

# He is able (Quality: Very Good)

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Preacher: Dawson, Colin

[ 0 : 00 ] This evening I invite you to turn to the general epistle of Jude and I will read the last two verses.

Verses 24 and 25 in the general epistle of Jude. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless that before the presence of his glory was exceeding joy.

To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever.

Amen. Amen. Our theme today is that our God is able.

That he is mighty. That he is full of power. That he can do all things.

[ 1 : 18 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. And this portion, like our mourning portion, emphasizes the greatness of our God in being able to able to guard and to preserve in safety.

And that the theme is in fact developed one stage further in this portion this evening to enable us to consider specifically he is able to keep us from falling.

Amen. Amen. Go without saying, I trust that we are all liable to fall.

Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Let those who think themselves immune from falling, they'll be very careful because they're on the brink of a great fall themselves.

Pride goeth before a fall and a haughty spirit before destruction. But there is one who is able to keep from falling.

[ 2 : 56 ] The Bible contains a number of accounts which we might describe as the falls of good people.

We read the night of Genesis this afternoon in which is recorded the fall of Noah.

Good man, a preacher of righteousness, a man who walks with God, a man who was saved in the ark and saw the mighty works of the Lord in preserving him alive.

But he fell, he fell into intoxication and indecency. And it's strange, isn't it, to read of such good man falling.

What then does such a portion as this mean? That God is able to keep us from falling. God was able to keep Noah from falling, it might be argued, but he didn't.

[ 4 : 15 ] In the week we read the 51st Psalm, which was written by another fallen saint, David.

The man after God's own heart. A man who was raised up by God to be king in Israel. A man who had an influence for good for many years in the midst of that nation.

But he fell into adultery and was responsible by his actions for murder. God was able to keep David from falling, it might be argued, but he didn't.

The case of Peter is very often referred to and very familiar. Who was ready to say that he would never deny his Lord, but he did.

He fell. He fell in such a devastating way. Such an unthinkable way. He cursed and he swore that he did not know the man whom he greatly admired and deeply loved.

[ 5 : 43 ] It could be argued similarly that God was able to keep Peter from falling, but he didn't. He did not know the man who was able to keep Peter from falling, but he did not know the man who was able to do it.

He did not know the man who was able to do it. But simply to refer to matters that may already be forming in some of your minds. That we do read in the Bible of the falls of good men.

By which we are taught that they were men of like passions with us. That whatever we read of them, their noble exploits, these things they accomplished not in their own strength, but in the strength of the Lord.

And we must ever understand her when we read of these mighty men and women too in the scriptures of truth. They were what they were by the grace of God.

I think a difference must be drawn between these falls that I've just alluded to, and other falls which Jude alludes to in his epistle.

[ 7 : 09 ] There's a fall that any may be the subjects of, from which there will be recovery.

Noah fell, David fell, Peter fell, Abraham fell, and many more like them have in their lifetime fallen from their steadfastness, fallen temporarily from their faith.

But they were restored. God had mercy on them. They were brought to repentance. They were brought to hate themselves and to abhor themselves and to cry aloud unto God for mercy.

Perhaps we might say, actually, in some cases at least, they were stronger for having fallen.

That is to say that their fall was overruled for good. We must believe that if that oft-quoted word is true, we know all things work together for good.

[ 8 : 31 ] To them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose. Therefore, sad, grievous though they were, were overruled.

And they were brought up again from their falls. Sadder, humbler, and wiser for the things that they had passed through.

Sadder, sadder, in that they had been left so to betray and to act dishonorably towards their Lord.

You know, if we do fall and the Lord restores us, there will be sadness probably about our life thereafter. sure there was in Peter and in David's life.

Sadness to think that they had ever been left to act as they had. But humbler, pride is a great enemy.

[ 9 : 44 ] It attacks us all. And, in one way or another, God may leave us to fall. To humble us.

Think of the word the Lord spoke to the Israelites concerning their forty years in the wilderness. Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee.

Priority number one with God to humble thee. if that's God's first priority with his dealings with you and me. That may explain some of the things that come to pass in our lives.

To humble thee. To prove thee. This is what the trial of faith is all about. To prove. To test.

To establish the reality of that faith in his people. To humble thee. To prove thee. To see what was in thine heart.

