

The Christians Testimony

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[0 : 00] What if we could with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this evening, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the book of Psalms, Psalm 116.

And I want us to walk through this Psalm, but if we just read again at verse one. What the psalmist says, I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy, because He inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call on Him as long as I live.

I love the Lord. The opening words of this Psalm, they remind us that this is the testimony of every Christian.

It doesn't matter about your upbringing, your background, your colour, your past, your income, your home, your family, your nationality, all these things that make us so different and so unique that they pale into insignificance because the testimony of every Christian is, I love the Lord.

I love the Lord. And many of the Lord's people, they love this Psalm because this Psalm, Psalm 116, it's so personal. In fact, Psalm 116, it is the personal testimony of a Christian.

[1 : 23] Now we're not sure who wrote these words. Some claim it was David. Some people say it was King Hezekiah. We don't know. But it doesn't really matter what physical hand penned these words because it was the Holy Spirit who inspired the composition of this Psalm.

And it was the Holy Spirit who has made this Psalm applicable to every Christian in every generation. It was the Holy Spirit who has applied this Psalm to our lives and made it the personal testimony of every Christian.

And you know, it really is a personal testimony because it uses the words, I, my and me. You see that repeated all the way through the Psalm. I, my and me uses these words over 30 times, which not only highlights to us the personal nature of the song, but it also highlights the personal nature of our conversion.

Because when we came to that point in our lives where we could openly and publicly confess, I love the Lord, we were confessing there and then that we have a personal relationship with the Lord.

And that's what the Samist is expressing here in Psalm 116. The Samist praises the Lord publicly because he has come to know the Lord personally.

[2 : 42] The Samist praises the Lord publicly because he has come to know the Lord personally. And you know, that's why Sam 116 is part of a group of six hymns called the Hallel hymns.

They're the Psalms numbered from Psalm 113 to Sam 118. And these hymns, they're called the Hallel hymns because they recount the experience of the children of Israel as they were being delivered from bondage and slavery in Egypt.

And they're called the Hallel hymns from the word hallelujah, which means praise the Lord. And their purpose as Sam's is to praise the Lord for the Lord's wonderful act of redemption.

And you know, is that not why the Christian sings these songs? They are to sing the hallelujah to the Lord and confess to the Lord that I love the Lord.

Because well, every Christian has been delivered from slavery to sin. They've been redeemed with precious blood. It's a wonderful Sam. And so Sam 116 is a Hallel hymn.

[3 : 50] It's the personal testimony of a Christian who praises the Lord for his salvation. And because Sam 116 is the Christian's testimony, I just want us to draw out four aspects of the Christian's testimony in the Sam, four aspects of the Christian's testimony.

And firstly, we see the confession. The first thing we see is the confession. That's in verses one and two, where the Sam is says, I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy, because he has inclined his ear to me.

For I will call on him as long as I live. Now, as we said, the opening words of this Sam are the confession of the Christian. But you know, it was Spurgeon who says he says in his treasury of David, it's a wonderful set of commentaries in Spurgeon's treasury of David.

Spurgeon says that the words, I love the Lord, he says they are a blessed declaration. He says every believer ought to be able to declare without the slightest hesitation, I love the Lord.

He says it was required under the law to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. But that love says Spurgeon was never produced in the heart of mankind, except by the grace of God.

[5 : 14] In fact, Spurgeon, he went on to say in his commentary that it's a wonderful thing, whether to say it publicly to other people or to say it privately to yourself.

It's a wonderful thing to repeat. I love the Lord. I love the Lord. I love the Lord because as Spurgeon says the sweetest of all graces and the surest of all evidences of salvation is love.

The sweetest of all graces and the surest of all evidences of salvation is love. And you know, that's so true because one of the key attributes of God is love.

God is love and God has demonstrated his love towards us in that whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And Jesus says to us in the gospel, greater love hath no man than this.

