

Faithful Regards

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[0:00] We are actually going to leave the company of a very dear and trusted friend tonight as we close out the book of 2 Timothy.

Teaching Paul's letters of the T's, the Thessalonians in here on Sunday morning, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and we'll start Titus next Monday, if the Lord willing.

If the Lord comes back for us, we'll just sit at the feet of Titus and let him, or Paul, let them describe that to us. But we're going to end our study of 2 Timothy tonight and move into the book of Titus. This has been an adventure, certainly for me, and I hope for you, and I trust we've all picked up truth from our study.

See, the Apostle Paul has an interesting ending to what are actually his two letters to the young Timothy.

[1:18] He's going to talk about people who greatly influenced his ministry. I'm sure every pastor could give a list of people that have influenced their ministry.

And interestingly, Paul's not just going to include those who were supportive, but also going to make some comments about those who were antagonistic toward his ministry.

Now, one thing about it, no minister can successfully minister alone. It takes people in a supportive role, and I believe there are always people behind every successful ministry.

Now, Paul is about to face the Executioner's Acts. It would not be surprising to me if Timothy was on his mind and heart at the last moments of his earthly sojourn.

In letter form, he advises Timothy of the people that will no doubt be available to carry on his ministry after he's gone.

[2:37] And many of these had supported Paul, and I'm sure Paul was hoping they would now support Timothy. But some had caused Paul some special harm, and I'm sure it was hoped that Timothy would heed the warning about such men.

Paul laces his writings with warnings about false teachers, false prophets, false preachers. And to this end of his life, Paul knew that false prophets and false teachers would still be feeding on the church.

They are to our day. That hasn't stopped. It's increased, in fact. I have no doubt that if the Apostle Paul were to appear on earth today, he would marvel at the great number of false teachers impacting the church, especially in the West.

And by that I principally mean the United States. I think he would be especially amazed at how they seem to infect the airwaves of television.

And certainly he would be more than willing to tell us who wrote the book of Hebrews. And we'll move on. The words that Paul closes this book with are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

[4:01] There will be paybacks on some Sunday morning. The Lord is revealing to his church through the generations about the people that impacted Paul's life and ministry to learn lessons from their faithfulness or from their failures.

And the first one Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 4, verse 9 is Timothy, Paul's faithful son. And he says there, make every effort to come to me soon.

Remember, Paul's in prison. No one on earth was dearer to Paul than was Timothy. He referred to him many times as his child or as a son.

He was his most dependable co-worker. It can be said that Timothy followed Paul by the doctrine he taught and by example.

The love they had for each other was mutual. It was in every respect a father-son relationship. And that's why we see Paul telling Timothy, you know, and Paul knew his time was growing short.

[5:15] And he says, Timothy, it's imperative that you come and visit me. Now, most Christian leaders, I believe, had someone that served as a mentor.

Dr. MacArthur had his father, Jack MacArthur. He also had Dr. Feinberg at Talbot Seminary, Charles Feinberg. Dr. Sproul spoke often or speaks often of his father-son relationship with Dr. John Gertzner.

And I would imagine that our pastor was heavily influenced by his father, perhaps other men. Most spiritual leaders have a mentor. And then Paul talks about Demas.

And it's very interesting because he is the unfaithful deserter. So he mentions Timothy and then he goes right into Demas. For Demas, verse 10, For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

Paul now moves from the most faithful brother, Timothy, to the most unfaithful, Demas. And the first time Demas is mentioned in Paul's works is in the book of Colossians.

[6:33] That book was written shortly after 1 Timothy and about five years before the writing of 2 Timothy. And it was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

He was in prison more than once. And it would appear that Demas at one time was a useful associate of Paul's. He was described in Philemon as a fellow worker.

Paul had every reason to believe that Demas would be intimately involved in the ministry until the end. Well, what happened?

We don't know. We don't know a lot of the circumstances that led to the demise of Demas. But one phrase is very instructive.

He says, Paul, says that Demas loved this present world. And let me say, you know, John talked about that in the epistles.

[7:37] When, you know, John talked, don't love the world. We're not talking about rivers, maybe the cany, but rivers and, you know, sunsets and sky, the mountains, snow-covered mountains.

