

LIVING HOPE: When Faith Gets Tested

Introduction: How do you know if your faith is genuine?

It's easy to trust God when life is going well. It's easy to worship when the prayers are being answered, the bills are paid, your health is strong, and the future feels secure. It's easy to declare that God is faithful when life makes sense.

But what happens when it doesn't? What happens when following Jesus becomes difficult? What happens when obedience costs you something? What happens when doing the right thing doesn't make your life easier, but harder?

That's when faith is tested.

Over the past several months we've been walking through 1 Peter together, and one of the things I love about preaching through books of the Bible is that we don't get to skip the difficult passages. We let God's Word set the agenda because we trust that the Holy Spirit knows exactly what His Church needs to hear.

Peter has been building one beautiful argument throughout this letter. Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we've been born again into a living hope. That hope isn't only about where we're going one day—it changes how we live today.

We've learned that living hope shapes our identity before it shapes our behavior. It calls us to holiness in a culture of compromise. It transforms our homes, our relationships, our witness, and even the way we respond when life becomes difficult.

Peter reminded us that living hope prepares us to remain faithful through suffering. Today he takes us one step deeper.

He answers the question. **What is God doing when our faith is tested?**

Because suffering and the testing of our faith are not exactly the same thing.

Suffering is in the circumstance. Testing is what God is doing through the circumstance.

That distinction changes everything. Peter isn't merely trying to explain why Christians suffer. He's showing us what God accomplishes through suffering.

Historical Context

Peter actually introduced this idea at the very beginning of his letter.

In chapter one he wrote, *"These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."* (1 Peter 1:6–7)

Now, as Peter comes toward the end of this letter, he returns to that same image.

Only now the fire isn't theoretical anymore. These believers are living in it. Many are facing rejection, slander, and growing pressure because they belong to Jesus. Some are beginning to wonder,

“Has God forgotten us?” “Did we miss His will?” “Why is this happening if we’re following Christ?”

Peter’s answer is wonderfully simple. “No.” God hasn’t abandoned you. **He’s refining you.**

Church, I think that’s one of the most encouraging truths in all of Scripture.

God doesn’t waste the fire. He uses it to refine our faith.

That leads us to the central truth of today’s message.

Big Idea: Living hope doesn’t keep our faith from being tested—it gives us confidence that God is using the test to refine us.

Let’s read God’s Word together.

Reading One: 1 Peter 4:12–19

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice in as much as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” ¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Point One: Living Hope Understands the Purpose of the Test

Peter begins with these words: **“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”** (1 Peter 4:12)

I love how Peter begins. He doesn't begin with correction. He begins with compassion. **“Dear friends...”**

Peter isn't scolding suffering believers. He's shepherding them.

Then he gives a command that almost sounds impossible. **“Do not be surprised.”**

The Greek word Peter uses means to be startled by something foreign or unexpected.

He's saying, “Don't think suffering is foreign to the Christian life.”

Peter isn't saying we should enjoy suffering. He's saying we shouldn't mistake suffering for God's absence.

Jesus Himself prepared His disciples for this. In John 16:33 He said, *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Notice Jesus didn't say, “You might have trouble.” He said, **“You will.”**

The promise wasn't a trouble-free life. The promise was His overcoming presence in the middle of it.

Peter goes on to describe suffering as a **“fiery ordeal.”**

The Greek word is **πύρωσις (pyrosis)**. It literally refers to the refining furnace used by a goldsmith to purify precious metals.

Imagine a refiner placing gold into the fire. He doesn't do it because he hates the gold. He does it because he values it.

The fire isn't meant to destroy it. It's meant to remove everything that doesn't belong. Peter says that's what God is doing with our faith.

The fire doesn't create genuine faith. It reveals it. It strengthens it. It purifies it.

That's why I want you to remember this sentence throughout today's message:

Suffering is the fire. Faith is what God is refining.

James says something remarkably similar. *"Consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."* (James 1:2-3)

Did you notice what James says? He doesn't say suffering produces perseverance. He says, **"The testing of your faith."**

Every person experiences suffering. Christians and non-Christians alike experience sickness, grief, disappointment, loss, and pain. But for the follower of Jesus, suffering is never meaningless. In the hands of God, it becomes the place where faith is refined, perseverance is produced, and Christ is formed within us.

