

Last Sunday of the Church Year  
November 21, 2021

“All glory to God our Savior, now and forevermore!”  
(Jude 24-25)  
LSB 791

By Rev. Ed Weber

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,  
Today’s text for the Last Sunday of the Church year is from our Epistle reading,  
Jude 24-25

**“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.”**

So, Jude, the bondservant of Jesus Christ, the brother of James the less, the son of Alphaeus, concludes his letter with this most glorious doxology to God.

It is most fitting, as we conclude once again, this Church Year, to do the same. To God, our Savior, be all glory. Amen. God alone has brought us safely in the faith to this Last Sunday of the church year.

God is able. God keeps you, and God will present you faultless. On these three truths, I want us to focus on today and keep them in your hearts as we look forward to the new year also.

I. God is able.

The same God who called those early Christians to faith and preserved them in the midst of many false teachings, continues to do the same for us.

Jude’s begins his short letter to the beloved of God with these words:

**“To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.”**

It is God, through Jesus Christ, who calls us sinners into the one Christian faith, forgives us, reconciles us, makes us holy with His righteousness, and preserves us in this one true faith. We're not able to do this.

Yes, God gives us abilities which mature with age as I mentioned in the children's message. There are mental abilities, physical abilities, musical abilities that unfold with time. It is a joy to see each new accomplishment in our children and grandchildren.

And of course, unfortunately, the opposite also happens as we age. We are able to do less and less. Our physical abilities wane. Our stamina and strength slows. Our minds sometimes become a little less focused and sharp. We don't think as quickly as we used to be able to do. And especially when this happens, we turn to God and are comforted to remember that God is able. God helps you through all the changes in life. He has helped us through a most difficult time of this pandemic. God is able!

But, most of all, God is able to do alone what we can never do. Save us from sin, death and the devil. That is why Jude calls the One, true God – God our Savior.

We are not able to save ourselves. We are lost in the darkness of our sin. Yesterday, we lit a candle after the baptism of Mia Garcia at Mision Emanuel. God called this little toddler out of her darkness of sin into the marvelous light of her Savior Jesus. He did it all through simple water and His most powerful word.

Her heart was **sprinkled from an evil conscience and her body washed with pure water**, as we heard in last week's epistle from Hebrews 10. God is able! All glory to God!

He has done this for each of you through your baptism. All glory to God!

Jude says, God has done this with His great gifts of mercy, peace and love. These are not given stingily, but they are poured out and multiplied to you! His mercy, His free favor, moved God out of great love to offer His Son, Jesus, as the one final offering for our sin! This has brought us peace.

So, we heard these beautiful declarations from God last week from Hebrews 10 that all this has been accomplished.

**“By that will (God’s will) we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (v.10) All glory to God!**

**““Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”(v.17) All glory to God!**

**“Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.” (v.18) All glory to God!**

And so, it is only by God’s continual mercy, that we arrive on the Last Sunday of the Church Year, once again, in the faith of Jesus Christ.

## II. God keeps us from stumbling

All glory to God who alone is able to keep us from stumbling and losing this faith. This is our second thought to remember from our text today.

After Mia was baptized and the pictures were taken with the family, she was all so eager to get out of the arms that were holding her and walk around with her own two little legs. One shoe came off and she stumbled a little bit, but didn’t fall down. There she was with one shoe on and one shoe off doing the best she could to hobble down the center aisle. Her one arm which she is receiving therapy for, was bent backwards at her side. But none of this would stop her, for she goes forward in her faith life with God at her side - her God and Savior who is able to keep her from stumbling!

She will face trials in her life like all of us – tests of faith and also temptations to follow false teachings. Yesterday, the wife of pastor Wally Schmidt, who is serving at Fishers of Men, fell in the parsonage and broke her arm and hip. There are physical stumblings in life, tests of faith that God helps through and keeps us close to Him. We pray for Ellen that God would give her healing.

And there are temptations to follow false teachings.

As in Jude’s time, so also in ours, there are those who turn this beautiful Gospel into a license of lewdness to sin.

So, Jude wrote,

**“I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Deny. If one rejects God you, He no longer keeps you. Jude gives examples for us to remember that we would not follow them into condemnation.

**“But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; 7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”**

Unbelieving Israelites, fallen angels and faithless people of Sodom and Gomorrah all suffer the same – the vengeance of eternal fire. That’s how important this is to take our faith walk in daily seriousness and rely only on God who is able to keep you!

So Jude says to the Christians, to each of you at the start of our epistle:

**“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”**

God has given us the most holy faith to keep us from falling. He has given us the true doctrine through His apostles. He has also given the Holy Spirit who moves us to pray to God.

His great love and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ keeps us in the faith as we continue into the new year unto eternal life! To God be all glory!

Jude exhorted the Christians of his time and God commands us also to not only keep one’s one faith strong but help those who are in grave danger of losing the faith and are being led astray.

**“on some have compassion, making a distinction; 23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.”**

With all humbleness and fear of God, we have compassion for others, pulling them out of the fire they are in before it is too late! We pray in the Spirit that God would use us to bring others to repentance and full forgiveness. Which brings us to our final thought. As great are the sins of fallen man, God alone through the blood of Jesus is able to remove all sin!

### III. God presents you faultless

God alone is able to present you faultless to Himself on that last day.

**“And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,”**

Oh, what a day we have to look forward to! It will be a day when all the sinfulness of this mortal flesh is changed into the likeness of Jesus and made incorruptible and perfect! And when that happens, by Him who alone is able, then you will be able to stand in the presence of His glory! You will not cower in shame for you will have nothing to be ashamed of. The image of God which was lost in the fall will be completely restored! And you will be able to stand without fear in His glory! What a joy that will be! An exceeding joy beyond measure!

Paul says in Philippians 3:

**“Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;”**

All glory, majesty, dominion and authority be to our Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who is able to keep you and present you blameless before Him. Amen. It is so! It is true! Amen.

**The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**