[ 10 : 54 ] We haven't seen everything that's in our hearts. We've seen something. Something. We've seen something that's in your heart. Some of the native vileness of it. Some of the unbelief that works there.

Some of the pride that still is developing there. To see what was in thine heart. whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or know.

And so there's a humbling through the fall and we're wiser sometimes.

These things by these things men live. They're taught in these ways. Firstly their own weakness.

Secondly the Lord's strength. Firstly their own unworthiness. Secondly the Lord's goodness and mercy. The mercy that heals the Magai is mercy transportingly sweet.

[ 12 : 10 ] And so these falls are though sad though inconsistent in the lives of God's people are overruled by God in such a way as his name is to be glorified and his people are to be taught.

And much as we may want to be kept from this kind of falling and God is able to do that there is another kind of falling that we shall want to be kept from.

that is the falling some of which is referred to here in this short general epistle of Jude.

Those who have had in times past a name to live are those who may have claimed to be amongst the people of God but have fallen from that state.

These are referred to here in this passage. Certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 14 : 01 ] What's your reaction to reading a passage like the general epistle of Jude? Or one or two other chapters which detail the state of these deceivers?

Is it first of all to say, I do hope I shall never be like that? I do hope I shall never be left to fall from what I hope the Lord has done for me, what I believe I have been brought to understand and to profess in my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to deny the only Lord, to turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness.

Secondly, is it a prayer? Not just some kind of vague hope, but a specific prayer. Lord, keep me. don't let me run greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.

Don't let me perish in the gainsaying of Korah. Don't let me, Lord, be like these spots in the feasts of charity, who feed without fear clouds as they are without water, carried out of winds, trees, whose fruit withereth without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, and so on.

Oh, here is fallen man at his worst. One who once upon a time professed the truth, but now has fallen into apostasy.

[ 15 : 58 ] One who has become an open enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ. well, you know, the apostles and the writers of the New Testament paint a very black picture when they describe the state of the human heart and the state of fallen mankind.

They paint a very black picture indeed, and it is perfectly realistic, absolutely correct of them to do so. This is the state of mankind in sinnership, in rebellion, in open opposition to God.

you want to know what sort of a world it is, you only have to read a daily newspaper, and there you will read of murders and of thefts and of adulteries, and of all manner of evil actions which are committed in the world.

Sometimes it may seem to be a strange world, a different world from which we are somehow or other insulated because we don't happen to have in our family circles acquaintance with this sort of thing.

But the Lord may bring this sort of thing into our very home. He may bring it within our own circle and then it's not them out there, not some remote people, the others who suffer, it's us.

[ 17 : 37 ] It's in our own circle. This is the black world. And there's something else that the spirit of truth does.

It'll take you away from reading the daily newspaper and cause you to read your own heart. And what we find there, murders, fornications, thefts, blasphemies, all the black things that the others do out there, they're all done in here.

And if it were not for the glorious truth that is presented to us here in this verse, all those black things would break out.

They would erupt in a terrifying volcanic eruption of putrefaction and evil.

there is one against this black background, there is one who is able to keep you from falling. And this is a black epistle in its literal destruction of the evil men who were even then abounding.

[ 18 : 56 ] But it ends on a most glorious note. It ends on a note of hope, yea, of triumph.

it all has to do with this wonderful Lord who is able to keep you from falling.

If events take the course which they are predicted to in the word of God, I shouldn't have said that, should I? Events will take the course that they are predicted to take in the word of God.

And consequently, as we draw closer to the end time, evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse.

And successive generations of Christians will bewail the fact that things are going from bad to worse. Well, that's exactly what the scriptures say will happen in these last times.

[ 20 : 03 ] what can people do? Very, it's very wonderful and very confirming and encouraging when it pleases God to to quicken into life those who are young and to the church young believers.

and yet sometimes we wonder what the future holds for them. What sort of world in 20 years' time, in 30 years' time, perhaps in 30 years' time, most many of this present church will have passed away.

What sort of world will it be for the younger ones who will then be in midlife? What sort of world will it be for them to live in? What sort of evil pressures will come upon them?

We don't know. But as scientific discoveries increase, as advances come about, these are all abused by the devil.

They are misused by wicked men, and they are tremendous forces for evil in the midst of our community. But there's one who is able to keep from falling.

[ 21 : 41 ] There is a grace that is sufficient from age to age. The notes of that hymn, from which we closed in the middle hymn, is true.

