



## Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

### May 19/20, 2018 - Jeff Bucknam In Conclusion - (Jude 24-25)

**[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]**

It's graduation season, some of you know that more than others. I have a son who's graduating this year, some of you just graduated, I'll say congratulations to you. Some of you in the room also did not graduate, so I don't know, there's always next year, I guess. Keep working.[Laughter] One of my greatest experiences of my *life* actually was when I graduated from college. I remember handing my paper, the final paper to Dr. Leonard Helthgott, Western Washington University's History Department, it was the final formal act that I had that I had to take in order to receive my degree. I handed it to him in his hands right as he sat over his desk. He looked up from the paper and said, "Well, congratulations." And I felt this kind of soaring sense in my spirit as I walked out of his office and I walked triumphantly down the hallway and down the stairs and there were double doors that exited the university I attended onto this big central area of the campus called, Red Square, where a bunch of students were there and I flung open the doors and I lurched out and I stood there as the sun - if there was a movie the sun would've been shining out in the distance. I don't know if it was shining, but I remember thinking, "Oh the sun is shining and the doors are open." At that point, like June and I flung the doors open and I screamed, "YESSSS!" You know William Wallace type, "YAHHHHH!" And everyone in the Red Square turned and looked at me, "Are you okay?"

"More than okay!" It's done, college. You contrast that to what happened when I finished my doctoral degree. I had to defend my doctoral dissertation down in Los Angeles and I left, they said, "Well this has gone well but you know we'll see we have to finish the paper and stuff."

"Okay." So I came back here and I received a FedEx envelope and my admin assistant came to me and she handed it to me at my desk like six weeks after the meeting. And I looked at it and I thought, "Oh does it have white powder in it, in any place." Ripped it open, and I pulled out my degree. There was no letter with it, it was just the degree. Very anticlimactic this moment, there was about 13 people in the office and I sat in the corner. And I was like, "Umm this is awkward." So I stood up and I said, "Listen I just feel like I need to say something at this moment. I've just officially become a doctor. From now on I shall be known as Dr. Jeff Bucknam." [Laughter] And they have not called me that once. [Laughter]

You know when you complete something significant you feel like there needs to be words to it, lofty words, formal words. We need to say something significant to kind of bring closure to this event. What you find in Jude 24-25 is precisely that. What you find are lofty words about God. Jude in this book began his book with lofty words about God and what he's done for his people. He calls these people, the called, and kept in Jesus Christ, loved in God, but then he returns to that theme in the end. Kind of his bookend. Start with God then we're going to talk about false teaching in the church. He talks a great



length about the false teachers and then how it is that we're supposed to respond to them but then in the end he returns his focus to God. And he wants to give some really beautiful words actually about God and his character and what he's done for us at the end here. If you're ever been in church for any period of time at all, you know a lot of time we finish our services with what's called a benediction. It's just, it's like a capstone to what we just went through and we refocus our attention on God. That's what you have here, in fact this is one of the benedictions that we use frequently in our church at the end of our services. So it will sound familiar to you, here I'll read it. Jude 24-25,

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

There's a lot said about God here. Like he packs this with statements about what God is like and so we can take all our time to spend on the nine things that I identified that he said about God. He's the only God, he's our Saviour, he's majestic and glorious and powerful and authoritative and eternal. Those are all true they'd all make great sermons but I want to focus on the two first things that he says about God, because they particularly pertain to what he's doing in our lives, okay. The other things are statements about who he is and there fantastic glorious statements that have implications for us, but these two are particularly important for what God's doing in our lives. And so if you like to take notes you just want to keep track where we are in the middle of this, number one, my first point is going to be that God guards, and number 2 that it's God's goal. So God guards and God's goal.