Peter continues, **"But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ..."** (v. 13)

Let's be clear. Peter is not asking us to celebrate pain. The Bible never glorifies suffering for suffering's sake. He's inviting us to rejoice because our suffering identifies us with our Savior.

The word **“participate”** carries the idea of sharing or having fellowship with someone.

Peter says that when we suffer because we belong to Jesus, we’re walking a road our Savior walked before us.

Jesus was misunderstood. Jesus was rejected. Jesus was falsely accused. Jesus suffered for doing good.

When we faithfully follow Him through suffering, we’re never walking unfamiliar ground. We’re following in the footsteps of our Shepherd.

That changes the question we ask. Instead of saying, *“Lord, why is this happening to me?”*

We begin asking, *“Lord, what are You producing in me?”* That’s a completely different perspective.

Peter then gives an important clarification. **“If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.”** (v. 15)

Not all suffering is the same. Sometimes we suffer because we live in a broken world. Sometimes we suffer because of our own sinful or foolish choices.

Peter isn’t talking about either of those.

He’s talking about suffering that comes because we faithfully belong to Jesus Christ.

Then Peter concludes this section with one of the most comforting commands in the passage. **“So then, those who suffer according to**

God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." (v. 19)

The word **"commit"** means to entrust something valuable into another person's safekeeping.

Picture placing your greatest treasure into the hands of someone you trust completely.

Peter says, That's what faith does.

Entrust your future. Entrust your family. Entrust your reputation. Entrust your fears. Entrust your unanswered questions. Entrust your pain.

Notice Peter doesn't simply say, "Entrust yourself to your Creator." He says, **"Your faithful Creator."**

The God who made you has not forgotten you. The God who called you has not abandoned you. The God who began His work in you is still at work—even in the fire.

And that raises the next question. If we're called to entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator... **What does that actually look like?**

Reading Two: 1 Peter 5:1-7

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. ⁵ In the same way, you

who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Point Two: Living Hope Trusts the Faithful Creator

Peter ended the previous section with these words: **"Those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good."** (4:19)

Now, as we begin chapter five, Peter doesn't change subjects. He's answering the question we were just left asking.

What does it look like to entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator?

At first glance, chapter five feels like Peter jumps from one topic to another. He talks about elders, then younger believers, then humility, then anxiety.

But if you follow his train of thought, you'll discover one thread tying everything together.

Trust.

Peter is showing us what tested faith looks like. It becomes a trusting faith.

He begins by speaking to the elders. **"To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings..."** (5:1)

I love how Peter introduces himself. He could have appealed to his authority as an apostle. He could have reminded them that he walked

with Jesus, witnessed the Transfiguration, preached on the Day of Pentecost, and saw thousands come to faith.

Instead, he simply says, **“I am a fellow elder.”** That’s humility.

Think about Peter’s journey. This is the same Peter who once argued with the other disciples about who was the greatest. The same Peter who confidently declared that even if everyone else abandoned Jesus, he never would. The same Peter who denied his Lord three times before sunrise. The same Peter who walked away weeping bitterly over his failure. But failure wasn’t the end of Peter’s story.

After the resurrection, Jesus met Peter on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

Three times Jesus asked, *“Do you love Me?”* And three times He recommissioned him. *“Feed My lambs.” “Shepherd My sheep.” “Feed My sheep.”*

Years later, God’s grace had shaped Peter into the very kind of shepherd he now calls others to become.

One of the clearest marks of spiritual maturity is that we become more impressed with Christ than we are with ourselves.

Peter continues, **“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care...”** (v. 2)

There’s another beautiful detail here that most English readers would never notice.

The Greek word Peter uses for “**shepherd**” is ποιμάνατε (**poimanate**). It’s from the same word family Jesus used when He restored Peter in John 21.

After Peter’s greatest failure, Jesus didn’t simply forgive him. He recommissioned him. *“Shepherd My sheep.”*

Now, years later, Peter passes that same calling on to the next generation of church leaders.

Grace had come full circle. The man who once needed to be restored is now strengthening others.

Isn’t that just like God? The places where His grace has restored us often become the very places where He calls us to serve others.

Peter reminds every pastor and elder of something we should never forget. This is **God’s flock**.

Not my flock. Not your flock. His flock.

That changes everything. Pastors aren’t owners. They’re under-shepherds. Jesus alone is the **Chief Shepherd**.

