A New Year's Resolution

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[0:00] But if we could, this morning for a short while, and with the Lord's help, the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read in the book of Psalms, Psalm 27.

And if we take as our text the words of verse 8, Psalm 27 and verse 8. You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, your face, Lord, do I seek.

You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, your face, Lord, do I seek. I'm sure that by now, if you're going to make a New Year's resolution, you'll have already decided upon one.

Because at the start of a new year, as we were saying to the children, we often try and make a New Year's resolution, or we try to make a few changes, whether it's changes to our health, or changes to our lifestyle, or changes within our home, and changes within our family.

At the start of a new year, it brings with it the desire for something new. And so we often begin a New Year determined to go on a diet, especially after overindulging during the festive season.

[1:28] And we resolve to cutting down what's bad for us, and some even, well, they go on a complete detox altogether. And so at the beginning of a new year, we make resolutions, we make improvements, we make renovations, so that we will live better lives and feel better about ourselves.

The start of a new year, it brings with it the desire for a new you. The start of a new year, it encourages us, and it challenges us to shake off all these old habits, and make a few changes in our life.

And you know, in fact, I looked up some, well, a list of New Year's resolutions that people embark on, and there's a long list. I'll just read some of them.

Eat healthily, lose weight, exercise more, eat better, drink less alcohol, quit smoking, stop biting nails, think positive, enjoy life, get out of debt, save money, get a better job, learn something new, such as a foreign language or music, read more books, be more organised, reduce stress, be less grumpy, manage time, be more independent, watch less telly, play less video games, take a trip, give to charity, get along better with people, make new friends, spend quality time with family members, settle down, get engaged, get married, build a house, have kids, spend less time on social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

And you know, the list of New Year's resolutions, it's endless. And don't get me wrong, they're all good suggestions. And they'll all have some positive outlook or positive bearing on our lives if we adopt them.

But you know, not one of these New Year's resolutions will have any bearing upon our soul or our eternal well-being.

Not one of these New Year's resolutions gives to us the New Year's resolution that we need. But you know, when we come to Psalm 27, we see that David is testifying to the Lord as his saviour.

Because he refers to the Lord in verse 1 as his light and his salvation. But that testimony of David, it only became a reality when he made a resolution.

And when David resolved to seek the Lord with all his heart. But that resolution to seek the Lord, it came at God's request. That's what David tells us in verse 8.

You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, your face, Lord, do I seek. And my friend, you might have made a New Year's resolution to change yourself physically or mentally or financially.

But David is reminding you that you need to make a New Year's resolution to change spiritually. You need to resolve to seek the Lord with all your heart.

And at the start of a New Year, you're being reminded in this Psalm, Psalm 27, that you need to do something about your spiritual condition. You need to do something about your spiritual condition.

And from the words of Psalm 27, I'd like us just to consider three things this morning. The request, the resolution, and the result.

The request, the resolution, and the result. So we'll look first of all at the request. The request. Look at verse 8 again. It's a wonderful verse.

You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, your face, Lord, do I seek. Now in this Psalm, Psalm 27, David is telling his testimony.

[5:26] In which he's testifying and he's explaining what the Lord means to him. And David gives to us his testimony at the outset of the Psalm. In verse 1, he says, The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? And as David testifies to the Lord being his light and his salvation.

He says that he doesn't have to fear the future. He's not afraid of his enemies. Because he has confidence in the Lord. And he has new desires. He has new longings.

He even says that in verse 4. David's testimony, it's all about the Lord.

And what the Lord has done in his life. But when we come to verse 8. We see that the reason that David has a testimony at all.

[6:29] Is because the Lord has made a request upon his life. And with this David, he speaks about what it was like before he was converted. He refers to the time before he became a Christian.

The time before he committed his life to Jesus Christ. And David says that the Lord spoke to him. And the Lord put this request upon his life. You said, seek my face.

You said, seek my face. That's what he says. David says that before he was converted. Before he became a committed Christian. Before he confessed that the Lord was his light and his salvation.

David knew that the Lord was speaking to him. And he knew that the Lord was saying to him. Seek my face. You said, seek my face.