We're not talking about the beauty of the earth. We're talking about world systems. Satan is the God, little g, of this world for now by the permissive will of God the Father.

So Demas, for some unknown reason, went back into the present world. He loved the present world. Obviously, Demas loved the world more than he loved the Lord, the Lord's people, or the Lord's work.

In all likelihood, he was never a true believer. And because of the information that John gave us by inspiration in 1 John 2.15, in fact, we'll see him leave us because he wasn't one of us.

And therefore, he left us. That's verse 19 of 1 John 2. It is there that we learn that anyone who loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

[8:48] That is very specific to the situation with Demas. Probably, Demas began to experience the same persecution and affliction as the others were experiencing, and it was more than he could handle.

And as I said it here a couple weeks ago, persecution will drive away false faith. If you're not a genuine believer, you don't want to stick around and endure persecution.

What's the sense of that if you're not genuine? Well, whatever the case, Demas deserted the Apostle Paul. And the word deserted in Greek is very strong.

It means to be totally abandoned. He totally abandoned Paul. It is used to describe a person that leaves a trusted friend helpless in the midst of dire circumstances.

Demas has now had 2,000 years to reflect upon that defection. And regrettably, there is no repentance from where Demas is at today. Now, we do note that Demas fled to Thessalonica, but the reason for this is not given.

[10:05] And I haven't come across anything in the study we're doing Sunday morning here on the two books of Thessalonians. He obviously felt comfortable going there.

I will say this. Thessalonica had a lot of false teachers and false prophets. Some have suggested that Thessalonica might have been his home and he would have friends there.

Obviously, the desertion of Demas caused great disappointment to Paul. And he makes reference to it in inspired scripture. Cretans, fateful and unknown.

That's the next one. Cretans has gone to Galatia. Here we have the only reference to a man named Cretans in the entire word of God.

All we know of him must be inferred from that brief information that Paul gives here. He has gone to Galatia. He was obviously faithful to Paul and he was faithful to the Lord.

[11:10] He did not flee with Demas when Demas left, nor did he flee as Demas did. Additionally, he was trusted by Paul to do the work assigned to him because he was sent to Galatia.

And it says he went. He went. Paul had a very special place in his heart for the church at Galatia. And that church, like most churches, or I should probably say all churches, they were not without problems.

We can infer that he would not send someone to them unless he had full confidence in them to minister to a church with problems. This man is one of the many that ministered faithfully to the early church, but their achievements did not rise to be recorded in church history and are obviously not known by the church today.

But the Lord knows the work of these men and women. Rich shall be their reward in heaven. And then Paul moves in. He mentions Titus.

We're going to be talking about him next week. Titus, both faithful and known. Titus, he sends to Dalmatia. Titus was well known. He was faithful to Paul.

[12:29] He was faithful to the Lord. Paul wrote about him. He wrote him, rather, a letter several years after 1 Timothy, about a year after 2 Timothy.

We're going to become real familiar with that letter. It's next on the list of our study. And we'll probably spend 10 lessons in there on three chapters. What work had Titus been engaged in for the church?

Here is where we learn in the opening words of the book that bears his name. This we'll study. For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.

That's Titus 1.5. That's his mission. That's his mission. So what do we know about Titus? Titus, he was a builder and equipper of the early church.

He was trusted by Paul to be a teacher and a pastor assigned to struggling churches. And after Paul was released from one of his prison sentences, he rendezvoused with Titus and gave him orders to strengthen the church and to build up its leaders.

[13:44] And so we're going to have an adventure in those three chapters of the book of Titus. And then he talks about one of our favorites, Dr. Luke, the faithful companion.

And he says, Only Luke is with me. Only Luke. Now, the liberals have tried to infer in that that Paul was depressed about Luke being with him.

Oh, well, all I've got is Luke. Well, that's a stretch. It's not a criticism of Luke. Luke stayed with Paul during his imprisonment while others departed.

And let me say something about prison in Rome. In the Roman Empire, you needed someone on the outside supporting you. Because Rome wasn't very liberal with food, water, shelter, clothing in the winter.