There are man laid down his life for his friends. Paul even reminds us that we can't be separated from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Paul says, I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth nor any other creature.

[6 : 27] He says, is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And why should we be persuaded about this? Why are we persuaded about the love of God?

Paul says, because the love of God has been poured into our heart by the Holy Spirit. And the first evidence of the spirit in dwelling in our heart, the first fruit of the spirit is love.

But we not only know that we love the Lord, we also know why we love the Lord. As the psalmist says, he heard my voice.

He heard my voice. He has heard my pleas for mercy. He has inclined his ear to me. He has heard me. I love the Lord because he heard me. He heard me.

And you know, the language that the psalmist is using here is the language of humiliation because the title Lord, those, that word in capital letters, it's a title of the covenant king, the covenant king who loves his people with this everlasting and unchanging love.

[7 : 33] And the psalmist is saying that the covenant king, the Lord, he has stretched down and lowered himself. He has humbled himself to listen to my pleas for mercy.

The Lord has humbled himself to listen to me. And the psalmist, you can almost see it here. He's amazed. He's honored. He feels so privileged to have the king of glory, the covenant king.

He's privileged to have him bow down his ear and listen to his cry. And the psalmist's response to the Lord because of what the Lord has done for him, the psalmist's response is love.

I love the Lord because he has heard me. But you know, when we look back over our lives, many of us can confess that there was a time in our life when we didn't love the Lord.

We didn't respect the Lord. You know, we may have, in a sense, we may have respected the Lord's house. We might have respected the Lord's day. We might have respected the Lord's cause and even the Lord's people.

[8 : 43] But we didn't love the Lord. He loved us because he spoke to us many times in the gospel. We heard his voice on many occasions, speaking to us and calling us to come to him.

And even then he was telling us that he loved us. The Lord spoke to us through his word. He spoke to us through other Christians. He spoke to us through providence. He spoke to us right into our conscience.

The Lord spoke to us time and time and time again through many different experiences. And yet we never listened. But when the spirit started working in our life, our life, you know, we never heard like we, we never heard his voice like we heard it then.

And the more the Lord spoke, the more we listened. And the more we listened, you know what we started doing? We started speaking.

And the more we spoke, the more he listened. And the more he listened, the more we spoke. And you know, that's when it became a relationship between the two, between you and the Lord.

[9 : 47] That's when it became this personal relationship with the Lord. That's when you started to love the Lord more and more and more. That when he spoke to you, you spoke to him.

You know, the Samas says that because we have heard his voice and because he has heard our voice, we have to maintain this relationship as long as we live.

It's what he says, because he has inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. We have to keep listening to his voice and we have to keep speaking to the Lord.

Because you know, if we stop speaking to the Lord, if we stop listening to his voice, well, he'll just become a stranger to us. And we can't confess that we love a stranger.

We must confess that we love the Lord because we're in this living, active and personal relationship with him. But you know, we have to ask, how did this change take place?

[10 : 47] What caused us to start listening to the Lord? Yes, we know it was the spirit, but what caused us to start listening to the Lord and even speaking to the Lord and loving the Lord? And that's what I want us to see.

Secondly, so we've considered the confession, verses one and two, but then secondly, the change in verses three to six, the change. The Samas says, the snares of death encompassed me.

The pangs of the grave laid hold on me. I suffered distress and anguish. When I call in the name of the Lord, Oh Lord, I pray deliver my soul.

Gracious is the Lord and righteous. Oh, God is merciful. The Lord preserves the simple. When I was brought low, he saved me. You know, there's this change, the change that takes place in the experience of a Christian.

What the Samas describes here is that that changes from death to life. And the Samas describes death and he describes the sorrows of death. He describes them like a snare.

[11 : 47] He says that death is like an army that comes and hems us in on every side where we have no way of escape. Death he says, it has a grip on us.

We were ensnared by death. We're under the power of death and the grave, he says, is closing in on us. And you know, the way the Samas describes death and the grave, it makes me think that they're like two kings.