### **[God Guard's]**

Here's the first of those. God guards, Jude 24, just read it,

“To him who is able to keep you from stumbling”

I'm going to stop there. “To him who is able to keep you from stumbling.” That word *keep*, is a word that's translated - so the original language of the New Testament is Greek and when we translate it one of the ways we translate that Greek word is, keep, but one of the other ways we translate it is, guard. It's a word that's used of a sentinel who's guarding an important asset. Or you know picture a guard, a professional military man standing at the corner of a facility and you can not get in because he is armed with whatever weaponry is necessary to keep you away. If you've ever seen celebrities when they come out of their important rooms and they got to go from the room through the crowds to their limousine or whatever car is waiting for them. And they are surrounded, more important people that they are the more guards surround them. If you've ever seen aerial photos of it, when they have these guards surrounding them, and those guards job is to make sure that nobody touches the celebrity. They are too important to touch. And so if you want to get in there and reach your hand out and touch LeBron James head or something like that, those guards job is to make sure you can't even get close to them. Like they will throw you away. There's this barrier between you and them. It's the image here. God is



able to guard you, from what? Well from stumbling. That's the language that's used here. Guard you from stumbling.

So I make fun sometimes of parents of young toddlers, only because I was one once both a toddler and a parent of a young toddler. But they, when they're walking behind their little first born and they just are freaked out because the baby just learned how to walk and they're like, "Oh he's going to go over." And their hands are always right underneath them, you know, making sure they don't fall over. But I'd say by the third one they don't care at all. [Laughter] But they're holding them up. That's what it means to guard from stumbling. I've been watching YouTube videos way too much lately. I'm going to show you a video of a father who's better than all of us. Here you go. [video playing] He's like super dad, right. Man that kid would've been done if I was in that field right, [laughter] because there's no way I'm getting down that hill. There's a great picture though, so this is the idea that Jude's trying to get at, is that the ability that God has, he's fast enough to outrun any little tikes car. He's able to any danger that presents itself that's going to run over your faith, he's able to deliver you from because of his ability to do so. He has the power to *keep* whomever he calls. So I've been using the language that God will bring through the minefield, through the reefs to safe harbour, he *guarantees* it. He's in that boat, he will get you there. It's all dependent on his ability, not yours, but his. So God calls he keeps.

Now I got to tell you what, in conversations that I have with people after I make that point, this is a very consistent point made in the Scriptures. That people's salvation is secure and you should have assurance, there should be a well spring of joy in your heart if you believe in the Lord Jesus. That despite your failings, God *will* preserve you to the end. I get emails from people who really seem to doubt that. So here's what I want to do in the next couple of minutes. I'm going to dogpile you with Scripture. Remember dogpile? You know you dogpile your friend, first guy jumps on, the next one and then the next one. I'm going to do that to you okay? Just to try mount up, so that at the end you are laying on the ground saying, "Okay I give up, God keeps, God keeps." Alright, it's a good image. Here we go. Romans 8:28-30, this is a passage that I bring up repeatedly in our church.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who *love* him [Or when he says good there, he's probably meaning eternal good, not temporary, momentary, happiness, he's talking about your ultimate joy. God is working for the good of those who love him in all things], who have been *called* according to his purpose. [Okay so how do you know that that is true? What guarantee can Paul, the writer here, give you that that's actually the case. That God is using all things to work for your eternal good. Well] For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined [those he foreknew he predestined, and those he predestined], he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified"

In theological terms we call this the golden chain. There is no person who is for foreknown who is also not glorified. In fact the language here is a past tense when he talks about glorified, because in the mind of God it's already accomplished. It's not something that's *happening*, it's something that's *happened*, so you can talk about like it's already happened. There's no one who's left out of the group



who is justified, “Oh you were justified but you’re not going to be glorified.” There’s *nobody* like that! Now I know that I’m right about that because of what comes immediately after this. Romans 8:31-39, okay right on the heels of that Apostle Paul says,

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? [Pause for effect. Hmmm ... what’s the answer to that question? If God is for us who can be against us? Now you’re not convinced yet. Okay he keeps coming] He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? [I mean he crucified his Son for you, you think he’s going to leave out all the other parts that’s going to mean application of what the Son’s done for your eternal benefit? Come on. If he’s given you his Son, he’s going to give you everything else.] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is *God* who justifies. [I mean in that courtroom who’s going to come and bring a charge against those God has said are mine. God’s the judge, he gets to make the determination. He’s already made the determination. There’s nobody who’s going to be able to change his mind on this.] Who then is the one who condemns? [verse 34] No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. [So you’ve got the first member of the Trinity who’s the judge, the second member of the Trinity who’s your counsel and their both on your side, the deck is stacked in your favour.] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? [That’s a lot of bad things, but will they separate you?] .... No, [verse 37] in *all these things* we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced [Now at this point I think the apostle Paul is like, ‘Okay come on, how do I say this in such exhaustive terms, I will leave *nothing* out, so that you walk away from this passage knowing that those who God calls he keeps, how do I say that, so here’s how he goes. Now] in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