You needed help. And Luke, a physician, stayed there during his imprisonment. Everyone else left. Some were sent. Some ran away.

[14:49] Dr. Luke is mentioned only three times in the New Testament. He's the only Gentile author. But he wrote the longest of the four Gospels in the lengthy book of Acts.

The fact that he remained with Paul placed Luke in serious and constant danger. If Rome didn't care whether Paul lived or died, they wouldn't care whether Luke lived or died.

We know that Luke was a physician. I think we can infer that he treated Paul and others on the journey. I mean, you've got a doctor with you. Why wouldn't you?

Paul refers to him as the beloved physician. And from the Gospel of Luke, we know that he was an outstanding evangelist.

But it is the book of Acts, which we studied in here last year on Sunday morning, that we also realized he was an outstanding historian.

[15:50] Great, great historian. The Holy Spirit used Luke to chronicle both the life of Christ and the early life of the body of Christ, the church.

Dr. Luke traveled extensively with the Apostle Paul. He was with Paul in Troas and Philippi during the second missionary journey. He joined Paul at some point during the third missionary journey. He traveled with Paul from Jerusalem, or rather to Jerusalem, and there they were under great risk of imprisonment. Paul was, in fact, arrested. He accompanied Paul to Rome.

He was with him when they suffered shipwreck on Malta. He ministered in Rome and was a comfort to Paul just before his execution. I think it's very obvious that Paul is happy that Luke is still with

him.

Great man of God. Look forward to meeting him someday and sitting at his feet. I'll see if he can measure up to Brother Don in teaching the book that he wrote.

[16:56] How do we describe Mark? Mark is next. Mark, unfaithful yet restored. Boy, that's important, isn't it?

Listen to what Paul says in 2 Timothy 4.11, the second part of that. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

Mark apparently lived on the route that Timothy was taking from Ephesus to Rome. And Mark is sometimes referred to as John, not the apostle or the evangelist, other times as John Mark, which I find the easiest to refer to him.

He was a native of Rome and one of the first congregations there met in his home. He showed great promise and Paul chose him to accompany himself and Barnabas as they set off on their first missionary journey.

Well, they got as far as Perga and Pamphylia, and we are told that John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. Now, here's what's interesting.

[18:14] There's actually been movies made about this, and they come up with all reasons, but we're not sure why John Mark left. But Paul was troubled by it, and he felt like the reason was inexcusable that John Mark would leave.

Years later, Barnabas wanted to give John Mark a second chance, but Paul refused, citing the fact that he had deserted them in Pamphylia.

The dispute between Paul and Barnabas was so intense, they ended up parting company. So Barnabas took John Mark with him, and they set sail for Cyprus.

Well, obviously, something had changed when it comes to John Mark. He had spent a lot of time with Barnabas. By the way, they were cousins.

Barnabas was his older cousin. Perhaps it is proof that Barnabas was just living up to his name, which means son of encouragement. He may have been encouraging John Mark.

[19:18] Whatever happened, Mark was a changed man, and Barnabas, I believe, was obviously involved in this change. Guys, older guys, we're to be mentors to the young guys and change them for the better if that's needed.

Now, it had been 20 years since Mark had parted with Paul, and now he had proved himself not only to Barnabas, but to Paul as well.

Paul described him to the church at Colossae as one of his fellow workers. Mark also spent time with Peter. Well, there's another honor. And no doubt grew in his faith through that exposure.

He had become important to the church, and Paul wanted him to come so that he would be of service. Now, whatever had happened before, Mark was now useful and a devoted servant, not only to Paul, but more importantly, to the Lord himself.

So, yeah, he had a lapse of faith, but now he is fully restored. Tychius, the faithful messenger, another guy we don't know a lot about. Tychius I have sent to Ephesus.

[20:32] Tychius, we are uncertain as to whether this was the first or second trip to Ephesus by this man. He may have been sent there to deliver the second letter of Corinthians to the churches at Ephesus and Colossae.

There's some information, secular. He may also have delivered the letter to Titus that Paul wrote to Titus. The precise spiritual gift that Tychius possessed is unknown to us, but it probably involves service of some type.

