

Doxology, Greeting, Benediction

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[0:00] Philippians 4.14 to the end of the chapter. Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, In the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only.

For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be accredited to your account. I have received full payment and even more. I am amply supplied now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent.

They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings.

[1:19] All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Amen. Amen. It was in Philippi that day. All the saints were gathered. There was the Philippian jailer and his family and Lydia and her family.

Perhaps that slave girl that had been delivered from her demon. The place was especially filled with anticipation this day as they're met for worship because Epaphroditus has just returned from Rome where he's visited the beloved Apostle Paul.

And he's brought back with him a letter from Paul. And here in the assembled worship of God's people, that letter is now being read.

And what a letter it is. In it, Paul has instructed the saints. He's exhorted them. He's even rebuked them. Calling on two women by name.

[2:29] He's praised them. He's testified to them. He's thanked them. And as Paul brings his letter to a close, he includes the usual greeting and benediction at the end.

But before he gets there, he breaks out into one last doxology. And so we have this morning a doxology, greeting, and a benediction.

First, the doxology. Verse 20. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Now sometimes we sing the doxology.

A doxology is a song that brings praise to God and often tells why He is so worthy of praise. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him above you, heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. A doxology.

[3:34] A song of praise to our God. Here's another doxology. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Now this is Paul's last word to the body of the letter that he's written. And it reaches out and it wraps its long arms around everything that goes before it.

And here's the fitting end of this whole epistle. May God be glorified. May God be glorified. May His praiseworthiness be known.

May His name be hallowed. May His attributes be praised. Now there have been references to God's glory along the way. Chapter 1 and verse 9 through 11.

It's why Paul prays for their love to abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight. That they might be able to discern what is best. Might be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

[4:38] To the glory and praise of God. There it is again. This grand end of all that he writes. To the glory and praise of God. Just as a fruitful garden brings glory and praise to the gardener.

So a fruitful Christian brings glory and praise to God and Father who is the gardener of his soul. Chapter 2 and verses 9 through 11.

This is the great end for which God has exalted his son. Who humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross.

Therefore God has exalted him to the highest place and given him a name above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Things in heaven, earth, under the earth.

And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Lord, why? To the glory of God the Father.

There he's ringing that bell again. To God be the glory.

[5:41] And we see this great theme then breaking out throughout the letter. But then it receives the last word as it comes to the close. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever.

Now folks, this is so important that we get this. We often get caught up with our circumstances. And we get preoccupied with them so that we miss the big picture.

We miss the big picture of what really important is going on in my life. God is being glorified in his people. That's the big picture.

As Jesus prays to his Father in John 17, 10. Glory has come to me through them. The likes of a Peter, an Andrew, a Matthew, a Thomas.

Glory has come to me through them. That's the big story. But we miss it. We're so preoccupied with our problems that we need to over and over stand back a while from our problem.

[6:46] And look at the big picture. What is God up to in my life? What is God up to in this problem in my life? Why this circumstance?

God is seeking to get glory to himself. That's the important story.

That's the reason for this problem. That's the reason for this circumstance. He seeks glory. And he's doing it in my life. And he's doing it in my circumstances.

And he's doing it in all my circumstances. He's doing it by my obedience to his commands. All these commands that I received in this letter to the Philippians.

He's doing it by my trust in his fatherly provision. My trust in his promises and in his providence.

He's glorifying himself by my love and service.

[7:43] By my becoming like him. Have you lost the big picture? In the midst of the trying circumstances that you're in. Friend, the trouble you're going through is not the big thing.

The big thing is that God is getting glory to himself. And he's meaning to get glory to himself in your life. In your present trouble.

Your present circumstance. Whatever it is. So that means then our great concern and focus. Must be not ourselves and our problems. But God and his glory. To God.

Our God and father. Be glory. Forever and ever. Never forget. There's a God to glorify. That's the all important thing.