His grace sufficed, saints of old. It made them strong, it made them bold, and it sufficeth still, and so it will next year, and the next decade, and the next century, if God should preserve the world so long.

The sufficiency of God's grace, the ability of our God to keep his people is impregnable. This is the God in whom we believe, and trusting in him we can look forward with total confidence to the future, and to him that is able to keep you from falling.

To fall before the subtle influence of the devil, remember he comes, disguising himself sometimes as an angel of light. Able to keep you from falling under the influence of the world.

You know the love of the world, his enmity of God. He's able to keep you from making a shipwreck of your faith, from your religion collapsing.

[ 23 : 06 ] What is your hope of the future? Have you got a pretty good hope in yourself? Do you say, well I've ridden out many a storm in my life, I'm 40, 50, 60, 70 years old now, I think I shall manage.

You won't you know. You only manage by God's grace. You only manage in his strength. And you're going to need to be kept from falling, all the while you're in a fallen world.

This epistle deals with fallen angels. He's able to keep you from falling with them.

Must be terrible, mustn't it, to fall with the fallen angels. the devil, Satan, the leader of revolts in heaven, launched an attack in some way or other upon God and was defeated and was thrust out from heaven and thrust down into outer darkness.

Oh how solemnly the word of God links up the fallen angels and fallen man. They all go to the same place. Oh sinner, can you contemplate with equanimity and eternity in the company of fallen angels?

[ 24 : 49 ] How terrible. There's one who is able to keep you from falling. Keep you from falling into that pit of despair and eternal death.

Yes, he is able to do him. Now, in the parallel passage that we were considering together this morning in the second epistle to Timothy, the apostle Paul there you will remember was speaking of the fact that he was able to keep those that had, to keep that, that they had committed unto him against that dying.

And may I just bring that thought in here at this point. Do you want to be kept and commit your soul unto him? Cast yourself, sin and all, upon the Saviour who still through his gospel calls and beckons and welcomes sinners to come.

you're the worst sinner in this chapel. Then I've got a word for you. And it is a word that comes forth from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, inviting you to come unto him.

You can't come as a deserving kind, as a worthy one. You can't come as a self-acknowledged child. Oh, but then come as a dog, come as a sinner.

[ 26 : 25 ] I was going to say, if you'll pardon the expression, come as a devil. Come with all the force of evil that are present in your heart.

Come to him. Come as you are. Try and patch things up, put on a good face, clean yourself up, bring out your best clothes, none of this will do.

Come as you are unto this Saviour. Oh, are you a thirsty soul, thirsting after water that you can't find anywhere in the world.

That is going to give you lasting satisfaction. There's someone here who's taken their fill of the world, who has gone out to seek their pleasures in this life. How have you got on, friend?

Have you found it yet? Have you found lasting satisfaction? Have you found a day when you've come home, when you've sat down at night and you've said, I've really made it, I've really enjoyed myself today.

[ 27 : 29 ] I've really found what my soul is looking for. Have you? Well, you might think you have. And you might say you have, you've really enjoyed yourself today.

But what about tomorrow? Oh, the pleasures of yesterday can sometimes have a very bitter taste the next day.

I tell you, you won't find anything to really and lastingly satisfy your soul anywhere but in Jesus Christ.

And to you who are far off, listen, while this God in Christ calls you to return and drink of the waters that he has to give, which if a man drink thereof, he shall never thirst.

now unto him that is able to keep you from falling. But have something that is expanded in this wonderful verse, isn't it?

[ 28 : 43 ] What I've been saying is perhaps something that is negative. The negative aspect of the glorious work of our God in preserving his people.

He stops them doing certain things. But there's a positive side to it also. There are things that he does for them. All those who are kept from falling, he is able also to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

thoughts. How many faults have you got? If you would stop and think about them, one or two perhaps?

Three or four when you really get down to thinking about it? Half a dozen if you were really honest with yourself. Thoughts, blemishes in your character and your makeup.

But that's about all, more or less, isn't it? Half a dozen things here and there. Or, or is it?

[ 30 : 05 ] Our pride won't admit to much more than that, I'm sure. Half a dozen faults are enough for the worst of sinners to have to confess. Or do you have a different view of yourself?

You're full of faults. Nothing but faults. Nothing but sin. Nothing but transgression and breaking of God's law. He is able to present you faultless.