I hope you’re convinced. I have a fear that you’re not. I’m going to throw another person on top of the dogpile here. John 10:22-30,

“Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. [So Solomon’s Colonnade is just a section of the temple, he’s walking along there and he gets surrounded by a bunch of critics, Jewish critics who were going to ask a really important question. Verse 24] The Jews who were gathered around him, saying, ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.’ [‘Oh Jesus why all the confounding language? Why don’t you just say it plainly boy? Are you the Messiah, are you the deliverer, the king who is coming? Or are we to wait for another? Just be *clear* man! Give us *evidence*!'] Jesus answered [verse 25], ‘I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, [‘Guys if you followed me around for any period of time and you saw me healing the lame and delivering people from the power of demons and doing the mighty miracles, you probably should make some good conclusions



about that about who I am. The fact that you don't says something about you.' verse 26] but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I *give them* eternal life, and they shall [listen now,] *never* perish; *no one* will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my *Father's hand*. I and the Father are one.”

Like we have the same opinion regarding this matter. I love that image of being snatched out of a hand. From time to time in my life my little girl, I will say to her whenever I want attention from her, I'll grab something she likes, hold it in my hand and say, “You want that thing, that barrette, that thing back, you want the jellybean, whatever. You want that?”

“Yes.”

“Come and get it.” She'll come and try and pry open my hand and she can't cause she's weak. [Laughter] So she'll try and pry my hand open. Then, <crying>“Daddy!” and then she cries and then that's the win. So, “Here you go you can have it.” So you're holding it tight, Jesus is saying, when God gives this to me I clasp it and there is no one who can loosen that grip. In fact my father takes his hand, wraps it on top of my hand, so now you have the first member of the Trinity and the second member of the Trinity *holding you*. Those who God calls he keeps.

One more, Ephesians 1:13,

“And you [the apostle Paul writes] also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. [So you responded to the message about Jesus. Repent and believe the gospel. So there's a moment in the life of every Christian where they respond to the good news about Jesus Christ, that he has come to save you from your sin.] When you believed [that], you were *marked* in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,”

In the ancient world the way you told other people that this particular item belonged to you was that you had a seal that you would, for lack of a better word, brand it with. Okay we do this with cattle ranchers these days, they take a brand, how do you know my cows are not your cows. Well I'm going to take my brand, singe it in the back of the cow so that when you walk by you say, “Oh that's a Bucknam cow” right it's in my field but it's not mine. It *belongs* to the Bucknam's. My mother used to do this with my underwear. [Laughter] Yes? Every mother in the room knows what that's like, which is kind of weird isn't it? “Honey, I'm going to put your name in your underwear in case you lose them.” Like I don't know where am I going to lose my underwear Mom? But I did. [Laughter] It's mine, there's a sign, a signature, a seal, some of you have a special way you sign a particular thing, It shows that this belongs to you. So what this is saying is that God, when you believed, God took his Holy Spirit and he branded you with the Spirit. Marking you out, this one belongs to me. Ephesians 1:13-14,

“...you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit [now] guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.”



So when I give a deposit to a business and say I'm going to come back in three hours with the rest of the money. If they sell the thing that I put the deposit on between the time I put the deposit on it and the time I return, that's an injustice is it not? So if God were to lose you after making this deposit of the Spirit. If he were to lose you and you were to go away, that would be an injustice on God's part. Those who God calls he keeps. Man, there's so many more of these I could do this. I just want to convince you cause here's the thing. This is such a rich thought, that despite all of your wavering, despite all of your wandering and inability to follow Jesus, he doesn't pin your future on your ability but on his.