Did you know that that is the grand reason behind all that's ever done in this universe? It only happens if it can bring glory to God. Paul himself says it in another doxology in Romans 11.36.

[8:45] For from him. And through him. And to him. Are all things. To God. Be the glory forever.

Amen. Everything that happens in the universe. It comes from him. From his decree. It happens through him. Through his control. And governance. And providence. And it happens unto him.

Unto his glory. And so nothing happens. But what brings him glory. Well that's a pretty God-centered view of history.

Isn't it? Pretty God-centered view of all that's happening in my world and in my universe. That it wouldn't be happening unless God is getting glory in the end for it.

Can it possibly be true? Do all things happen to bring glory to God? Well we're in John 9 and Jesus is walking along and there's a man along the road.

[9:43] And he's blind. And we learn that he's been blind since birth. Forty years earlier. And the disciples see the plight of this man. They say who sinned?

This man or his parents that he was born blind? And Jesus says neither this man nor his parents. But this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.

And he proceeded to spit and make mud. And to heal him of his blindness. Do you mean that God would have a man spend forty years of his life in darkness?

Never seeing his mother, his father. A sunset, a rainbow, a kitten. Just one perpetual night for forty years. You mean God would put a man through that?

So that the Son of God could walk along one day. And display the work of God in his life. That's what Jesus says happened.

[10:51] Wow, what power is displayed in this miracle. What mercy, what compassion upon this man. God's works displayed.

And I soon come to see that the glory of God is more important than my own comforts and my own ease. Two chapters later, we're in John 11 and Lazarus is sick.

His sisters send word to Jesus. The one you love is sick. Come and help him. Is their intent. And Jesus stays where he was two more days.

And says, this sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory. So that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Do you mean sickness happens so that God might be glorified?

Do you mean death happens? For that's exactly what happened to Lazarus. Do you mean people die so that God will be glorified in it? After four days in the grave and four days of mourning and crying.

[11:58] Do you mean God would put sisters through the mourning process of losing a beloved brother? All in an intent to get glory to himself.

Lazarus, come forth. Did I not tell you if you believed you would see the glory of God? Jesus says. None like him who raises the dead and calls things which are not as though they were.

Talks to Lazarus' ears as if he could hear when he couldn't. None but God. Then we're over in chapter 12 of John and Jesus predicts his own death.

And he says, now my heart is troubled. Oh, how Jesus stooped. God of gods. Become man. In a situation now where his heart is troubled.

He tells us that. Now my heart is troubled. He's thinking about his death. He's thinking about the wrath of God that he must drink at Calvary. And what shall I say?

[12:59] Father, save me from this hour? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.

And then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and will glorify it again. Do you mean that God would send his one and only beloved son to the damnation of Calvary in order to glorify his name?

Jesus says, yes, that's the reason I've come to this very hour. Father, glorify your name. You say, I thought Jesus came to save sinners.

Yes, he did. But there was a bigger end in view than the salvation of sinners in the coming of Christ. And that was the glory of God who is glorified in the salvation of sinners.

Don't put the sinner at the center of the universe. God in his glory is the center. And where is that glory so displayed as it is at Calvary?

[14:14] God. Suffering, dying to reconcile guilty sinners to himself. What grace is this? We say amazing love. How can it be?

What justice that that he would punish his son rather than to let one sinner into heaven without his sins punished? What righteousness, what holiness reigns at Calvary?

God's glory is the end of everything that happens in the universe. And this is the passion of Christ breathing throughout the pages of John's gospel.

Glorify your name. Whatever it means in terms of my suffering. Whatever it means, even if it means me being damned in their place. Glorify your name. Now the passion that we find in Jesus is the same passion beating in Paul.

And it breathes through his life in letters. Here he is in this letter. We find him in prison. But he's joyful. He's being mistreated by other Christian ministers.

[15:18] Out to do one better than him while he's down. But he's rejoicing that the gospel is being preached. He could be facing the death penalty. But he's not worrying.