And you know, I was thinking, well, that for you. As someone who is uncommitted. And unconverted. This is, is this not where you are today?

You're hearing the Lord's request upon your life. And sadly, you've been hearing it for a long time. And yet you still haven't responded. But up until this point, maybe you've ignored the Lord's request.

Or you've put off the Lord's request upon your life. Or you've delayed, delayed answering the Lord's request. And yet you know that he's speaking to you. And you know that he's calling you to answer his request.

Because it's a wonderful request. You said, seek my face. You have said, seek my face. And what the Lord means when he says, seek my face.

The Lord means that he wants us to come to him personally. He wants us to have a personal encounter with him. Face to face. Seek my face.

He's saying, the Lord is saying, come to me personally. Individually. Intimately. And speak to me. Speak to me. My friend, the Lord's request is for you to enter into a personal relationship with him.

[8:40] Because that's what being a Christian is all about. It's all about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It's all about having a conversation with the Lord.

Where the Lord speaks to you in his word, the Bible. And you speak to him through prayer. And because the Lord knows everything there is to know about you.

The Lord knows everything about you. And because he knows everything about you. You can have an honest conversation with him. You can have an open conversation with him. You can have a personal conversation with him.

That's what the Lord is requesting from you. He wants you to seek his face. And come to him personally, individually, and intimately.

The Lord wants you to speak to him. That's the Lord's request upon your life. Seek my face. Seek my face. But you know the beautiful thing about all this.

[9:40] Is this request. This request is not our request. This is the Lord's request. It's the Lord requesting us. And saying to us.

Seek my face. And this is a beautiful thing. Because the Lord didn't have to make a request. The Lord didn't have to say to David. Or to any one of us.

Seek my face. The Lord was under no obligation to make any request. Because we have sinned against him. We've rebelled against him. We have broken God's holy law.

We have spurned his name. We have despised his cause. The Lord didn't have to make a request to seek his face. And yet. Yet even in our sin.

And rebellion. And our waywardness. The Lord is saying to us today. Seek my face. Seek my face. But why? Why would the Lord say to us?

[10:37] Why would the Lord invite us? Why would he beckon us? Why would he request of us? To seek his face? And of course the answer.

Is out of love for us. This is the Lord's initiative. This wasn't our initiative. Because we couldn't save ourselves. Salvation is the Lord's request. It's the Lord's initiative.

And salvation has always been the Lord's initiative. And the Lord has always been requesting. And inviting sinners to seek his face. He's been inviting us.

Since the beginning. And he's been inviting us. Out of love. For us. And you know. When you consider. How many times in the Bible.

If you have a concordance. Look it up. How many times in the Bible. The Lord says. To his people. Seek my face. Or seek the Lord. You know.

[11:36] When you consider. How many times. It's incredible. Just to name a few. Deuteronomy 4. It says. Seek the Lord your God. And you will find him. If you search after him.

With all your heart. And with all your soul. Psalm 34. Which we were singing. The young lions suffer want and hunger. But those who seek the Lord. Lack no good thing.

Psalm 105. Which we were singing. Glory in his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his presence.

Continually. Hosea chapter 12. Sow for yourselves righteousness. Reap steadfast love. Break up your fallow ground. For it's time to seek the Lord.

Amos 5. Thus says the Lord. Seek me and live. Jeremiah 29. You will seek me and find me. When you search for me. With all your heart.

[12:31] Matthew 6. Seek first the kingdom of God. And his righteousness. And all other things. Will be added unto you. Matthew 7. Ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives. The one who seeks finds. The one who knocks. It will be opened. And probably the most well known verse.

Maybe you learned it in school. Isaiah 55. Seek the Lord. While he may be found. Call upon him. While he is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way. And the unrighteous man. His thoughts. Let him return to the Lord. That he may have compassion on him. And to our God. Who will abundantly pardon.

My friend. The Lord's request. The Lord's loving request. Upon your life. Is seek my face. Seek my face.

[13:28] And let's not think that. This request is one in which. You are not involved. Don't think that this is for someone else in here. Don't think.

That the Lord is saying to you. Just. It's not about you. Stay where you are. The Lord isn't saying to you either. I'll come to you. He's already come.

