

“Give Credit Where Credit is Due” - Jude 24-25

As we have been looking at the book of Jude we find vital warnings and encouragement from a man who not only was able to identify a problem in his time, but was also able to speak prophetically into the future. Little did Jude realize that his words would clearly define our current society and the dangers that lie within the false teachings of the enemy, which are widely embraced. Yet, within our time the word of encouragement granted by Jude is for the church to remain faithful to our faithful God, to defend the truth of God’s Word, and for us to reach out to those who are led astray.

In the closing of his letter, he makes it clear to us that we are to give credit where credit is due. Let us look at **Jude 24-25**:

And now, all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy. All glory to him, who alone is God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, glory, majesty, power, and authority belong to him, in the beginning, now, and forevermore, Amen.

It is interesting that after Jude has addressed a difficult topic, and has made some strong warnings, that he ends his letter with words of praise to God. These types of words of praise are predominant throughout the epistles. **Romans 16:25-27** says:

God is able to make you strong, just as the Good News says. It is the message about Jesus Christ and his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they might believe and obey Christ. To God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through Jesus Christ, Amen.

*Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May he be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen. **Ephesians 3:20-21***

Words of praise help us not to remain focused on the problem but to seek the solution through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to rely on His strength. As we look at **Jude 24-25** may we grasp this concept. May we apply it in our own lives.

1. We are to give praise to God

On Wednesday nights, we have been looking at who God is – His character, His works, His names. I believe that the more we know about God the more we have reason to worship God. We need to have an understanding behind our words of exaltation, our singing of songs. There needs to be a driving factor behind our pursuance of God. The more we know about him the more we will want to know. Just as with food, once we

find something that we really like, we will want to eat it more and more. When we see the goodness of God and understand all the benefits that we face because of his mercy and grace, the more we will press closer to God, the more we will want to know. It is like a perpetual motion of belief that fuels itself. Jesus, in **John 6:35** said:

I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry again. Those who believe in me will never thirst.

Not only are we to focus on the benefits of what God does, but we are to allow those benefits to fuel an appetite for more of the source of benefit. One who eats all the time will never be hungry. One who drinks all the time will never thirst.

Even when talking with the Samaritan Woman at the well, Jesus said in **John 4:13-14**:

People soon become thirsty again after drinking this water. But the water I give them takes away thirst altogether. It becomes a perpetual spring within them, giving them eternal life.

The spiritual implication here can be that the things of this world will only offer satisfaction for a short period of time, and will create more thirst in the future. Yet, as we learn more and more about God we will find a searching hunger and thirst for more of him. And we will never go away empty handed. **John 7:37-38** says:

On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "If you are thirsty, come to me! If you believe in me, come and drink! For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water will flow out from within."

We need to focus on why we praise God. We need to make an educated response. We need to expand our understanding of his goodness thus fueling even greater praise to Him. We can develop this by being in God's Word and seeing what he has done, what he is doing, and what he will do. **Isaiah 55:1-2** says:

"Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink – even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk – it's all free! Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen, and I will tell you where to get food that is good for the soul!"

Some of us purchase food that does us no good. It does not benefit us, in fact it hurts us by being a distraction or by being contrary to nourishment. It steals praise away from God, because it is not from God. And this type of food always seems to cost us something. But God is calling us to receive food from him that is free. Food that will prove His goodness, His character, His promises, His grace and mercy, no matter what the world may be trying to tell us.

As Jude has called us to worship God, I enhance that challenge by asking us to be educated in our worship of him. That we can say he is good to us because we have experienced his goodness or have seen his goodness. That we can praise him as our Almighty God because we understand how he has proven his mighty power. That we can praise him as our provider because we realize that all that we have has come from him.

Let us not just speak words of praise for the sake of moving our lips, but let us put our understanding, our love, our heart, and our actions behind what we say. Jude says to worship God, but let us worship in spirit and in truth. May our praise and worship of God be based on our knowledge, and experience.

2. Because Our God is Able.

a. To keep you from stumbling

When you look at the Greek translation of this phrase we find that it doesn't refer to the idea of sinning every once and a while. It refers to the idea of one who walks away from the faith, or who falls away completely. **II Peter 1:10**

So, dear friends, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Doing this, you will never stumble or fall away.

Jude tells us that in spite of his warnings of false teachers, we can find comfort in the fact that we have strength and the ability to remain in our faith as long as we rely on God for His strength and ability. And because of this the words of **Jude 1** are true

"I am writing to all who are called to live in the love of God the Father and the CARE OF Jesus Christ.

Although God has the ability to keep us from falling away from his grace and mercy, it requires a responsibility on our part. Obviously, we can't go out and purposefully sin and then expect God's salvation to automatically kick in and wipe our rebellion away. Our faith needs to cooperate with God's power if we are to keep from stumbling. **I Peter 1:5**

And God, in his mighty power, will protect you until you receive this salvation, BECAUSE you are trusting in him. It will be revealed on the last day for all to see.