Whether in plenty or want. Pleasure and pain. He's content in each and every circumstance. Pretty amazing stuff, isn't it? That we see in the apostle in this letter.

What's driving it all? You see that car racing down the speedway. Wow! What's driving it? I'd like to lift up the hood and see what kind of super engine is in there.

And we lift up the hood on this man, Paul. And we see what makes him tick. And what we find inside is this beating heart.

To God, our Father, be glory. Christ, be magnified. Glorified. The same heart, passion that was found in Jesus.

[16:17] Found beating in the apostle Paul. And that's more important to him than where he is. Than what he has.

Than how he feels. Oh, we're so forever taking our emotional pulse, aren't we? How do I feel today? Is it fun? You see, those kind of questions are lost.

In the forgetfulness. Swallowed up in the far greater issue. Is God being glorified? Glorified. That's the issue. This is why it doesn't matter to Paul whether he lives or dies.

Just as long as Christ is glorified in his body. Whether by life or death. This is why he's content to be right there in prison. Because the God-glorifying gospel is being advanced.

Even while I'm here. It's how Paul and the Philippians can embrace their God-given assignment. Not only to believe on Jesus. But to suffer for his name. That's why men like Epaphroditus would risk their life in the work of Christ.

[17:20] They want to see him glorified. So here's the great motivation. You need a motivation to get up in the morning? You need a motivation? Here's the great motive for the Christian life.

Here's the great motivation to do all that you've been called upon to do in this letter. Every command that precedes verse 20 of chapter 4. Here's the motive. Why we do everything without complaining or arguing.

Because we want this world to see a refreshingly different people. In a world that is full of complainers and arguers. Why do we do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.

But in humility consider others better than ourselves. So that glory might come to God when they see his people walking in unity. Having the same mind. Deferring to one another in love.

That's why we press on. Like a runner straining to get his nose across the tape first. What are we straining after? Why we press on? To become like Jesus Christ in perfection.

[18:24] Haven't reached it yet, Paul says. But one thing I am doing. Forgetting what's behind and straining toward what's ahead. I'm pressing on to attain that perfection in Christ.

It's my goal. Why? So that God may be glorified when people see Christ in us. It's the great motivation.

Why we stand firm in the Lord. Why we agree with one another in the Lord. It's the motivation for rejoicing in the Lord always. Because when we are rejoicing in difficulties, a glory is displayed.

What must her Lord be that she should find joy in him going through all that she's going through right now? What kind of Savior must she have?

You see, here's the reason then for letting your gentleness be evident to all. That God might be glorified. For not worrying about anything, but praying about everything with thanksgiving.

[19:29] So that the peace of God might garrison your heart and mine. And you might walk about in a world of trouble with peace. Why? So that God might be glorified.

That people might say, what a father in heaven he has. That he can be doing, going through this and suffering that and not worrying, but resting.

What a father. Glory to God. That's why it's our motivation for controlling our minds. For being content in each and every circumstance.

For giving generously and sacrificially. That people might see that there is a God who means more to us than money. Wow. What kind of God is this?

God's glory stands as the great end of everything written in this letter. So as we come to the end of this letter, I must ask you, how much of your life is consciously brought into line with this grand scheme of the universe?

[20:36] Is God's glory the center of your solar system? Is it the thing around which everything revolves in your mind, your emotions, your heart, your life?

Are you seeking God's glory in your church? Your church life? Is that the reason you come to worship? Is it the reason you care about your brothers and sisters? Is it the reason you evangelize and invite folks?

Is it the driving force of your church life? Is it the reason you're living in your life?

Praise and honor to God. Asking yourself, how might God be glorified in this present circumstance?

Right now, my age, my situation, my problems, my talents, my money, my situation, my health.

How could God be glorified in me here and now? And pursue that. That's the big picture. And Paul doesn't want to let us miss it as we come to the end of his letter.