Faultless. Not a spot anywhere. Here is perfection. Ah, not perfection in the flesh, is it? perfection in Christ.

He's able to do it. Oh, as if the Lord was to say this, bring me a vilest sinner out of hell.

Bring me some prodigal that has gone as far as their talent and their possessions will have taken them in the pursuit of sin.

[ 31 : 14 ] And I'll make them faultless. Impossible. Of course it's impossible for us. But it's not impossible without God.

He's able to do it. Able to do it. God's God's spirit is teaching you and me one thing that will trouble us. It will trouble us in the sleepless hours of the night sometimes.

It will trouble us in the lonely hours of the day when we're on our own. It will trouble us at odd moments when the truth is born home in our souls by the Holy Ghost.

our own sinfulness. And the persistent nature of our sin. Year in, year out.

Sin that didn't leave us when we passed from childhood into maturity. Sin that wouldn't stop in our twenties but persisted in coming into our thirties. And also strode over the threshold into the forties and so on through life.

[ 32 : 24 ] Oh this wretched sin. Sin. He is able to present you sinner faultless. You faultless.

Can you imagine? You who know your faults, who live with your sins, who confess unto God your failings, you faultless. If the searchlight of the holiness of heaven was beamed into your soul, it wouldn't find a blemish.

If the searing light of God's law were to be cast upon you, it would find nothing amiss in your soul. Faultless. That's what he's able to do.

Oh what a mighty saviour is this. Oh what a God is this who is able to take the vilest of sinners and present them faultless.

Faultless. so he does. What's the secret of this? Well, there's a twofold secret here in the faultlessness.

[ 33 : 32 ] First of all, they're faultless through cleansing. They're cleansed from all faults.

Remember, there's a psalm somewhere that has this prayer in it, cleanse thou me from secret faults. Who can understand his errors?

Well, this is part of it, he cleanses. And what, what is it that can cleanse from all sin?

there's only one answer to that question. We know it well, but we must repeat it often. It is a precious blood of Jesus Christ that alone can cleanse my spotted soul from all faults.

Oh, we value the blood of Jesus Christ. it's invaluable blood, precious blood.

[ 34 : 45 ] The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanseth us, writes John, from all sin.

There it is. He's able to present you faultless because he'll take your soul and he'll wash it in his own blood. And here is blood that takes all sin's defilement away.

Oh, here is the cure, the only cure for man's sin. Secondly, presented faultless by covering.

notice it is a cleansed sinner that is covered. It's not an attractive out of covering to hide a multitude of sins.

Don't think of the righteousness of Jesus in that sense. It is a pure robe to adorn a pure son.

[ 35 : 58 ] He takes our sins and gives in their place his righteousness.

You can't have your sins and his righteousness. Now, we shall be alas troubled and burdened and grieved all our lifetime by our own sinfulness.

But if we have confessed our sins, the Lord Jesus has taken them, all of them, from birth to death, nay, from the inevitable outcome of the fall in Adam.

He's taken all those sins hands and washed them away. And as a token of it, he has given us his righteousness. He was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He presents you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

[ 37 : 41 ] That's wonderful, isn't it? Jude is not just writing about something that will be a wonderful and glorious but temporary blessing for the church here upon it.

No, the whole force of his teaching just like Paul's in his second epistle to Timothy is against that die.

All that he's saying is projected forward to that great day. And what he's speaking and the wonderful blessings he's setting forth are going to be of value to a soul in that day.

Oh, it's not a question of passing before men as Christians. It's not just a question of getting it all clear from some vetting committee of men, is it?

It's the day that is before us and that is the day that is coming nearer and nearer and nearer in the purposes of God. And what really matters is standing on that day, faultless, in the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

[ 38 : 53 ] This must be a miracle, and that's not too strong a word, is it? A miracle. A miracle that you and I, defiled as we are by sin, should be there that day, faultless, before the presence of his glory, there will be displayed the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in such a wonderful way, such a powerful way that the ungodly will shriek and cry to rocks and to hills to fall upon them and cover them and cover them, to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb.

Will you be there without a fear? Will you be there with your heart and soul filled with joy? That's what he's able to do.

Oh, blessed be God, he's able to save unto the uttermost, to save from all sin, from all evil forces, from everything in this world and in the next.

To present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. Yes, we shall be happy then, joyful then, in the glory of the Lord.