There is no scriptural support that he was ever a teacher or a preacher, but obviously he had great value to the apostle Paul, and he was a friend, and he was useful to the Lord Jesus as he built his church.

See, Jesus uses all kinds of people to build his church. You may not be a teacher or a preacher, but God's given you a gift to build the church, and we're still in the business of building the church, aren't we?

The called out ones, the set of apartments. And then Paul mentions Carpus, the faithful host. Very interesting.

[21:56] He says, when you come, bring the cloak, which I left at Troas, with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

Very interesting. Here's a guy that's about to be executed. He's wanting his library. I think that's just great. I want mine too. Once I'm died, you've got to go for it and have a feeding frenzy.

What's that for Mike in the Sports Illustrated? It was, and what is almost a famous request, Paul asked Timothy to come back to him with the cloak that he left in Troas with Carpus.

The Holy Spirit, who breathed those words, saw fit to include this request into the canon of sacred Scripture.

I mean, it's just, I find that just really neat, that they put in these marvelous things, and things that are sort of mundane, and they're all woven together.

[23:04] Paul had obviously spent some time in the home of Carpus, and had trusted him with some of his valuables. In all likelihood, the church there met in the home of Carpus, although we cannot be dogmatic about that fact.

See, there weren't church buildings for the third century. I think most of you guys know that. That's when Constantine declared Christianity to be the state religion. Oh, isn't that wonderful? No, it was horrible.

You don't become a Christian by being born into a Christian society. You can become a Christian by being born from above or born again. And then he mentions the cloak.

What is that? This was a large and heavy woolen garment. It served as a coat and as a blanket in the winter months.

And Paul's in a cold, drafty prison in Rome. This would be an important item for the approaching winter. Now, the books and parchments would have been expensive, and Paul wanted them for his ministry.

[24:13] The books were probably papyrus scroll of Old Testament writings. Parchments were made of animal skins. Very expensive.

And it's possible that some of Paul's letters were ultimately placed on them. None have been located by the archaeologist Spade. But desiring them indicates that Paul planned to continue to write up until the end.

I mean, if they delayed his execution a few years, no telling how many books we'd have. You know, there'd be no telling. And then Paul says, Alexander, the faithless enemy.

Wow. Wow. Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much harm. I'd hate for Paul one day to tell the Lord, Tom Holland did me much harm.

I would melt like wax, you know. The coppersmith did me much harm. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds. He didn't say, I'm going to repay him.

[25:20] I'm going to get Timothy to repay him. He said, the Lord will take care of that. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Be on guard against him yourself. And he's writing to Timothy.

Timothy, be on guard against Alexander. For he vigorously opposed our teaching.

And who's our? Paul, Timothy, probably Silas. They were all together. He didn't just oppose their teaching. He vigorously opposed their teaching.

Paul uses a lot of words to warn Timothy about Alexander. No doubt Paul had good reason to do so. We don't know for sure just who this man was.

It is possible he is the same Alexander that was singled out when Paul wrote about Hymenaeus, whom the apostle had delivered over to Satan so they would both be taught not to blaspheme.

[26:25] We studied that in 1 Timothy 1, verse 20. But we do know this. Alexander is a coppersmith. He may have been making copper idols.

And Paul's preaching, when he came into an area, it totally disrupted those trades. Guys who were making idols were put out of business because people got saved and learned about idol worship.

Now, if you've studied Acts chapter 19, you know there was a Demetrius, a silversmith. I don't know what it is. Was he silversmith and coppersmith? I'm not going to go into that business.

But we had a Demetrius who was a silversmith. Paul put him out of business. He preached Jesus. And he said, these are idols. These are sin.

In any event, Paul made it clear to Timothy that the Lord was the one who would repay Alexander for what he had done to the ministry and, by extension, the Holy Spirit's work there because that's what's really going on.

[27:32] The danger was that this man was an enemy of God and Paul warns young Timothy, be on the lookout for him.

If he shows up, be leery and cautious. You're going to have to deal with him. And then Paul throws in something called the unfaithful anonymous.

In verse 16, he says, At my first defense, no one supported me, but all deserted me.