He came in the person of Jesus Christ. You know. I fear that. So many of you. Use the old cliche. If I'm in the elect. I will be saved. Or if I'm going to be saved.

I'll be saved. And there's nothing I can do about it. It's completely wrong. It's completely unbiblical. Because if you're ever going to be saved.

You'll seek the Lord's face. If you're going to be saved. You'll do all that you can. To be saved. By seeking the Lord. Because when the Lord says. Seek my face.

[14:25] This is an imperative. This is a. This is a command. This is his request. And because it's a command. It requires a response.

That means you have to actively seek the Lord. With all your heart. Because if you think. If I'm going to be saved. I will be saved. And there's nothing I can do about it. Then you will never be saved.

You will never be saved. I will repeat that. You will never be saved. If you think. If I'm going to be saved.

I'll be saved. You will never be saved. And if you think that salvation. Is just going to. Drop into your lap. And fall into place. Or just click. And this bright light.

Will shine for you. And give you this warm. Fuzzy feeling inside. Then you're greatly mistaken. Because. When the Lord makes a request. He makes a request. Using imperatives.

[15:23] And the Bible. It's full. Of imperatives. Full of commands. That require. Our response. Full of requests. That require a resolution.

The Lord commands us. In the Bible. Ask. Seek. Knock. Come. Look. Listen. Hear. Take. Follow. Repent. Believe. They're all commands.

And when he makes that command. When he makes his request. He uses imperatives. And he makes the request. Because they all require a response.

The Lord is making a request upon your life this morning. Seek my face. And it requires a response. They require.

A resolution. They require a resolution. And that's what I'd like us to consider secondly. We've considered the request. The request from the Lord.

[16:22] Seek my face. But now let's consider the resolution. The resolution. Look again at verse 8. You have said. Seek my face. My heart says to you.

Your face Lord. Do I seek. And so as David tells us his testimony. And he explains to us. How he came to confess the Lord.

As his light and his salvation. David says that he responded to the Lord's request. By making a resolution. David says that when the Lord spoke to him.

Personally. Individually. Intimately. He says he knew in his heart. That he needed to respond. He knew in his heart. That he couldn't put it off any longer.

He knew in his heart. That he needed to do something. He had to make a commitment. And confess the name of the Lord. He knew in his heart. That he needed to seek the Lord.

[17:18] Because when the Lord said to David. Seek my face. David says that it was at that point. It was at that point in his life. That he gave in. He stopped running.

He stopped putting it off. When the Lord said. You have said seek my face. My heart says to you. Your face Lord. Do I seek. And in that moment.

David made a resolution. He made a firm decision. To do something. He came to the conclusion. That he needed to act. He needed to put into practice.

All that he had heard. From the Lord. Because he knew the Lord. Was speaking to him. He knew the Lord. Was speaking to him. And so David resolved. To seek the Lord. With all his heart.

And as David testifies. In this psalm. It was the best resolution. He ever made. And you know my friend. Do you not see.

[18:15] That your situation. As someone who is unconverted. And uncommitted. Your situation. And your circumstances. They are so like David's. Because you have heard. The Lord speaking to you.

Personally. Individually. Intimately. He has been challenging you. For maybe many years. He has been inviting you. He has been requesting. You to listen to him.

And seek his face. And like David. You know in your heart. That you need to respond. You know in your heart. That you shouldn't put it off. Any longer.

You know in your heart. That this is what you have to do. You know that. You have to do something. About all that you've heard. You know in your heart. That this is.

What you really want. This is what you really need. You know in your heart. That you have to take that step. Make that commitment. Confess. Jesus. As your Lord.

You know. That you have to seek the Lord. With all your heart. You know that you have to make this resolution. Your resolution. You know that you have to make that firm decision.

And commit your life to the Lord. And what better time. What better time in your life. To make this resolution. Than today. Now. The start of a new year.

A new year's resolution. A new beginning. A new you. What better time. To seek the Lord. Than today. What better time.

To make this. Your new year's resolution. Than now. Because as the Bible says. Now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation.

But you know. What we have to see. Is that David's resolution. It wasn't something. That he took lightly. Seeking the Lord. Committing his life to the Lord. Becoming a Christian. It wasn't something. That he treated casually.