I have a dear friend, I got to know in New Zealand when I was a pastor there. He has this interesting story. He said me when he went through high school, kind of was around the church for a bit. You know what it's like, you go through high school and you decide there are better things in the world than Christianity. And so he departed in the church and got involved in a lifestyle that he was never very specific about, but I know it involved a lot of drugs and he ended up actually going through rehab a few times. He would tell me from time to time, "Jeff I would wake up in beds and I didn't know how I got there at midnight or whatever. And I would wake up and even though I never wanted anything to do with God anymore in these moments at night it was like there was, I mean in the midst of my sin, God was there. And I would just push him away and shun him and I didn't want to have anything to do with it. Try to go to sleep. Take sleeping pills in order in fact to get him off my mind." Well one thing led to another, he goes to rehab, eventually he has to end up back at his home. He said it was Sunday morning when finally after having a good long look and what had happened in his life he sat there on a Sunday morning, of all times. And he woke up and he finally gave in. He said, "I just couldn't put up with God's pestering anymore." He said, "I just said fine. I mean my life is a mess. I'm not doing really well on my own. I give up and I give in." So he goes and he gets himself dressed for church. His parents are like, "What are you doing...what?!?" He gets himself dressed, "I'm going to church." They're freaking out. He arrives at the church where he used to attend. He walks through the door of his church and Cory, dear Cory, is surrounded by people, who just rush him and cling to his neck and say, "Oh we've prayed for you!" He said it was like being married cause there was a line of people, like a reception line. I said, "So what is it that brought you back?" He said, "God just wouldn't leave me alone."

Have you ever seen that TV show, *Mantracker*? Yeah? Some of you know what I'm talking about, those of you that don't know *Mantracker*, it's basically this crusty old Albertan dude and he rides a horse. And he basically says, "Listen I can track you down." So the game is about 10 kilometres from the starting point these guys, these two people, these two novices need to kind of get there. They're usually from Vancouver or something, right and, "We can do it, we work out all the time." So they go, you have to go 10 kilometres and the Mantracker will get you. He's got a lasso and he'll lasso you and get you at some point. It's a race to the finish line. You have to get there before he gets you. Well they never win, I mean occasionally they win because the Mantracker gets sick or something, but they never ever win. They're usually, "Oh we'll do this secret thing where we show that we're going this way but we actually go this way. Ohh that will throw him off." It never throws him off, "Oh they faked it here but they went that way." And he follows them and he sometimes hides in the bushes and watches them sleep at night. Ohhh creepy. [Laughter] It's a great image though, he always gets his man. You do see that. That God always gets his man or woman. He's *awesome* at this. So who God calls, he keeps. You do know that if you have loved ones who are wandering, he is able. He is able to bring them back. And if you are



worried, because you're like, "Man how are we going to get through all the false teaching, how are we going to keep following Jesus. And I have propensities to sin here and there. He's able. God guards.

### [God's Goal]

Here's the second one, God's goal. Here's the second part of Jude 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"

So God is able not only to keep you but "to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy." That's a reference to the Day of Judgement. He can take you from what you currently are and he's going to turn you into a masterpiece. If you ever renovate your home, or a business or something, one of the things that architects do these days, or renovators will do is that they, they give their plans to a designer, a digital designer and they'll put those plans, you know what's the finished product going to look like and they'll put it on like a video screen or a file that they'll send you. And you can take like flights through your imaginary, a virtual tour of what your home will one day look like. I've never seen anybody who's seen those who's like, "Oh this is horrible." No it's always like, "Woah this is going to be fantastic and beautiful." I have a friend who does some renovations and he said this whole advance has been awesome for his business. He said because what used to happen often times is that the person who has hired him, they'll start renovating the house and of course in order to renovate the house and turn it into what it is that you've shown them. You just have to knock all the walls down. Right, and gut the thing and take care of the termite damage and all sorts of nonsense. And sometimes the people who've hired you will walk through the door and be like, "Ohhh my goodness, you've ruined the house!" And this has been lovely because you can put this picture in front of them and say, "Now remember, despite what you see in the present moment, this is where we're going. In order to get here, we have to do this first. Your house doesn't look like this now, it will." So the question you have to ask, okay if that's an image that we can apply, what is God's goal for you? What is God trying to do in your life. Why did he save you. He could have saved you and sucked you immediately up to heaven. He did not do that, so there's this period between the time you're saved and the time that he's going to suck you into heaven through death or his return. So what's going on in this time. What's he trying to do. Now I want to answer that question with a few passages of Scripture. So we're in our little Bible study and I want you to try to figure out what the answer to that is. It should be relatively clear. Ephesians 1:3-4,

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world [Why?] to be *holy* and *blameless* in his sight."