They're two kings that are allied together, death and the grave. And they're coming to bring destruction upon us in which you could say death's army is coming and it's surrounding us and himming us in.

And then the graves army is slowly moving in, slowly moving in to destroy us. But you know what I love about this version, these enemies, these enemies, death and the grave.

What I love about this version is that Peter quoted this verse in his sermon at Pentecost when over 3000 souls were saved.

[12 : 51] Peter quotes verse three and he says that they were delivered from death and the power of the grave and Peter quoted verse three in reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ stressing that even though Jesus was delivered, he was delivered into the hands of death and into the hands of the grave.

Even though Jesus was delivered to these two kings, they couldn't hold him. They couldn't hold King Jesus. These two kings, death and the grave, which rule the world, you could say for millennia, they were defeated by King Jesus.

And tonight King Jesus stands over his and all our enemies and he says, oh death, where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory?

My friend, the wonder of our salvation is that King Jesus abolished death and he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

And for the Christian who loves the Lord, in many ways, death is no longer the enemy at once was. Yes, there is the pain of death in this life and there's no hiding that.

[14 : 06] There's the pain of loss and separation because of the death of a loved one. But you know, the hope for the Christian is that death is not eternal because death cannot separate us from the love of Christ.

And you know, we may ask, how did we come to embrace the love of Christ and how did we come to receive the promise of eternal life? And the truth is, it was all through the humiliation of Jesus Christ because it was the humiliation of Jesus that enabled him to listen to a please for mercy.

But it was also the humiliation of Jesus in dying our death. That's what brought about this change from death to life because when we heard the Lord speak to us in his word and when the Lord he actually called us by his spirit, we were convinced as the Catechism reminds us, we were convinced of our sin and misery that we have been separated from God by our sin and that these two kings death and the grave, they were our fierce enemies.

But when the spirit he actually called us, when we were convinced of our sin and misery, when we were enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, the veil was lifted, our eyes were opened, our mind was renewed.

And you know, we not only saw the brokenness of our condition, we also saw the beauty of our savior. But when we were brought to the end of ourselves, we could do no other but call upon the name of the Lord and cry to him for salvation.

[15 : 49] And that's what the psalmist does here. He says in verse four, then I called on the name of the Lord, O Lord, I pray deliver my soul. And you know, the psalmist reminds us, he reminds us that we were saved and our soul was delivered and our pleas were heard not because of who we are and not even because we called upon the name of the Lord.

The Lord heard us, the Lord delivered us, the Lord saved us because the Lord is gracious, righteous and merciful. And you know, the description that the psalmist gives in verse five of the Lord, it's so beautiful because he's saying to us that the Lord who saves, the Lord who saves is one who bestows favor.

He is gracious. He is the one who imputes righteousness because he's righteous and he's the one who loves unconditionally because he's merciful. He's gracious, righteous and merciful.

He's the one who bestows favor and imputes righteousness and loves unconditionally. And you know, my friend, when we think of who the Lord is and what the Lord has done in us and for us, it's no wonder the Christian's confession is, I love the Lord.

I love the Lord. But then there's the third aspect of the Christian's testimony. So there's the confession, I love the Lord, there's the change from death to life.

[17 : 16] And then thirdly, there's the conversion, the conversion. Now look at verse seven. He says, return, O my soul to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you, for you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed even when I spoke, I am greatly afflicted. I said in my alarm, all mankind are liars.

What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? In many ways, the change in the conversion are synonymous. They mean the same thing because the transformation of a person from darkness to life, from death to life, from dungeon to liberty.

It's a change that takes place at conversion. But I want to highlight this aspect of conversion simply because the Samus does, because he has emphasized that the change which takes place in our life is all because of the Lord.

Where we love the Lord because he's gracious as he says in verse five, gracious, righteous and merciful. The Lord bestows favor, he imputes righteousness, he loves unconditionally. That's the change that the Lord has brought about in our life.

