

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE  
Blumenort Community Church

“Keep Yourselves in the Love of God”

June 23, 2024

1. Warning: please don't go and try this at home. But if you already have, what is the longest you've driven a vehicle without your hands on the steering wheel?
  1. The artist Carry Underwood sings a song titled “Jesus, take the Wheel,” where she sings about taking her hands off the wheel of her car and how it saved her. Does this phrase do justice to what a Christian's life looks like? Can Christians just “let go and let God?” Explain your answer.
2. **Read Jude 20-21.** The main verb/instruction in this sentence is the phrase: “*Keep yourselves in the love of God.*” Jude's phrase highlights our human responsibility in the salvation process.
  1. In **verse 1**, Jude talks about God being the one who calls, loves and keeps us for Jesus Christ. But here in **verse 21**, Jude talks about our human responsibility to keep ourselves in God's love. How do you reconcile that tension within the book of Jude?
  2. Christians have debated for centuries whether human choice is the primary factor in salvation, as if God is almost not even needed (the Arminian view); or if God is the primary agent of salvation, and humans have no real choice (the Calvinist view). If this debate is new to you, what are your first thoughts? If you're familiar with it, how do you sort through the debate?
  3. Saint Augustine (354-430 CE) is known for saying: “Without God, we cannot save ourselves. Without us, God will not save us.” Is that a helpful way of holding the tension? Explain.
3. **Read Jude 20-21 again.** Because Jude believes Christians are somewhat responsible to keep themselves in God's love, he calls them to three intentional practices: (1) to build their faith on Scripture, (2) to prayer in dependence on God, and (3) to live in light of their future hope.
  1. What do you think Jude expects these practices or spiritual disciplines to do in the lives of his readers? Why recommend them? Or to ask the question from the other side, why would Jude have reason for concern if these Christians were not intentionally doing these things?
  2. **Read Jude 22-23.** What responsibility do these faithful Christians have to their lapsed brothers and sisters in the church? And what role does “*mercy*” play in their response?