[22:03] This is not only the aim for all of your life, for all of time, but this is the worthy end of all eternity. To God and our Father be glory forever and ever.

It's the song that tunes the hearts of angels and saints in heaven forever and ever. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and blessing forever and ever.

Amen. The amen. The word of affirmation. When a brother leads us in prayer and we add our amen to it. We're saying I sign on to everything. I sign on. That's my prayer.

What he said about God, I believe it. So be it. Can you put your amen, sign your amen onto this statement about everything in your life, about everything that's been written in this letter.

To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Amen. That's the doxology. And then it's followed by a greeting in the second place.

[23:11] A greeting. Now when you, the greeting, we'll look at it in a moment. But when you came into the building this morning, you were greeted by our greeters, weren't you? You received a greeting.

When you saw one another, you greeted one another. Greetings are done with a customary act and with customary words.

The act might have been a handshake, a warm embrace, a pat on the back. And the form of words might have been a warm good morning.

Hi, good to see you. In the days of the scriptures, the form was to greet one another with a holy kiss. The words were often shalom, peace, grace.

Greetings are fairly common throughout the world. It's not something that Christians only do. But in Christ, the greeting takes on a deeper meaning and significance. Paul says, greet all the saints in Christ Jesus.

[24:15] Because in Christ, this common greeting becomes a sign of our fellowship. We're in Christ together.

Most of us had no connection with each other before Christ. Some of us are related physically. But most of us had no relationship with each other outside of Christ.

What has brought us together here this morning? It's Christ. We're in Christ. And our greeting to all the saints in Christ is expression of the fact that it is Christ. It's being in Christ that has brought us together.

If God is our Father, verse 20, then we are brothers and sisters to one another. And so we greet one another in the Lord. And Paul's greeting both demonstrates this unity in Christ and promotes it. Remember, unity was something that was being threatened and unraveling in Philippi. And was a constant note being struck throughout the epistle. And so it's a note that's banged again at the end.

[25:20] You all greet each other now. Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. All the saints. That means, you odious and sintiki, you greet each other.

No standoffishness between you. How can the Son of God accept in Himself this one? And you be standoffish from her? All the saints in Christ Jesus.

Remember, saints are not extraordinary, super-duper Christians that have done something special. Saints are the ordinary word for the ordinary Christian that Paul gives to the believers.

Those who are in Christ. Saints. The word saint has a basic idea of holy. Sanctified. Set apart from normal use for the Lord. Taken out of the normal humdrum of life.

And set aside specially for the Lord. Whether that was a utensil that was once used to scoop up cereal in the morning. Now being used. Set aside from normal use to be.

[26:23] Set apart to the Lord for temple offerings. Or whether it be the individual. Who set apart from the world. Set apart for the special use of living unto the Lord.

A saint. That's a saint. Set apart to the Lord. And greet all of them. Greet all of them. Let's greet all the saints.

Let's not keep any of the saints off of our greeting list. Let's arrive early enough to give greetings. Let's stay long enough afterwards to give and receive greetings. It's a part of our identity in Christ. And expressing that unity that is ours in Christ. And then these greetings are seen to be sent by three ever widening circles of people.

They start with an individual Paul. He sends his greetings to all the saints. Greet. The idea is greet for me all the saints in Christ Jesus. And then secondly, a larger circle.

[27:24] He says the brothers who are with me send greetings. And these are not included in the next category of all the saints. Who are these brothers? They're probably his co-workers. As he

often refers to them.

His traveling companions. Who are perhaps even now visiting him in prison. Especially Timothy. Who is spoken of in chapter 1 and verse 1. And so Paul sends his personal greetings.

The brothers who are with me send their greetings. And now the biggest circle of all. All the saints send you greetings. All the saints here in Rome where I'm in prison.

Send you greetings there in Philippi. And under this heading of all the saints there in Rome. A certain group of believers is singled out for special mention.