[18 : 35] But when the Samus speaks about conversion, he does so in the sense of his active commitment in turning away from sin.

Meaning that conversion is not just a work of the Lord. It is primarily a work of the Lord. But the Samus draws attention to the fact that we have a responsibility in conversion.

Because the word return, the beginning of our seven, it literally means to turn back. And that's what it means to be converted.

To be converted is to turn back is to turn around. It's to actively turn away from your sin and turn back to the Lord. And that's what he's saying here.

He says in verse seven, return, oh my soul to your rest, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you, but you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

[19 : 33] The Samus, he's speaking to his own soul and he's making this conscious decision to turn away from sin and turn back to the Lord. And he's active, you could say, in his conversion.

He's not passive and just saying, well, well, this is all the Lord's work. The Lord is going to take me away from my sin and make me walk away from all of these things. No, he's actively converting.

He's actively seeking to turn away from a sin and turn back to the Lord. And you know, this is why repentance is never enough.

Because repentance, the word repentance literally means to change your mind where we've repented our sin. We turn our mind away from our sin and we seek the forgiveness of the Lord.

But you know, repentance will not succeed unless there is conversion. Repentance will not succeed unless there is conversion because repentance, as you said, is a change of mind.

[20 : 37] But conversion is a change of character. Repentance is the change of mind, but conversion is the change of character. And we need to be active in both because, well, we can know that it's wrong to say this or to do that or to go to this place.

We can know that it's wrong and we can experience conviction of sin and we can repent of our sin but not convert. We can have a change of mind, but not a change of character.

But the Bible stresses that we have to have both repentance and conversion. We have to have both sorrow for sin and the turning away from sin.

They must be part of our Christian character. And you know, as we grow in our Christian walk, some of you have been on the walk a lot longer than me, but as we grow in our walk by listening to the Lord and speaking to Him in prayer and gathering for fellowship, you know, our conscience should be more alert to what is of Christ and of life.

And we should be actively turning away from what is of death and of the grave. And you know, the Samus confesses that his desire, his desire is not to walk amongst that which is of death and the grave.

[21 : 55] Because he says in verse nine, I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. His conversion means that he doesn't want to walk amongst the dead.

He doesn't want to seek the pleasures of the things of this world. He doesn't want to walk among these people who are dead in trespasses and sins. No, he wants to walk in the land of the living.

He wants to spend time talking about the things of Christ and the things of life. And he wants to do that because he's alive in Christ. He's been begotten again to a living hope.

He's become a new creation. He's been brought into the marvellous light of the gospel. But you know, he also says in verses 10 and 11, because the Samus has confessed his love for the Lord and there's this change in his life and there's this conversion from his old life because of all of this, he says there is opposition.

He says that he's afflicted. He says in verse 10, I am greatly afflicted because I love the Lord. And you know, there's a great lesson for us there.

[23 : 05] Now we're to walk in the land of the living. We're to actively turn away from death. We're to turn away from death to life. We're to turn away from darkness to light from the dungeon to liberty from Satan to Christ.

We're to repeatedly turn away from it. We're to actively actively turn away from these things that we know are unholy and unbecoming for a Christian.

We're to actively turn away from the things which contradict our confession. The confession that we've all made. I love the Lord.

We're to actively convert from and keep away from the things that will contradict our confession and even matter relationship with the Lord.

My friend, as those who love the Lord, we have to actively guard our character, our conduct and our conversation. And even our company.

[24 : 02] We have to actively guard against or guard our character, our conversation, our conduct and even our company. Because far too often, and I see it far too often, the Christian is in the world and the world is in the Christian.

But we must remember our confession. As a Christian, we love the Lord. And that confession, I love the Lord. It's before an onlooking world.

Therefore, we must strive to live up and to live out our confession. And we do that, you know how we do that, by our commitment.

