

Week 11 - Preservation of the Saints

The Power of God for ALL Your Life

? Think of a time when you had the choice to quit something or to keep going. What did you choose and, looking back, how do you feel about that decision?

Jude 1:1-4 (NIV)

¹Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,

To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:

²Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

³Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. ⁴For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

? In vs. 1, Jude describes believers as those who have "been called, are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ." What stands out to you from this?

? What does it mean to pervert the grace of God into license for immorality? (vs. 4) How have you experienced that in your own life and/or seen it in the lives of others?

? In vs. 4, Jude describes people who live in licentiousness as those who deny Jesus as Lord. How is this unbelief different from the doubt that believers experience?

? What are examples of faith from Scripture that have encouraged you during times of uncertainty or doubt?

Several people throughout Old and New Testament history were commended for their faith and yet were deeply flawed. They experienced times of doubting and struggled with sin, but they still persevered. For some examples, see Hebrews 1, Genesis 12-15, and 2 Samuel 11.

? As people who have put our hope in Jesus as Savior, we can wait in confidence for eternity in heaven. What are some of the things we put our hope in (or are tempted to put our hope in) besides Jesus?

“True Christians can have radical and serious falls but never total and final falls from grace.” - R.C. Sproul

1 John 1:6-10 (NIV)

⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

? Do you believe that Jesus’ forgiveness, grace, and sacrifice are big enough for all of the sins we should be condemned for? How does this belief compare to the messages we hear from other religions or the culture at large?

? Are there areas of your life that you feel you are still working to somehow achieve or maintain your salvation/righteousness in God’s eyes? How do you fight against the lie that you need to earn your salvation?

Jude 1:17-25 (NIV)

¹⁷ But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” ¹⁹ These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

²² Be merciful to those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

²⁴ To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

? What are helpful ways to walk alongside/care for someone who is doubting their faith?

? What do the promises in vs. 20-25 say about God's relationship with His people? What do they say about His desire for His people?

John 10:14-18, 25-30 (NIV)

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." ...

²⁵ Jesus answered, "... The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

? What does this passage tell us about Jesus' relationship with the Father? Why was this important for the Jews to hear? Why is it important for us?

? What do you find encouraging or comforting in this passage?

For Discussion and Accountability

? Are there sins you've committed in the past - or feel stuck in currently - that you believe are unforgivable? Have you talked to someone about them? Have you confessed them to God?

? What are the things that are keeping you from feeling 100% confident in your salvation?