Especially those who belong to Caesar's household. All of us here at Rome in Christ send you greetings. And especially those of us here in Christ who belong to Caesar's household.

[28:28] They send you greetings. Now who are these who belong to Caesar's household? It doesn't mean that they were his family in the sense of his blood relatives.

But rather his household is a reference and a technical word that would be used. Of members of his staff. Probably included servants.

Whether slave or free. Soldiers. Government workers. Civil service workers. Those who worked in and around the palace complex. In the service of Caesar. Who happened to be none other than Emperor Nero.

As Paul writes. Nero. The man who in a few years would start persecuting Christians. When he had garden parties and wanted light in his gardens.

Would smear pitch on Christians and stick them on a pole and light them on fire. What kind of party that would be. But that's what he thought of Christians. That's what he thought of Christ. And Paul says.

[29:29] That's what he thought of Christians. And Paul says. We all send you our greetings. And especially. Those saints who belong to Caesar Nero's household.

Paul. Paul. You remember. Was a prisoner here at Rome for several years. He came into contact with these.

These folks. Caesar's household. Every day. Every day. He was. Chained. To some of these soldiers. Remember. We saw that in chapter 1 and verse 12.

It's why Paul was. Was rejoicing. Though he was in prison. Because. He saw how the gospel was advancing. It's become clear throughout the whole palace guard. He says. And to everyone else. That I'm in chains for Christ.

There comes a servant. Carrying the meals into the prisoners. And bringing it to Paul. And he hears about Jesus Christ. From this prisoner. Here come the soldiers.

[30:23] And they're being chained to him. For their four hours of duty again. You talk about a captive audience. For the gospel. You don't know who is the prisoner. But they sat.

And they heard of Christ. And then they went back to the barracks. You know that guy Paul. Yeah.

You know what he told me. Yeah. You know what he told me. And the whole barracks. Indeed.

Everyone else. Knows that I'm in chains. The whole town of Rome. Was buzzing. With the gospel.

And they all knew. That Paul was in prison. For preaching. This Jesus.

So this letter. Ends on a note of triumph. I. May be imprisoned. In Rome. But the word of God. Is not bound. Paul is saying.

You talk about the power of God. In the gospel. It is penetrated. To the very capital. Of the whole. Roman empire. It is claimed.

[31:21] Prisoners. From. From Satan's kingdom. And brought them into the kingdom. Of God's dear son. It's made saints. Out of sinners. In Rome. Of all places.

That. That pagan city. And some of the saints. Are even members. Of Caesar. Nero's. Household. Glory to God. The gospel is triumphing.

It's advancing. Jesus shall reign. Where'er the sun. Does its successive journeys run. Does the sun shine on Rome. He's got servants. Of Christ. There. That he reigns over.

My name will be great. Among the nations. In every place. From the rising of the sun. To the going down. Of the same. In every place. Incense.

And pure offerings. Will be brought to my name. Because my name. Will be great. Among the nations. Says the Lord almighty. And here. At Rome. There are saints.

[32:16] In Christ. Jesus. Here. In Caesar's household. There are those. Who love the savior. And who are faithfully. Serving him. In that dark.

Wicked place. Where are you? Where are you? Serving Christ? Do you know. There's grace. In Jesus. To enable you.

To be faithful. To Christ. In an unholy family. In an unholy. Work environment. In an unholy. World. Saints. Of God.

In Christ. Jesus. In Caesar's. Household. God. Is greatly. Glorified. To have healthy. Plants. Of holiness.

Thriving. In such. Barren. Soil. We all know. The. Proverb. One bad apple. Spoils the whole barrel. What is this God.

[33 : 10] When the. In the midst of a barrel. Of bad apples. Has. These good ones. Right there. Caesar's household. Saints. In Christ Jesus.

Saints. In Christ Jesus. In northern Indiana. In the midst of that. Pagan America. It's forgotten. And turned her back on God. Amazing. Glory.