And that's what the Samist highlights last along. He says that there are four aspects to the Christian's testimony. He says there is the confession, I love the Lord. There's the conversion or the change, sorry, from death to life.

The conversion where we actively turn away from our sin and seek the Lord. And then lastly, the commitment. The confession that changed the conversion and the commitment.

[25 : 08] Look at verse 12. He says, what shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Oh Lord, I am your servant. I am your servant, the son of your maid servant.

You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and calling the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

In the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem, praise the Lord. Now we mentioned earlier that this Sam is part of a group of six Sam's called the Hallel hymns.

And as I said, they're the Sam's numbered from Sam 113 to Sam 118. And these Hallel hymns, they were traditionally sung during the Passover meal.

[26 : 10] But the purpose of the Passover, as you know, it was to recount the experience of the children of Israel as they were delivered from bondage and slavery in Egypt.

But in the course of the Passover meal being eaten, there were four cups that were filled with wine and these cups, they were passed around the table as the Passover meal.

It went on and each cup, it was associated with the benefits that the children of Israel received in their deliverance from Egypt. And so when the Passover meal was prepared, there was, as you know, there was the Passover lamb, there was the unleavened bread and there was the bitter herbs.

And the Passover, it would begin by singing the first Hallel hymn, which is Sam 113. It begins even with the words praise the Lord, hallelujah.

And Sam 113, it praises the Lord for the Lord's faithfulness towards his people. And then after singing Sam 113, the first cup would be passed around the table.

[27 : 14] And this was called the cup of consecration. And the cup of consecration, it reminded the Jews that God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt because of his faithfulness to his covenant.

Then the Israelites, they would sing the second Hallel hymn, which is Sam 114, which is a hymn that begins with the words, when Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people, a people of strange language.

And you know, at Sam 114, it was sung to remind the children of Israel of them being brought out of Egypt. And after it was sung, the second cup of wine was then passed around the table.

This was called the cup of release. And the cup of release, as it was passed around the table, the history of the children of Israel, and the occasion of the Passover, that story was then retold, where they were all reminded about the angel of the Lord passing over all the houses, the houses where they had the blood upon the lintel and the doorposts.

And the story about the firstborn of all the Egyptians dying. And after that, they would have the Passover meal, they would have the lamb and the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs.

[28 : 32] But then once the Passover meal was eaten, they would then resume their worship and they would begin to sing Sam 115 and Sam 116, and their hymns of dedication and commitment to the Lord.

Because Sam 115, it opens with the statement that we are to ascribe glory to the Lord and to know Him. Not unto us, Lord, not to us, but do thou glory take.

And then as we've seen this evening, Sam 116, it's all about commitment because we're saying, I love the Lord because He heard my voice. But as we see in verse 12 of this, Sam, the Samus considers how he should render thanks to the Lord for his salvation.

And in verses 13 and 14, in this act of public commitment, the Samus acknowledges the Lord for his wonderful salvation. He says, what shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me?

And then he says, I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

[29 : 46] During the Passover meal, it would be at the end of singing Sam 116 that the third cup of wine would be passed around the table.

And this cup was called, as you might expect, as it says in verse 13, it was called the cup of salvation. And once the cup of salvation was passed around the table, the Jews would then go on to sing Sam 117, which is a short Sam about the coming Messiah and the hope for all nations.

And then after Sam 117 was sung, the last cup, which is called the cup of the Messiah. And traditionally, the cup of the Messiah was filled with wine and it was passed around the Passover table, but no one was to drink from it.

Because the cup of the Messiah was not to be drunk until the Messiah would come and drink from it himself. So it was then in the upper room that Jesus, he was eating the Passover meal with his disciples.

And I was at this point in the Passover meal that Jesus then instituted the Lord's supper. For Jesus, you could say, put the Passover meal to one side, indicating the end of the Passover.