[20:13] Or flippantly. It was a firm decision. It was something. He wanted to do. He wanted to seek the Lord. Because he knew. That he needed the Lord. It was a resolution.

David resolved. To seek the Lord. Because he knew. That he was lost. He knew. That he was lost. And he made a firm decision. To seek the Lord. With. All his heart.

It was a wholehearted resolution. It wasn't. A half-hearted resolution. But a wholehearted resolution. You have said.

Seek my face. My heart. Says to you. Your face Lord. Do I seek. Now of course. When the Bible. Speaks about. The heart.

It's not referring to. The organ. That pumps blood. About our body. It's not. A romantic. Or a philosophical. Concept. When the Bible. Speaks about the heart.

[21:10] It refers to. Our entire being. Because for a Jew. The heart was more than just. Feelings or emotions. The heart was. Your soul. It was.

And your emotions. Your mind. Your conscience. Your strength. Your heart. Governs. Your entire being. That's why the greatest. Commandment. In Deuteronomy 6.

Is. Love the Lord. Your God. With all your heart. Mind. Soul. And strength. And your neighbour. As yourself. In other words. You're to love the Lord. With all. Your being. And that's.

Not easy to do. Because as the. Bible reminds us. Our heart. Is deceitful. It's desperately. Wicked. Jesus. Says that.

Our heart. Is so corrupt. That. What comes out of it. Is. Evil thoughts. Sexual immorality. Theft. Murder. Adultery. Coveting. Wickedness.

[22:06] Deceit. Sensuality. Slander. Pride. And foolishness. All these things. Says Jesus. They come from. Within our. Heart. And they are what. Defiles. You.

As the old saying goes. The heart of the problem. Is the problem of the heart. And that's what the Bible. Is all about. It's all about. Fixing the problem of the heart.

It's all about. Fixing you. In fact. The heart. Is mentioned. Over 750 times. In the Bible. That only goes to show.

How important. The condition. Of our heart. Is. To the Lord. And the condition. Of our heart. Should be important. To us too. That's why David.

Made this wholehearted. Resolution. David knew. That the heart. Of his problem. Was the problem. Of his heart. And when the Lord. Made that request. Seek my face. David made a resolution.

[23:06] He made a firm. Decision. A wholehearted. Decision. To seek the Lord. With all his heart. It wasn't half-hearted. It was. A wholehearted. Resolution.

He sought. The face of the Lord. With all his heart. And you know. That's what the Bible. Stresses to us. It stresses. That we need to seek. The Lord. With all of our heart.

The Bible. Stresses. That we can't. Make a half-hearted. Resolution. It must be. A wholehearted. Resolution. It can't be. A half-hearted. Commitment.

Or a part-time. Christianity. It has to be. A resolution. Of wholehearted. Commitment. To the Lord. Wholehearted.

Commitment. And you know. I love the book. Of Deuteronomy. It's probably a book. That we don't read often. But you know. The book of Deuteronomy.

[24:02] It's all about the heart. The book of Deuteronomy. Is all about. Wholehearted. Commitment. To the Lord. And in the book. Of Deuteronomy. The whole book.

It's just a sermon. Moses. Is preaching. To the children. Of Israel. And they're on the banks. Of the river Jordan. They're just about. To cross over. The river Jordan. Into the promised land.

They're on the threshold. Of a new beginning. They're on the start. Of a new life. And. The book of Deuteronomy. Throughout that book. Moses. Is reminding.

The children of Israel. That the only way. To experience. Blessing. Is if they seek. The Lord. With all their heart. Moses. He not only. Says to them. You have to love.

The Lord. Your God. With all your heart. Mind. And soul. And strength. But Moses. Also. Repeatedly. Says. Throughout the book. Of Deuteronomy. When you seek. The Lord.

[24:56] With all your heart. You will find him. If you search. After him. With all your heart. And all your soul. When you seek.

The Lord. You will find him. If you search. After him. With all your heart. And with all your soul. My friend. The Bible reminds us. That we need.

To resolve. To make a whole. Hearted. Commitment. To the Lord. And you know. That. Is not only for the unconverted. But also the Christian.