Comes to Christ. To have a people. Who were holy. Set apart unto him. In this. Unholy world. The doxology.

The greeting. Lastly. The benediction. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with your spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen. Now I'm sobered.

Whenever we come to the end. Of a study. Of another one of God's. Books. In the Bible. We've spent. Some 22 weeks. In the book of Philippians. God.

[34 : 11] Has been speaking. To us. Here. That's the nature. Of scripture. What. Scripture says.

God says. And so he's been talking to us. For 22 weeks. What effect. Has it had on my life? That's. The sobering question.

That comes to me. At the end of a series. Like this. Will these four chapters. Have any lasting. Impact. upon the way I think. And live. From here on out. When you see me.

Ten years from now. Will I just be a little balder. A little. Heavier. A little richer perhaps. But unchanged. Or.

When you see me. Ten years from now. Will I know something more. Of that contentment. That secret. Of contentment. Because in spring of 2007. God worked me over.

[35 : 07] In chapter four. Verses 10 through 13. Will you find me. Not worrying so much. But praying more. About my problems.

And thanking God. For all of his help. In the past. Such that the peace of God. Will mark my life more. Than it does today. Will you find me.

Rejoicing in Jesus. In difficulties. That today. I don't find joy. In Christ in. Will I be. A happier man. In Christ. A holier man. In Christ. Will I be. A living epistle. Known in red. By all men.

Because these words. Have been written. Not with ink. On tablets of stone. But they have been written. By the holy. Spirit. Upon tablets. Of fleshy heart.

[36 : 07] Have I been changed. By this. Four chapter book. Have I been sanctified. By this word. Has this word. Been at work in me. Has it been at work. In you.

I wonder. If there are any. Who have been saved. During the last. Twenty two weeks. As we've been studying this. You have been saved. Brought out of darkness. Into the light. From death. To life. Brought from.

Trusting in your own. Good works. To repudiating. Everything you've ever done. Religious. Saying. There is nothing in that.

To commend me to God. And coming and clinging. To the righteousness. Of Christ alone. Any of you done that. In the last. Twenty two. Been brought. Into the family of God. Been made saints.

I wonder you see. I wonder after. Preaching through this book. Where Christ is set. Before sinners. As. As their only hope. Of righteousness. Only hope. Of salvation. Have you gone.

[37 : 03] From one. Who's. Who's an enemy. Of the cross. Whose destiny. Was destruction. Whose God. Was your appetites. Whose mind.

Was on earthly things. And. And now. You've been brought over. Now. You're a new creature. In Christ. And your citizenship. Is in heaven. And so your thoughts. And your minds. Keep running to heaven. Because you're expecting.

Eagerly. A savior from there. Wonder if that is. That has transpired. In any hearts. As we've studied. The book of Philippians. Wonder if any saints. Here have grown. Downward in humility.

As we've seen. Christ. Humbling himself. In chapter two. And serving. Our good. And he come away. Wanting to know. Christ better. Wanting to know.

More of the power. Of his resurrection. The fellowship. Of his sufferings. Anyone actively. Seeking more. Zealously. To become like Jesus. Running day by day.

[37 : 59] To be transformed. Into his likeness. Anyone finding more joy. In Christ. Have you identified. Any battlefields. In your life. Where the battle.

Is being fought for joy. Where it's being fought. For peace. Where it's being fought. For purity of mind. And for contentment. And then are you running. To Christ.

In the midst. Of your day. When you see the battle. And you say. This is the enemy. This is the time. This is the thought. To be repudiated. And to be replaced. Is any of that happening? Because God has been talking to us.

In Philippians. And he found. Pride. And self-centeredness. Those two.

! And then I come to the very last words.

[39 : 11] words of the book. And I find this apostolic. And I find this apostolic benediction. It's a benediction. From this apostle of Christ. Which reminds us. This isn't just something from Paul.