May it not be counted against them. Defense in the Greek word is the same word for apologetics or an apologist. Now, remember, an apologist is not someone that apologizes for the Scriptures.

An apologist is a defender of the truth of the Scriptures. Probably the most famous today is Ravi Zachariah, Dr. Zachariah, who's a really neat guy.

[28 : 34] This may refer to one of the trials that Paul was on before the Roman court, during which time he defended the faith.

He defended the faith. In so doing, he was abandoned by all of his so-called friends. They didn't want to stick around and see what the Roman judge was going to do, the procurator.

Not even fellow believers came to his support. The fact that all of them deserted him indicates that neither Onesiphorus, who we read about in Philemon, nor Dr. Luke were with Paul as yet because it is written, those men were never ashamed of his chains.

They would not have deserted Paul even if they had to pay the same penalty, even execution. The actions of the men who deserted Paul could not be defended.

And it is entirely reasonable to assume that some of them may have been true followers of Christ but were abandoning Paul, Christ's man.

[29 : 48] Regardless, Paul asked that their desertion not be counted against them. Did the Lord answer that prayer? I don't know. I don't know. But this is a very poignant moment in Paul's life.

Very poignant. He no doubt was thinking back to his participation in the murder of Stephen. Paul was instrumental in that.

He had been forgiven both by Stephen and the Lord Jesus Christ. So he asked, Lord, don't hold this against these men. Paul had received mercy and grace and he's able to pray for the mercy and grace of these men.

Well, then Paul comes to this point. Christ, the faithful Lord. Verse 17 and 18. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished and that all the Gentiles might hear.

And I was rescued out of the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.

[31 : 07] To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Paul was on trial for his life. Some believe that the judge may have been Nero himself.

Now, you remember that guy. Got burned Rome. Blamed the Christians. The court would have been jammed with spectators, many of them prominent citizens of the empire.

No one was on Paul's side. But here we see one person supporting Paul. He only had one person in that courtroom. The creator God himself, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, that makes a majority, doesn't it? That makes a majority. And you know, isn't it interesting? Paul didn't say, I'm going to throw this in early. I'll probably get to it again. He didn't say, bring me safely out of this court.

He said, bring me safely to your heavenly kingdom. He had this kingdom vision. God said, we need to be walking around with a kingdom vision. We're not even citizens of this world.

[32 : 14] Our citizenship is elsewhere. But the Lord stood with him. Now, Paul had often been delivered out of the lion's mouth.

That was a very common expression in that day if you were facing mortal danger. One can't help but think of Daniel in the lion's den.

Satan himself is described as a prowling lion that seeks to devour. But no lion, including the devil himself, has any power over Christ.

None. Paul had no fear when it came to physical danger. Why? He knew where his ultimate destination lay.

He was going to a heavenly kingdom. He even wrote to the Romans telling them, Roman church, that he preferred to be absent from the body so he could be present with the Lord.

[33 : 21] To the Philippians, he said, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Paul was enduring great loneliness, pain, deprivation, desertion. With all of that going on, it's no wonder that the prospect of heaven was so appealing.

It appealed to him. In spite of his circumstances or maybe because of them, Paul exalted to him be the glory forever and ever.

Amen. And then Paul mentions rather some fateful old friends. He says, Greek, Prisca, and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus, and I'll probably pronounce that bad, Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus, I left sick at Miletus.

The Holy Spirit, again, he wove those words together for us. Paul remembered old friends who stood with him in good times and bad.

That's a true friend, isn't it? Can stand with you in good times and in bad. He met Prisca and Aquila at Corinth.

[34 : 35] They had fled Rome when the Emperor Claudius ordered all Jews expelled from Rome. Now, they had something in common. They were all fellow tent makers just like Paul.

I'd love to have a tent made by Paul. When Paul left Corinth, he took this devoted couple and left them in Ephesus to minister to the flock while they were there.

Now, while there, Prisca, and by the way, we know her more like her common name Priscilla. That's who it really is. And Aquila met a man named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth.

the Bible describes him as an eloquent man who was mighty in the scriptures. Well, obviously, that would be the Old Testament scriptures, right? New Testament hadn't been written yet.