[31 : 02] And we're told that he took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and then gave it to his disciples and he said, this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

And when they had eaten the bread, he then took the cup, the cup of the Messiah, saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

And so having instituted the Lord, the Lord's supper for the first time, he and his disciples then sang the last Hallel hymn, Psalm 118.

And that's why we often sing it during the communion season. We sing Psalm 118. And we're told in the Gospels, there was after that they had sung a hymn, Psalm 118, that they then went out to the Mount of Olives.

And you know, Psalm 118, it's a hymn of thanksgiving. It's a wonderful hymn that talks about the thanksgiving we should have for what the Lord has done for us.

[32 : 05] But you know, when we consider this, this time we're looking at this evening, Psalm 116. And when you see that the testimony of the Christian is so interwoven with the institution of the Lord's supper, with this confession, I love the Lord, the change from death to life, the conversion of turning away from sin and turning to the Lord.

And then you have the commitment of taking the cup of salvation and calling upon the name of the Lord and making your vows to the Lord. When you see all this, you know, it's when we come and sit at the Lord's table and we present ourselves as living sacrifices, we realize that what we're really doing, what we're really doing in coming to the Lord's table, it's not only proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes.

It's not only professing our faith, but it's also vowing our commitment to the Lord. Vowing our commitment to the Lord, that we love the Lord, and that we will continue to strive to love Him, to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves.

And you know, is it any wonder to us then that the Psalm, as he concludes this Psalm with these wonderful words of commitment, he says in verse 17, I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and calling the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem, praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. He gives his hallelujah. My friend, Psalm 116 is the Christian's testimony. There is the confession, the change, the conversion and the commitment. But the testimony of every Christian is, as it is, I'm sure your testimony, I love the Lord.

[34 : 04] I love the Lord. And this hallel hymn, it reminds us that we are to give our hallelujah to the Lord. We're to praise the Lord publicly because we have come to know the Lord personally.

We're to praise the Lord publicly because we have come to know the Lord personally. Our testimony is, I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy, because he inclined his ear to me. Therefore I will call on him as long as I live. Well may the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, help us to have this Psalm as the life song of our experience, that we would say each and every day that I love the Lord and that we would confess it publicly and even privately, that when we're at our weakest and when we have so many doubts in our Christian experience, Lord help us to confess that I love the Lord and the realization that we love him because he first loved us. O does I wonder that thou wouldst look upon us at all, that we would be loved from even before the world began and yet we thank the Lord that thou art the God who has demonstrated that love to us in the death of thy son Jesus and that thou has poured that love into our heart by the power of thy spirit. Help us, Lord, then we pray to to live by the fruit of the spirit, to all be an example, Lord, to those around us, that we would love them, that we would love one another as Christ hath loved us and that we might prove to be thine own disciples.

Lord bless us, we pray, keep us, we ask and help us, Lord, in our journey to keep ever looking to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. Go before us, then we pray.

Remember those, Lord, who are not with us this evening, that we think, Lord, especially of Ian in hospital, may thine hand be upon him, that he would know thy grace to be sufficient for him, that he would know healing and help. O Lord, we bless thee that everything is in thine hand and what better hands to be in than the hands of Jesus. Keep us, then, we pray, for we ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Well, we bring our time to a conclusion by singing the closing words of this Psalm. Psalm 116, verse 11, down to the end of the Psalm. I said when I was in my haste that all men liars be, what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me? I love salvation, take the cup, on God's name will I call, and I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all. Down to the end of the Psalm, to God's please.

[37 : 11] I said when I was in my haste that all men liars be, what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me?

I love salvation, take the cup, on God's name will I call, I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all.

Here in North Side is his estate, Thy servant, Lord, am I, Thy servant sure, Thy handmade Son, my bonds, the days, and time, all of anxiety to thee will give, and all cross names will call, I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all.

Within the course of God's own house, within the midst of thee, O say does he know Jerusalem, praise to the Lord, give peace.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forever more. Amen.