He's a spokesman. He's sent from Jesus Christ. This is. This comes with the authority of Christ. A benediction. An authoritative pronouncement. Of a blessing.

For all who are in Christ. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with your spirit. Amen. Now here's the empowerment.

To do all that you've been asked by God to do. In the book of Philippians. Here it is. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. With your spirit. It's all you'll ever need.

To do anything that you've been commanded to do. Here in Philippians. One through four. This is the grace that enables you to do all things. Through him who strengthens you.

[40 : 10] This is the grace. Right here. Promised to you. To be content in each and every circumstance. This is the grace to keep you from worrying. Whenever you're living in need.

It's the grace to keep you dependent upon Christ. When you're in prosperity. To not forget him. It's the grace to make you generous. In your giving. Even when you aren't loaded.

It's the grace of the Lord Jesus. Right here with me. With my spirit. My innermost being. To control my thoughts. To help me not worry about anything.

To rejoice in the Lord. To let my gentleness be known. To agree with one another in the Lord. To stand firm in the Lord. It's the grace to live up to what we've already learned. It's the grace to know Christ.

And the power of his resurrection. It's the grace to rest on Christ's righteousness alone. It's the grace to hold out the word of life. In the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. And to not be ashamed.

[41 : 06] But to have sufficient courage. To magnify Christ. All the grace right here. Promised to us. In this benediction. It's the grace to do everything without complaining or arguing.

The grace to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. To do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. But to consider our brother better than ourselves. And to look after his interests.

To have the same attitude of that as Christ Jesus. The humble, obedient servant of the Lord. The grace that whatever happens to me. To conduct myself in a manner worthy of the gospel.

The grace to be ready to live or die. And to count death gain when it comes. Better by far. The grace to care more about the advance of the gospel than my own comforts.

The grace to have love abounding more and more in my life. To be filled with the fruit of righteousness. To be praying with thanksgiving and joy on every occasion. To be a servant of Christ Jesus.

[42 : 08] In short. This is the grace to do whatever God commands you to do in this letter. And I want to draw your attention to a very well-known fact.

It's the very same grace. That enabled the Apostle Paul. To be content in prison. You have absolutely the same resources.

That the great Apostle Paul had. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with your spirit. So what are you facing?

What are you anxious about? What are you pressed down about? What are you discontented about? What are you saying about? Jesus Christ is full of grace. Full of grace. And His grace is sufficient for you.

It's all you could ever need. Live upon Him. Live upon Him. He's like a bank account that's infinite. Whenever you need something, you just write another check.

[43:08] You never have to balance your book. You never have to worry about it. Because you know that there's no bottom on that bank account. Jesus is this treasury of grace, you see, in heaven. What is your need?

You come again today. And in prayer you ask Him to meet your need. Lord, I need more patience. I need more thankfulness. I need less complaining. I need more contentment.

I need greater love. I need genuine interest in my brother or sister. I need patience. I need discernment.

I need joy. I need peace. grace upon grace.

It's like standing at the shore of the ocean and there come the waves. grace upon grace. And they just keep coming. You think they're going to tire themselves out.

[44:04] Here they come. They just keep coming. Grace upon grace. The ocean. Bottomless ocean of Christ. Riches. Of grace.

You see what Paul's up to. What he's been doing throughout this letter. He does once more as he comes to the close. He directs us back to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. And to that grace that is found in him.

May we live by that fountain. May we drink from it continually. First thing we do when we get up in the morning. We wake up to grace. The grace of the Lord Jesus.

The favor. The unmerited. Undeserved favor. What a way to wake up. I wake up and this Christ is for me. He's no longer against me. He's for me in his power.

He's for me in his wisdom. In his knowledge. His love. In his control of all the circumstances. He's for me. His favor. His smile. His face is toward me.

[45:02] The grace of the Lord Jesus. Be with your spirit. And the more we live as beggars. Upon the rich grace of Jesus. The more our God is glorified.

To our God and Father. Be glory forever and ever. Amen.