So his goal is our holiness. Our obedience to his commands, our good works, that's his goal. Ephesians 5, Paul uses some images for this that'll help. Ephesians 5:25-27,



“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her [Okay so why did Christ love the church and give himself up for the church? Verse 26] *to make her holy*, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a *radiant church*, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but *holy and blameless*.”

So this is a wedding image here, yes? Which is one you should be well acquainted with, some of you who are very tired after watching the Royal Wedding. Have you ever seen a bride who is not radiant? Well no! That's the word we usually use for a bride. I was at a wedding one time, I was officiating. And we were seated under a tree in this big park. And the bride, she came out kind of from a distance and walked across the field and the sun was shining down on her. They did it at just the right time so that the sun was shining down on her and she was walking in her dress alone through this field to come to her groom. And usually I've seen this so many times it just becomes normal but at this particular occasion I was like, “Oh dear. She's gorgeous. Like that's amazing.” But you know to be honest with you at every wedding the bride is gorgeous. Now it took time to get her there. [Laughter] I mean that morning when she woke up, eh I don't know. And then she's there and you're like, “Woah, that's amazing what a transformation.” Right that's the image that he's actually working with here. [Laughter] It is, and it's drawn actually from an Old Testament passage where God says about the way that he treats Israel. You listen the way that I called you, you were like a strung out hooker on the side of the street, and nobody wanted you and you were nothing and I came and I loved you I took you into my home and I adorned you with gold. And I gave you beautiful piercings and I have restored you so that now I'm presenting you as a *glorious bride, radiant bride*. That's what God's doing with his church. You're not, <whispering> listen, you're not radiant yet. You will be, but that's what he's doing. Romans 8:29,

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

So the image of a sculptor who goes out and he marks, predestines a stone that he says, “That'll be perfect for the sculpture that I want, the masterpiece that I want to make that is the perfect stone for it.” So he marks it out, later he sends somebody to go and collect it and they bring it into his workshop and he starts to chisel away at everything away that is not the masterpiece. His goal is to take it one day, to sit in the Louvre so that all the hoards that go past it say two things. Number one, “What a glorious masterpiece,” and second, “What a glorious sculptor.” That's what he's doing, but you're not the masterpiece yet. But you will be after the chisling. See God's goal in your life is to present you in Jude's language here, God's goal in your life is to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy. He saved you in order to make you holy. The theological language here is that he justifies us in order to sanctify us. There is no one who is justified who he's not sanctifying.

Now there are a couple of really important implications of that theological point, okay. I'll give you the two of them as we finish here. Number one if God's goal is my holiness then I know I'm a true Christian when I see growth in holiness. One of the marks or one of the signs or evidences that I'm a real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is when I see holiness growing in my life cause that's what God is after. That's what he's doing in my life. The effect of him doing it is holiness, it's obedience to him. So



you get some really provocative language in some of the Scriptures about this. 1 John 2:3-6, just listen to how pointed John is here, he says,

“We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. Whoever says, ‘I know him,’ but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. *This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*”

Now everyone of us in the room go, “Oh my goodness, we’ve got to be perfect? What?!” No, no, you are saved, Christianity is a religion of grace, you are saved by the grace of God and the perfection of Jesus whose merit is given to you by faith. So you believe in the Lord Jesus and his excellence and his moral purity is given to you. It’s attributed to you, and you stand before God justified. But, like we just read at that moment when you believe, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. In fact the Spirit comes to live within you and they’re ought to be in people where the Spirit lives, fruit of that. Yes? So we have passages that talk about the fruit of the Spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control. Those should be things that are evident in the life of a person where the Spirit is dwelling.