Shall we? One thing to say, will it be true? Oh, God, grant it shall be true. Oh, that we poor sinners shall be saved by his grace, clothed in his righteousness, justified by faith, and brought at last to the presence of his glory.

[ 40 : 25 ] now, at this point, I just want to go back a moment and ask you to look at a word you'll find in verse 21 where the Jew says, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ until eternal life.

Keep yourselves. yourselves. What's the connection then between that and what we've been trying to say today, that this is God's work.

This is his gracious work in keeping his people from falling. Keep yourselves. arms. Who are those that God is able to keep?

Who are those that know these truths? They are those who keep themselves in the love of God. That's the connection.

Now, there's no contradiction here. There's no taking of the work away from the Lord Jesus Christ and the creature doing it for him. There's none of that. There's no taking away of the glory from the Lord Jesus Christ unto a creature.

[ 41 : 51 ] There's none of that. But keep yourselves in the love of God. It's a word addressed to the saints of the Lord.

This is a general epistle it says at the top. But not addressed as far as we know to a specific person or group of people. But to a certain class of people described as those who are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called.

Now, to such, this word is addressed, keep yourselves in the love of God. This is not an impossible word addressed to dead sinners, requiring them to do something which they have no power to do.

is a word from the Holy Ghost addressed to sanctified ones, preserved and called ones. A word addressed to the Lord's people, keep yourselves in the love of God.

Ensure that this is the great word in your life. This is the motive that guides and directs you in your affairs.

[ 43 : 13 ] Keep yourselves in the love of God. Know when you have to decide what to do in certain circumstances, this or that, go this way or the other way, keep yourselves in the love of God.

Keep yourselves close to the Lord Jesus Christ, to his word, to his love. Walk in the footsteps of the flock. Keep yourselves in the love of God.

A believer does not have the total power to keep himself, but nevertheless, we all actively, day by day, take decisions.

we have to decide whether to do this or whether to do that. We are not robots and puppets manipulated by strings.

We are creatures made in God's image, rational beings with a mind to use, a mind that is to be used under the sanctifying influence of the word of God.

[ 44 : 21 ] Keep yourselves in the love of God. if you know the devil lives in a certain street, in a certain house, don't go there.

Keep away. You don't need some special revelation from God to tell you that, do you? You don't need some particular and personal leading for you to know that is the will of God.

Keep yourselves from it. what about teaching of the first psalm, which highlights this point for us very well.



blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law of he meditates day and night.

keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, looking for mercy.

[ 45 : 40 ] These are surely they who have obtained mercy, but they still look for it. If you've obtained mercy, you'll still look for it, and you'll look for it with hope, you'll look for it with expectation, you'll look for it in confidence, because the mercy of the Lord endureth forever.

Then, this little epistle ends on this wonderful night, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.

Amen. This beautiful verse sums up, summarizes, our God who is able to take His is the glory, His is the majesty, His is the dominion and the power, both now and ever.

Wonderful thing, if we can, from our very hearts, say, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's close our worship today by singing 1059.

[ 47 : 05 ] Jesus, the truth, the way, the sure, unerring light, on thee, my feeble soul, I'd stay, which thou canst lead awry. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. highly high found Surf Holk. To the soul I say, We shall can see the rise.

O may I hear you, Lord, So does the hope come to me.

[ 48 : 22 ] Here's our clerks of heaven whom And shall the Great of Chal hour Then I call every dream That's on the stand of God The hopeless arts that■■■ on birches And of the church destroying Thou self I can't say

Thou self I can't be The strength in me I pray to have Will I in never sleep I shall to be alone I shall forever come Till Jesus' glory Come upon me We'll love them to the end

Dear Lord, we ask thou in mercy forgive all that has been missed through the day. Blessed we do pray thy own words.

It may not return unto thee, boys. Now, Lord, may we depart under thy blessing. Go forth into days of the coming week if spared. Dependent, trusting, leaning upon thine arm.

And do bring us through all that awaits us in the coming days. Preserve us in safety. Bless us with the fear of the Lord.

[ 51 : 15 ] And grant us, Lord, that courage, boldness, to stand in thy name and for thy sake.

Lord, we pray that we may be wise as serpents, harmless as doves. Send forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. And thou art able to keep thy lambs surrounded by a pack of wolves. Lord, so be with us each. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us. Amen.

Amen.