So make every effort to apply the benefits of these promises to your life. Then your faith will produce a life of moral excellence. A life of moral excellence leads to knowing God better. Knowing God leads to self-control. Self-control leads to patient endurance, and patient endurance lead to godliness. Godliness leads to love for other Christians, and finally you will grow to have genuine love for everyone. The more you grow like

*this, the more you will become productive and useful in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop these virtues are blind or, at least, very shortsighted. They have already forgotten that God has cleansed them from their old life of sin. So, dear friends, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Doing this, you will never stumble or fall away. And God will open wide the gates of heaven for you to enter the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **II Peter 1:5-11***

God can only keep us from stumbling when we are focused on him. We need to cooperate and follow what he tells us. It is like having a doctor who tells what medication to take and how to take care of ourselves, yet if we disregard his input we will continue to suffer, or may even get more sick, or maybe even die. Doctors are known to save lives, yet if people disregard their input and instruction then the Doctor's hands are tied.

But God has the ability to bring us into eternal life. He has the ability to assure us that we will receive this reward. However, we need to work with him and not against him.

b. To present you innocent of sin and with great joy.

God's goal for us to be presented blameless and innocent of sin. **Ephesians 5:27** says:

He did this (loved the church) to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.

God wants to present us as being without a spot which means to be without a stain, or without defect or disgrace. To be without a wrinkle which when looking at the Greek this term is used especially in regards to wrinkles on a face. And finally with out a blemish. The Greek here points to one who is faultless, unblameable, or free from disgrace.

God wants us to present us completely pure. **I Thessalonians 5:23** says:

Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until that day when our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

*For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until Christ returns. **Philippians 1:10***

In order for us to gain entry into the presence of a pure and holy God, we must be pure and holy ourselves. And through the work of Jesus Christ this is possible.

Jesus' eternal work of salvation takes the sins, past, present and future, away from those who remain in faith and obedience to God. God now looks at us as if we have always been pure. Just as if we have never sinned. And what is even more mind boggling is that fact that this is available, not at a great price for us, but at the expense of our faith and the death of Jesus, God's Son.

What relief we will experience when we find that we are blameless in God's sight. What joy we will have in our salvation. King David's words voices this fact in **Psalm 32:1-2**:

"Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. Yes, what joy for those whose sin is no longer counted against them by the Lord."

But let us not forget the joy of God that will take place in heaven at this point in time. His joy of seeing his righteous children at last and then being able to live among them. **Revelation 21:3-4**

I heard a loud shout from the throne saying, "Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever."

This is not a fairy tale or mythology, it will be reality. And in the end heaven will be a place where the joy of the Lord will not only be expressed by himself, but also through his people.

God is our Savior. He has saved us so that we no longer have to live in sin. And if that wasn't enough, he now sees us as pure, holy and blameless, thus wanting to live with us in the New Heaven and New Earth that he will create for us. A place where tension and fear will no longer exist.

3. So acknowledge his glory, majesty, power and authority.

The term glory comes from the Greek word "doxa" which means "to be worthy of honor or of great value or worth." The term majesty or "megalosoonay" means "great in might." Jude is telling us to acknowledge that God is worthy of our worship or the placement of value because He is our great and mighty God. As we think of God we need to have a sense of awe in who he is. We are to have a healthy fear of God so that we will not allow circumstances to cause us to respond, but that the command of God will be the priority.

Jude continue and tells us that we need to acknowledge God's power and authority. This term power comes from the Greek word "exousia" which means "the power of authority, mastery, influence, force, competency, and freedom." He is the one who has power to

cause whatever he deems necessary. The term authority here comes from the Greek word "kratos" which means to have mental strength or force, intensity of action or effect, being full of power and strength. We serve a God is able to make his plans come about. He is able to bring salvation, to give us abilities to overcome sin, to present us a pure and holy sacrifices. He has the ability and ownership over his creation.

God's nature, abilities, and authority will never change. It has always existed, it is present today, and will always be there. .

Conclusion

This morning we have found that we are to worship God. Yet, our challenge is to be educated worshippers of God. That we will continue to learn about who God is, his nature, his efforts, his love, and then allow our limited understanding fuel a passion for God. And then out of the passion, there would be worship birthed out of understanding. The more we learn, the more we will want to learn. That we will worship God because he is able to help us and give us strength, and only he is able to save us from our life of sin, thus uniting us with himself. And finally, that we acknowledge that the God we serve has full ability, power, and authority. Which makes him our most prized possession. The most valuable treasure.

Jude wrote this book as a warning to the church, urging us to not allow false teaching or false (fake) teachers to come and distract us from the true source of love, hope, salvation and truth. Instead, we are to defend the truth, placing value in God's commands – not falling into the trap of disrespecting God, becoming to prideful or arrogant, or committing ourselves to sin. That we would seek good fruit in our lives, not allowing earthly treasures to influence our motivation. But that we would remain faithful, looking to the warnings of the Scriptures, and allowing the truth of Scripture to become the foundation of our faith. And with the help of the Holy Spirit we can find guidance, confirmation, and comfort thus resulting in God's blessing in our lives. The blessing of eternal life. Yet, God doesn't want us to hoard the blessings for ourselves but to then offer this hope to others by sharing the truth of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

And as we have seen today, that we would give God credit for his work. That we would give him place, priority and praise for what he has done, what he is doing, and what he will do in the future.