If I go, I want to buy a house and there’s a bunch of trees in the backyard. You know your dream has come true, you’re getting property and a walk in the backyard and you look out there and you see all these trees and you say, “I don’t know what kinds of trees these are?” And you’re not an arborist, I think that’s the word. Maybe we should, you’re not a treeologist. And your spouse says to you, “What kind of trees are they?” And you say, “I don’t know but we’ll be able to tell when the fruit comes.” And you know later on in the year you walk out and there’s like, apples and there’s oranges and there’s whatever. All these things are on the trees and you can tell the nature of the tree by the fruit of the tree. You can tell the root of it by the fruit of it. Right, you can tell a Holy Spirit filled tree, a Holy Spirit filled person, when the fruit of that spirit is displayed. If it is not displayed, well now we’ve got some questions. And you say, but wait a minute, I don’t always produce that kind of fruit. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don’t. I do a couple minutes and then I don’t, I mean - love, joy, peace, ohhh patience eeeehhh, in the right moments. If you look at my life you’ll see it’s kind of up and down and up and down. And yes so that’s normal. Have you ever seen a stock market graph, you know from the wider stock market? What you get with the stock market graph is you start here <drawing graph> and then it kind of dips down and then goes up and dips and then eventually, you usually invest at this high point and sell down here right? [Laughter] And listen if you take that section and you say, my experience with the stock market is that we’re going to look in closely and say, “Oh you know, doesn’t work. What a loser of an investor.” But know actually, if you look at the stock market graph as a whole you actually see now there has been growth over time. And this is exactly the way it is with Christ and following him. You’ll have moments where you follow well and other moments where you don’t follow well, where you’re striving in holiness and other times where you’re struggling with holiness, but over time the expectation of a genuine believer in the Lord Jesus is that there should be growth. You should love God more, you should display the fruit of the Spirit more, over time. It’s a process. So if God’s goal in my life is my holiness, then I know I’m a true Christian when I see growth in holiness.



Here's the second one. Second implication of God's goal being my holiness. If God's goal is my holiness then *everything* happening to me, good and bad, serves that purpose. Everything that's going on in my life right now serves that goal. Okay when the renovator comes in and he shows you the videos, this is where we are going, everything that's happening in the current moment regardless of what walls are being knocked down, are serving that end goal. When the sculptor comes and starts chisling off things he is chisling off everything that is *not* masterpiece. The problem of course is that rocks don't feel it and houses don't feel it, right. We feel it. And when God's chisel is used on us, we start crying out, "Wait a minute, what are you doing? Do you hate me God?" No actually he loves you, he's treating you as his son and a daughter. So that's the language that you get in Hebrews 12:7-11,

"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

So one of my sons, when he was little, he used to stand up at the dinner table all the time, drove me nuts. Right, stands up and eat his food sometimes standing there, we'd all be sitting there and he'd be like standing up like he's ready to go on a race immediately afterwards. There were times if he wanted something at the table and he would lean over the table and grab it, right. And he'd stand back up and there'd be imprints on his white shirt or every other kinds of food that we were having. I said, "Listen boy, you need to sit down at the table or I will tape you to that chair." And he's like, "Hmph, right." [Laughter] So one day, no joke, one day we show up at the dinner table and I brought my duct tape. He stood up and I said that's it, I sat him down. I wrapped the duct tape around him to the chair, <crying> "Daddy, wa wa wa."

"You're not going to stand up now are you?"

<crying>"No, I'm sorry, I'm sorry." You might think I'm horrible but he doesn't stand up at the table any longer does he. See in my mind I was thinking some day you're going to be sitting at the dinner table with your fiance and you're going to stand up and start eating and reaching over and they're parents are going to be, "Nope, it's off." And then I'm going to be stuck with you the rest of your life. [Laughter] Yeah but this is what you do when you parent. You have a goal a mind and you work toward that goal. They're not there yet, and listen very closely to me. My commitment toward his transformation is a sign of my love. You'd know I'd hate him if I was indifferent. Why's God messing with my life? Hmmm...Well maybe he's a mantracker, maybe he's going to keep what he calls, maybe his goal is your holiness and you're not there yet. Jude 24-25

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



Let me pray for us. Lord I'm thankful for this passage, for this book, for these words. I pray Father that you'd help us to see your action in our life through your eyes. Would you make sense of our current state in light of where we're headed. And the guarantee that you can get us there. What a great God you are. So encourage us today we pray. In Jesus name. Amen.