We have to be whole hearted. Whole hearted. Whole heartedly. Committed. To the Lord. Because whole hearted. Commitment.

To the Lord. It's the only way. To experience. The Lord's blessing. As well as testimony. David is reminding us. That the Lord. Has made this request. The request.

[25:51] To seek his face. But the Lord. Has also given to us. The responsibility. To seek him. The Lord. Has given us. The responsibility. To make. A resolution.

To seek the Lord. With all our heart. But you know. Maybe for you. The thought of commitment. It fills you with fear. Fear of the unknown.

Fear of rejection. Fear of being. Unworthy. Well all I can say is that. You can take comfort. Because it seems that David.

Even had fears of rejection. And being unworthy. He went on to say in verse 9. Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away. In anger.

O you who have been my help. Cast me not off. Forsake me not. O God of my salvation. It seems that David. Had all these fears. And concerns. About taking that step.

[26 : 47] About making that commitment. That wholehearted commitment. He was afraid. It concerned him. And so it should. It's a big step.

But you know. When he made the step. When he made that step. All those fears disappeared. When he resolved. To seek the Lord's face. All his fears went.

When David committed his life. To the Lord. And you know. Like every Christian. They wonder. What was I worried about?

What was it that I was worried about? What was it that was really holding me back? And they realize. It was nothing. All fears went. When they committed their life.

To the Lord. And when David made his commitment. We see it here in the psalm. His concerns. They all changed. To confidence. His concerns.

[27:47] Were changed. To confidence. That's the result. Of the. Of. His resolution. David testifies. To the result. In his life. He obeyed.

The request. Of the Lord. Seek my face. He resolved. To wholeheartedly. Seek. The Lord. And the result. Was confidence. In the Lord. The result.

Was that the fears were gone. And he was confident. In the Lord. And so we've considered the request. The resolution. But lastly. The result. The result.

The result. The result is given to us. At the beginning of the psalm. Verse 1. Where David says. The Lord is my light. And my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold.

Of my life. Of whom. Shall I be afraid? As we said. Psalm 27. Is David's testimony. He's. He's sharing his testimony. He's telling us. How he became a Christian.

[28:44] And as we've said already. He became a Christian. Because. The Lord's request. Upon his life. Was seek my face. And David became a Christian. Because he resolved. To seek.

The Lord's face. Wholeheartedly. With all his heart. And the result. Was the confession. Of the Christian. Which we have in verse 1. The Lord's my light.

And my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold. Of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? And as we said. When David. Made that commitment.

To the Lord. His concerns. Were changed to confidence. The fears went. When he took the step. When he made the commitment. His fears went.

His worries. Just disappeared. The worries. Of course. About seeking the Lord. But when David. Responded to the Lord's request. When he made that resolution.

[29:36] It resulted. In a transformation. The result. Was a new man. A new outlook. On life. A new hope. In life. And a hope. In death. Because.

Where David's. David once. Walked. In darkness. Blinded by the world. He could now say. The Lord is my light. Where David. Was once lost. In sin.

He could now say. The Lord is my salvation. Where David once looked. To people. And to friendships. And to himself. For all his strength.

And all his confidence. He could now say. The Lord is the stronghold. Of my life. The Lord is the one. I lean upon. And what David is testifying here.

Is the Lord is my everything. The Lord is my everything. He is my all in all. And what we can't miss. From David's testimony. Is the personal nature of it.

Because he says. The Lord is my light. The Lord is my salvation. The Lord is the stronghold. Of my life. It's a personal testimony. Because it was.

A personal commitment. It was an individual commitment. And as we said. When the Lord speaks to us. He speaks to us. Personally. Individually. Privately.

Privately. You could say. Intimately. And the Lord requests. That we make. This resolution. In our life. To make a personal. Commitment to him. Because when we make.

That personal. Commitment to him. We have confidence. In him. We have confidence. In him. And that's the result. Of David's test. We see in David's testimony.

He confesses. That the Lord. Is his light. His salvation. The stronghold. Of his life. And because of this. David goes on to say. In verses 2 and 3. Of whom shall I be afraid. Whom shall I fear.