That’s actually a unique title in the New Testament. Peter calls Jesus the **Chief Shepherd** because every other shepherd ultimately answers to Him.

Every pastor. Every elder. Every ministry leader.

One day we will all give an account to the Chief Shepherd for how we cared for people who ultimately belonged to Him.

Peter says shepherd willingly. Not because someone forced you. Not for dishonest gain. Not by lording authority over people. But by becoming an example to the flock.

That's exactly how Jesus led. He didn't use His authority to elevate Himself. He used it to serve others. He washed feet. He welcomed children. He touched lepers. He laid down His life. That's what spiritual leadership looks like.

But Peter isn't finished. He broadens the conversation. **"In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another..."** (v. 5)

Did you catch those words? **All of you.**

Peter has moved from pastors to people. Now every believer is included. **The garment every Christian should wear is humility.**

The phrase **"clothe yourselves"** paints the picture of a servant tying on an apron before serving others. Humility isn't something we put on once a week when we come to church.

It's the clothing of a disciple. Every single day.

Peter then quotes Proverbs. **"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."**

Those are sobering words. God doesn't simply dislike pride. He opposes it.

Why? Because pride says, *"I've got this." "I don't need help." "I'll handle this myself."* Pride insists on being in control.

Humility willingly places itself under the leadership of God.

That's why Peter continues, **"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time."** (v. 6)

Don't miss that phrase. **God's mighty hand.**

Throughout the Old Testament, God's mighty hand was a picture of His saving power. It was His mighty hand that delivered Israel from Egypt. His mighty hand that sustained them through the wilderness. His mighty hand that accomplished what His people could never accomplish on their own.

Peter says, Place yourself beneath that hand.

Church, the safest place in the universe is under the mighty hand of God. When our faith is tested, our instinct is often to grab tighter.

We want answers. We want certainty. We want control.

Peter says, The pathway to peace isn't greater control. It's greater surrender.

And then he gives us one of the most comforting invitations in all of Scripture. **"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."** (v. 7)

The word **"cast"** is the Greek word **ἐπιρίψαντες (epiripsantes)**. It means to throw something completely upon someone else.

Here's what's fascinating. This same word appears in Luke 19 when the disciples **cast** their cloaks onto the colt before Jesus rode into Jerusalem.

They took what belonged to them... and laid it on something else that would carry the King.

Peter says, Do the same thing with your anxiety. Take the burden that's weighing you down and place it completely upon Christ. Don't keep carrying what your Savior has invited you to entrust to Him.

That's what faith does. It releases the burden instead of rehearsing it.

Why? Because He cares for you. Don't rush past those words.

The Creator of the universe cares about what keeps you awake at night.

He cares about your marriage. He cares about your children. He cares about your finances. He cares about your diagnosis. He cares about your grief. He cares about your future. He cares because you're His child.

This is one of the most important lessons of the Christian life. **Learning where to take the Load of Life**

I wonder how many of us have prayed about something... and then picked it right back up again.

We've said, "Lord, I trust You." But we've continued carrying the burden ourselves.

Peter says, Cast it. Release it. Entrust it. Because here's what tested faith discovers.

Faith that's tested becomes stronger as it learns to trust.

Not because the fire gets easier. But because the One holding us has always been faithful.

Reading Three: 1 Peter 5:8-14

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. ¹² With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. ¹³ She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Point Three: Living Hope Stands Firm in the Grace of God

Peter has shown us the purpose of the fire. He's shown us what tested faith looks like as it learns to trust. Now he shows us how believers finish well.

He writes, **"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."** (1 Peter 5:8)

Peter isn't trying to frighten the church. He's trying to prepare the church.

The Christian life isn't lived on a playground. It's lived on a battlefield.

There is a real enemy. Jesus spoke about him. Paul warned about him. And Peter knew him personally.

In fact, I can't help but wonder if Peter remembered the words Jesus spoke to him on the night before the crucifixion.

Jesus looked at him and said, *“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.”* (Luke 22:31–32)

Think about that. Jesus didn’t say Peter would never be tested. He prayed that Peter’s faith would endure the test.

Peter knew what it was like to have his faith sifted. He knew what it felt like to fail. He knew what it was like to stand around a charcoal fire and deny the One he loved three times before the rooster crowed. He also knew what it was like to be restored by the grace of Jesus Christ.

