. There's no one higher than our king of kings. There's no one whom God must give an account to or answer to.

God reigns far above the heavens and the earth. And he is the creator of the universe and therefore has authority over all things.

All things give an account to him. From every blade of grass to every person, to every planet, all things are under him.

And what a comfort it must be to Jude's audience to worship such a God. A God who has the power and the authority to keep them guarded against false teaching.

[26 : 50] And think more broadly too. A God who is able to guard them against their own flesh or against the devil and against any and all who oppose him. Who can contend with the Lord?

Nobody. God. And all of these attributes of God have been his from all eternity past and future. God does not change.

He is immutable. So something to know about doxologies is that they always include the duration or the time for which the author believes the praise or worship should endure.

And here is the duration for which a Jew believes God should be worshipped. He says in the second half of verse 25, before all time and now and forever.

This is the great I am who we are talking about after all. The Alpha and the Omega, the only one who is without beginning or end. And because of his eternity, because of his infiniteness, because he is unchanging and immutable, because he is all glorious, he must be worshipped always.

[28 : 00] He is worthy. So finally, Jude concludes with the only word fitting to end this epistle, and the only word fitting to end this magnificent doxology.

He says, Amen. In verse 25. Now this word connotes a great deal and has such a variety to its potential meaning.

I heard Al Mulder preach on this text once, and he said, of all the words in this text, this is the word he is the most unsure of as to what exactly it means, so that is pretty intimidating.

He is a very smart guy. But the gist of the meaning of this word in this context is truly. Jude writes the word as a way of acknowledging the truthfulness of everything that has been said so far.

This is the very same word in Greek that our Lord uses often when we translate truly, truly, I say unto you. He is actually saying, Amen, Amen, I say unto you.

[29 : 01] It is a word one would use to express their total agreement to something, or their total commitment to something. And so Jude is saying that with all this truth, he is in total agreement.

There is not one aspect of this letter that he has written that he is concerned about or somehow secretly against or not in line with, but he is in total agreement. covenant. And this also is a writing convention, right?

In the New Testament era, the epistles would be read aloud to the congregation. And when they ended with Amen, it was understood that the congregation as a whole would recite this special word as well, a way to signify that we, the church, are unified in Christ, that we are one in Christ, and that we are in agreement with these things, that we hold these things to be true and will therefore live in light of these truths.

It's a way for the church to respond to this epistle, a way for the church to say, yes, we too are in line, we too will submit and find these things to be true and wonderful and good.

So we, the church, affirm these things. We are in agreement. That is what Jude's audience would signify when they say together, amen. And so in a similar spirit, I would like to read the doxology one more time in full.

[30 : 37] And at the end, I would like for us all to say amen together as well. But I will warn you, do not say so lightly. Let your yes be your yes and your no be your no, only affirm these things, all of what Jude has said, if you actually believe it, if you're actually going to live in light of it.

And I'll tell you that a good indication of whether or not you say amen with sincerity is whether or not you go about this week worshiping God, whether or not you are able to think over the truths that we have dwelled on these last few weeks with agreement, joy, and sobriety.

Whether or not you are able to consider Jude in light of all of scripture and God's plan to judge the wicked and save his chosen, whether or not you are working to obey him, these things will indicate whether or not you're sincere.

Because only in these things then are you in submission to the will of God, because you delight in God and all that he's doing and all that he is and all that he demands, then you can say amen.

So in closing, I'm going to read it one last time, and again, I'd like for us all to say this in agreement, as the church, in Christ. So Jude writes, 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.

[32 : 19] Amen.