Because the Lord is with me. Then he says. When evildoers assail me. When they eat up my flesh. My adversaries. And my foes. It's they who stumble. Though an army. Encamp against me.

My heart. Shall not fear. Though war arise. Against me. Yet will I be confident. Where does that confidence. Come from. Where does that assurance.

Come from. It comes from. Confessing the Lord. As your light. As your salvation. As the stronghold. Of your life.

That's where that confidence. Comes from. It comes from. Confessing. Jesus. As your Lord. The Lord. Who is your light.

Your salvation. And the stronghold. Of your life. But you know. This is what I love about. David's testimony. Here in Psalm 27. And with this.

[32:26] I'll close. What we see here. In verse 4. Is that the result. Of David's. Resolution. To. Obey the Lord's. Request. He requested.

The Lord requested. Seek my face. David resolved. Your face Lord. Do I seek. The result. Is that he's no longer. Seeking the Lord. In salvation.

The result. Is now that. As a Christian. David is seeking. To be with the Lord. For all eternity. That's his great hope now. Now as a committed Christian.

David is. Is living every day. Of his life. With an eternal. Perspective. And as a committed. Christian. He has one desire. Look at verse 4. One thing.

Have I asked. Of the Lord. That will I seek. That I may dwell. In the house. Of the Lord. All the days. Of my life. To gaze. Upon the beauty. Of the Lord.

[33:23] And to inquire. In his temple. My friend. What better. New Year's. Resolution. To have. Than this one. A resolution.

That results. In you looking. Beyond. This world. Of sin. And shadows. To the world. To come. Where you're saying. One thing. Of the Lord. Desire.

And that. Will I seek. After. That all. Days. Of my life. I would gaze. Upon the beauty. Of the Lord. You know.

You see. To it. That you make. A New Year's. Resolution. Today. That if you're. Out of Christ. That you would.

Seek the Lord. Lord. That you would. Hear the Lord's. Request. Seek. My. Face. And that. You would. Make the resolution.

[34:17] To seek. The Lord's. Face. With. All your heart. Whole hearted. Commitment. Because the result. Will be.

That you have. The testimony. Of David. The testimony. The Lord is my light. He's my salvation. He's the stronghold. Of my life. But also.

The result. That. You will dwell. In the house. Of the Lord. All the days. Of your life. Tell you what. How David. Closed. Psalm 23.

Goodness. And mercy. All my life. Shall surely. Follow me. And in God's house. Forevermore. My dwelling place. Shall be. He could only say that.

Because he knew the Lord. As his shepherd. So my friend. I ask you. To seek his face. Because that's what the Lord.

[35:15] Is requesting of you. Today. May the Lord bless. These thoughts to us. Let us pray. The Lord. Let us pray. That was how to— And that we would Dhoc.

Thank you. believing the Lord. as thy word reminds us that they that truly seek the Lord shall not lack any good. O Lord, bless us then, we pray.

Give to us an attentive ear and an understanding heart. Bless us, Lord, in the week that lies ahead that thou wouldst go before us in it and keep us on the way.

Do us good, then we pray. Take away our iniquity. Receive us graciously. For Jesus' sake. Amen. We're going to conclude by singing some words from that psalm.

Psalm 27. Psalm 27, page 236.

[36:28] We're singing verse 1 and then we're going to sing verses 7 and 8. Page 236, Psalm 27, verse 1 then verse 7 and 8.

The Lord's my light and saving health who shall make me dismayed. My life's strength is the Lord of whom then shall I be afraid. O Lord, give ear unto my voice when I cry to thee.

Upon me also mercy have and do thou answer me. When thou didst say, seek ye my face then unto thee reply as did my heart above all things thy face, Lord, seek will I.

These verses of Psalm 27 to God's place. The Lord's my light and saving health who shall make me dismayed.

My eyes and bless the Lord of whom then shall I be afraid.

[37:44] O Lord, give ear unto my voice when I do cry to thee.

upon me also mercy have and do thou answer me.

When thou didst say, seek ye my face then unto thee reply.

Thus did my heart above all things thy face, Lord, seek will I.

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 forevermore. Amen.