That’s why Peter isn’t writing as someone who has never struggled. He’s writing as someone who has discovered that God’s grace is greater than his greatest failure.

Peter says the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Notice he says **“like”** a roaring lion. **Satan is dangerous, but he is not sovereign.**

He is not equal to God. He is not God’s rival. He is a defeated enemy who still seeks to discourage, deceive, and distract God’s people.

One of his greatest strategies is convincing believers that the fire means God has abandoned them.

“If God really loved you...” “If your faith were genuine...” “If God were truly in control...”

Church, those are ancient lies. Peter has spent this entire letter answering them.

No.

The fire is not evidence that God has abandoned you. **God doesn't waste the fire. He uses it to refine our faith.**

So Peter says, **"Resist him, standing firm in the faith..."** (v. 9)

Notice what he doesn't say. He doesn't say, "Fear him." He doesn't say, "Become fascinated with him." He doesn't tell believers to obsess over spiritual warfare.

He simply says, **Stand firm.** How?

By remaining anchored in the truth you've already received. By remembering who Jesus is. By remembering who you are. By remembering that your hope is living because your Savior is living.

Peter continues, **"...because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings."**

One of the enemy's greatest weapons is isolation. He wants you to believe you're the only one struggling. The only one grieving. The only one wondering if you can keep going.

Peter says, You're not alone.

The Church has always walked through seasons of testing. Generation after generation, followers of Jesus have discovered the same truth.

God is faithful. If He sustained His people then... He will sustain His people now.

Then Peter reaches what I believe is the high point of this entire passage. **"And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal**

glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.” (vv. 10–11)

Before we move on, don't miss who's writing those words. Peter says, **“The God of all grace...”** Think about that. Peter isn't writing as a theologian in an ivory tower. He's writing as a man who knows what grace feels like.

He failed publicly. He denied Jesus repeatedly. He wept bitterly. He stood beside one charcoal fire in the courtyard of the high priest, overwhelmed by fear and shame.

But that wasn't the last charcoal fire in Peter's story. After the resurrection, Jesus built another charcoal fire on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Around that fire, Jesus didn't shame Peter. He restored him.

Three denials were met with three opportunities to declare his love. Three failures were met with three commissions to shepherd Christ's sheep.

Church, aren't you grateful that our greatest failures don't have to become our final chapter?

The God who restored Peter is still restoring people today.

So when Peter says, **“The God of all grace...”**

He's not merely explaining a doctrine. **He's telling his story.**

Then Peter makes an incredible promise. He says that after we have suffered **“a little while,”** God Himself will restore us.

Peter isn't minimizing suffering. Some of you have walked through years of grief. Some have carried pain that no one else knows about.

Peter isn't saying your suffering is insignificant. He's comparing it to eternity.

The Apostle Paul says something similar in 2 Corinthians 4 when he writes that our **"light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."**

Compared to eternity, even our longest trial is only for a little while.

Then Peter says something remarkable. **God Himself** will restore you.

Don't miss those words. He doesn't say God will send someone else. He doesn't say an angel will do it. He says **God Himself**.

The God who called you... The God who saved you... The God who has been refining your faith... Will personally complete His work in you.

Peter uses four beautiful words.

He will **restore** you. He will mend what has been broken. He will **strengthen** you. He will give you strength you don't possess on your own. He will make you **firm**. He will establish you on a foundation that cannot be shaken. He will make you **steadfast**. He will give you the endurance to finish well.

Do you see the progression? Peter began this letter talking about fire. Now he ends by talking about grace.

Because the fire was never the destination. **Grace was.** The fire is the process. **Christlikeness is the purpose.**

Isn't it beautiful how Peter brings the entire letter full circle? The refining fire he introduced in chapter one now leads to God's promise

in chapter five. The God who allowed the fire is the same God who finishes His work through the fire.

Then Peter closes with these words. **“This is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.”** (v. 12)

I think that’s more than the conclusion of this passage.

It’s the summary of the entire letter. Stand fast.

Stand fast when life is easy. Stand fast when faith is tested. Stand fast when you’re misunderstood. Stand fast when you’re weary. Stand fast because your hope has never rested in your circumstances. Your hope rests in Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Church, isn’t that exactly what we see in Jesus? No one’s faith was ever tested more than His.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, He surrendered Himself completely to the Father’s will. At the cross, He suffered—not for His sins, but for ours.