He was mighty in the scriptures. But Apollos had not been exposed to the gospel. He knew the Old Testament, but he didn't know the gospel.

[35 : 41] So, these two, Priscilla and Aquila, took him aside and lovingly explained Christ to him. Paul also expresses appreciation for the household of Anisiphorus, describing him as a man not ashamed of Paul's chains, which brought refreshing to Paul.

Wasn't ashamed of him. His was a household of converts, which would have included children in his home, servants, and slaves.

What's the Lord saying? The gospel is for everyone. The gospel is for all people. Erastus remained in Corinth. That's okay.

That's where God wanted. And there's some evidence that he may have been the city treasurer there. He may have served as the city treasurer. Now, Trophimus is interesting. He was a citizen of Ephesus.

He had accompanied Paul from Greece to Troas. And the passage tells us that he had to leave Trophimus behind in Miletus because the man was sick.

[36 : 53] Now, don't just let that pass over you. That's really important. That's really important. It's especially important in the 21st century. we have to make a note here that Paul made no effort to heal his good friend, Trophimus.

Didn't do anything. Didn't lift a finger to heal him, as far as we know from Scripture. Trophimus had been with Paul and had seen him raise a dead person.

He was present when a young man went to sleep during a service. fell out of a window and was killed. Let me tell you, do not fall asleep in dawn's service.

You can't tell what might happen. I can't hear. You can't tell. And, I mean, if you think dawn's going to raise you from the dead, maybe you can snooze off a little bit, but this guy falls out of a window. I'll tell you his name, but I can't pronounce it. Euclis. Euclis. He's this young guy, and he's in a window, and he nods off, and boom, he's dead. Let me tell you something, guys.

[38 : 06] This verse, in my belief, is concrete evidence that the sign gifts were coming to an end.

The apostolic age was coming to an end. Why did Paul have all these gifts? Why did Peter have these? To authenticate what they were preaching until the New Testament was written.

and once we had the New Testament, we didn't need signed gifts. We didn't need the signed gift of our pastor got to buy a Rolls Royce.

You can see those guys on TV, not this pastor. We don't need those signed gifts. We can go to the Word of God to see if what is being spoken is true or not.

The apostolic age was coming to an end as more and more of the New Testament was completed and made available to the church. God's Word no longer needed the verification of miracles.

[39 : 06] Now, can God work a miracle? Absolutely. Absolutely. And He does. I cut myself shavings. Don't get close. You'll not see it from far away.

I nick myself. You know in six weeks you won't be able to tell it. God put that system in our bodies. God built that into our bodies. could God heal it?

Yes, sure. He could. But we don't need miracles to verify that what the guy that's doing the miracles is telling the truth. We have the Word of God.

The Bereans listened to Paul and they said, we went home and opened up our Bibles to see if what he was saying was true or not. That's where the rubber meets the road. Then Paul says, there's also some faithful new friends.

make every effort to come before winter. Ebulus greets you also Putin's and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.

[40:10] Paul again asked Timothy, come to me before winter. And by the way, Timothy, don't forget that cloak. It's going to get cold. He needed that cloak for warmth during the cold nights in a prison cell.

And Paul then gives final greetings to these three, Ebulus, Putin's, and Linus. All three of those names, by the way, are Latin, indicating these men were probably from Italy and were members of the church at Rome.

Claudia was a faithful believer, but we know nothing else about her. She was obviously a friend of Paul's. Tradition suggests she was either the mother or the wife of Linus.

I don't know if that's where Charles Schultz got Linus or not, but this has never been verified as to whether or not. And then Paul says this, and don't you love it, the Lord be with your spirit.

Grace be with you. We see in this closing that Paul had a variety of people around him. Many were true friends.

[41:26] Some were bitter enemies. Some were faithful. Others deserted Paul, and by extension, they deserted the Lord Jesus. But typical of Paul, he focuses his closing words on the Lord.

He returns to the Lord. and he prays that Jesus would be especially close to his friends and fellow laborers.

Most of them, he would never see or hear from again, at least in this life. He'd have to wait until heaven. So he leaves them, all these people, in the greatest hands in the universe, those of our sovereign King, our eternal God, the Lord Jesus himself.

Amen.