When He was mocked, He didn’t retaliate. When He was insulted, He didn’t threaten. When He suffered, He entrusted Himself to His faithful Father.

The cross looked like defeat. But three days later, the resurrection declared victory.

The fire didn’t destroy Him. The Father vindicated Him. And because Jesus stood firm, our hope stands firm.

If your life belongs to Christ, your story follows the same pattern. Testing is not the end. Grace is not the end. **Glory is.**

That's why Peter can tell suffering believers to stand firm. Not because they're strong enough. But because the God of all grace has promised to finish what He started.

Challenge

So let me leave you with three questions. Not for the person sitting next to you. Not for your spouse. Not for your Life Group. For you.

First... Where is your faith being tested today?

Not simply, *"Where are you suffering?"* Those aren't always the same question. Where is God inviting you to trust Him more deeply? Maybe your faith is being tested in your marriage. Maybe it's in your parenting. Maybe it's through a doctor's report you never wanted to hear. Maybe it's financial uncertainty. Maybe it's loneliness. Maybe it's waiting. Maybe it's disappointment. Maybe you've been faithfully obeying Jesus, and instead of things getting easier, they've gotten harder. Remember what Peter has taught us today. **God doesn't waste the fire. He uses it to refine our faith.**

Second... What burden are you still carrying that God has invited you to cast upon Him?

You've worried about it. You've talked about it. You've replayed it in your mind a thousand times. You've prayed about it... but if you're honest... you've picked it right back up again. Peter doesn't simply tell us to mention our anxiety to God. He tells us to cast it upon Him. This week, every anxious thought can become another opportunity to trust

your faithful Creator. Every time the burden comes back... cast it again. Every time fear whispers... cast it again. Every time uncertainty rises... cast it again. Because faith doesn't grow by pretending the burden isn't heavy. Faith grows by continually placing the burden into the hands of the One who is strong enough to carry it.

Finally... Will you stand firm?

Not because you have all the answers. Not because you feel strong. Not because the trial is over. Will you stand firm because the God of all grace has promised to finish what He started? Church, hear me. The enemy wants tested faith to become abandoned faith. Peter says, Stand firm. Stand firm because Christ is with you. Stand firm because the Holy Spirit is strengthening you. Stand firm because your church family is walking beside you. Stand firm because your future is secure. Stand firm because your Savior has already overcome. And remember...

Suffering is the fire. Faith is what God is refining. God doesn't waste the fire. He uses it to refine our faith.

Invitation

Before anyone moves, I want us to do something together.

Would you simply open your hands in front of you? Just turn your palms upward.

This is one of the oldest postures of prayer. It's the posture of surrender. It's the posture of dependence. It's the posture of receiving.

You can't receive God's grace with clenched fists. And you can't cast your burdens while you're still holding tightly to them. So with your hands open, would you silently tell the Lord what you've been carrying?

Maybe it's fear. Maybe it's anxiety. Maybe it's grief. Maybe it's shame. Maybe it's disappointment. Maybe it's a relationship that's been weighing on your heart. Maybe it's something no one else in this room even knows about.

Right now, in your own words... Entrust yourself to your faithful Creator. Cast your anxiety upon Him. He cares for you.

Now, as we begin to sing, I want to invite you to respond.

Maybe you've never entrusted your life to Jesus Christ. You've been carrying the weight of sin on your own. Today, the invitation isn't simply to endure hardship. It's to know the Savior who endured the cross for you. Come.

Our prayer team would love to pray with you and introduce you to the living hope found in Jesus Christ.

Maybe you're a believer whose faith has been tested. You've grown weary. You've been standing in the fire for a long time. You need someone to pray with you. Come.

Maybe today your response is simply to say, "Lord, I'm done carrying this alone." Come.

Let's entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator together. Let's pray together. Let's stand together. Because no one was ever meant to walk through the fire alone.

Benediction

As we leave today, receive this blessing.

May the Father remind you that every trial is held within His faithful and loving hands.

May the Son, who endured the cross, conquered the grave, and now reigns in glory, strengthen you to stand firm when your faith is tested.

May the Holy Spirit refine your faith, deepen your trust, and fill your heart with living hope until the day your faith becomes sight and your hope is fulfilled in the presence of Christ.

Church, Go knowing that **God doesn't waste the fire. He uses it to refine our faith.** Go trusting your faithful Creator. Go standing firm in His grace. And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.**