

The Many

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this evening with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read. Isaiah chapter 53.

Isaiah 53. And if we read again at verse 11, towards the end of the chapter. Isaiah 53 at verse 11. Where Isaiah writes, Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. By his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors.

Yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors. As you know, and as we've said over this short communion season, we've been considering the words of the song of the suffering Savior.

[1 : 09] And what's unique about this song is that it's all about the humiliation, rejection, suffering, death, and burial of Jesus Christ. And as I said over this communion season, I want us to sing this song of the suffering Savior.

I want us to sing this song, not audibly, but with adoration, with affection, with appreciation, with admiration of our suffering Savior.

And in a measure you could say, over the past couple of days we've done that. We've looked at this song, and we've seen that this song is divided into three sections. The first section was the mission. The second section was the message. And the third section, as we're looking at this evening, is the many. Last night we looked at the mission, the mission of the suffering servant, in verses 13 to 15 of chapter 52.

And we noted his action and his appearance and his atonement, where his action, the action of Jesus, was that he was appointed and anointed to be the suffering Savior from all eternity.

[2 : 16] In that great covenant of redemption. His appearance was that, as we read there, verse 14, he was marred beyond human recognition. And his atonement, verse 15, was that his blood, his blood would sprinkle many nations.

The next section we looked at, we looked at this morning, from verses 1 to 6 of chapter 53, which sets before us the message, the message of the suffering Savior, in which we heard his testimony, and his tenderness, and his transaction.

His testimony was all about the gospel of the suffering servant, upon which we are to believe in our heart, and confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. His tenderness is revealed to us in his incarnation, where he humbles himself from his crown of glory, down to the cradle in Bethlehem.

He became that tender plant. And then his transaction, as we saw this morning, it was the real Black Friday, where God the Father made his Son to be sin for us, even though he knew no sin, all so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

It was Calvary's great transaction. It was his transaction. And we remembered that. We reflected upon all of that. We reflected upon his testimony, and his tenderness, and his transaction, and we did so at his table, the Lord's table.

[3 : 44] And so the song of the suffering servant, it divides into those three sections, the mission, the message, and the many. The mission gives us his action, his appearance, and his atonement.

The message, his testimony, his tenderness, his transaction, and his table. And now this evening, you have yet more alliteration.

The many reveals his sacrifice, no, his silence, his sacrifice, and his soul. The many reveals his silence, his sacrifice, and his soul.

So first of all, we see his silence. His silence. Verse 7, He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Now we mentioned this morning that Isaiah was called by God to be a preacher of the gospel, a herald of God's truth, a minister of God's word. And that Isaiah's ministry, it wasn't to pander and to please people.

[5 : 00] Isaiah's ministry was to preach and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was to preach and proclaim the good news. And we see that in these verses, because these verses, verses 7, and also 8, and even 9, these verses, they foreshadow and foretell of the silence of Christ as he was led towards the cross of Calvary.

Because we're told there, if we read in verse 8, we're told there, by oppression and judgment, or sorry, verse 7, he was oppressed and he was afflicted.

We will read there in verse 7, he was oppressed and he was afflicted. Literally it means oppressed is, he was driven, something was driven through him and brought down.

Oppressed and afflicted, driven and brought down, or you could even say impaled and humbled. He was oppressed and he was afflicted. It's the language of crucifixion, which is amazing.

It's really remarkable because, as you know, this song of the suffering Savior, boys and girls, as you know, it was written over 700 years before Christ was born, or even before Christ was crucified.

[6 : 10] It was written even before the art of crucifixion was invented. And I say it was the art of crucifixion because it really was an art. An awful art, but the art of how to prolong pain and how to create agony and affliction prior to death.

You know, I read an article just the other day, it was by a physiologist from King's College in London, and he explained that prior to death by crucifixion, there was suffocation, loss of bodily fluids, and multiple organ failure.

And he said, in the article, he says from the outset, from the outset, it wasn't pleasant. It wasn't pleasant. That's what we looked at even last night, marred beyond human recognition.

But this is what the physiologist writes. Seven-inch nails would be driven through both wrists to support the body's weight. The nails would sever the median nerves, which not only caused immense pain, it would also paralyze the victim's hands.

The feet were then nailed to the upright of the crucifix, with their knees bent at a 45-degree angle. But the weight of the victim's body compressing their lungs would make breathing extremely difficult.

[7 : 40] The only way to inhale was to press down on the nails. But as blood slowly drained through the victim's wounds, their strength was being drained and their heart would stop working properly.

To speed up the death of a victim, executioners would often break the legs of their victims to give no chance of using their thigh muscles as support. And that's what we see with the two who were on the other side of Jesus.

Their legs were broken. He writes, once the legs gave out, the weight would be transferred to the arms, gradually dragging the shoulders from their sockets.

The elbows and the wrists would follow a few minutes later, making the arms six or seven inches longer. The victim would then have no choice but to bear his weight on his chest, resulting in suffocation.

Then he writes, death was a relief. Death was a relief. And you know, you think about it, and there is Jesus, and you think, Calvary really was a cruel cross for Jesus Christ.

[9 : 03] He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

And you know, his silence is emphasized in that verse, verse seven. It's emphasized by the repetition, that repetition, he opened not his mouth.

He opened not his mouth. And you know, at this point in the song of the suffering Savior, the picture that's been portrayed to us isn't so much of, you could say, a priest making a sacrificial offering to God.

That will come in the next section. Here the picture we have in verse seven is more like a butcher in a slaughterhouse. That's what we're told. A butcher in a slaughterhouse.

That's what the cruel cross of Calvary was. It was a slaughterhouse. He was like a lamb that is led to the slaughter. Like a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

[10:14] He opened not his mouth. Now, I know that many of you, you have animals or you have family members have animals and maybe you were there that day when you dropped off the animals at the slaughterhouse in Stornoway.

And you know, maybe it was just me. I've been to the slaughterhouse in Stornoway and I always remember dropping off a couple of my father's heifers at the slaughterhouse early one morning. And I remember letting them out of the trailer into the pen inside the slaughterhouse. And I don't know, maybe it was just me, but I felt they were so sad, these heifers. They seemed so sad. But what also struck me was the silence in the slaughterhouse.

There were sheep there in a pen. There were other sheep over the other side in another pen. There was cattle in different places. And they all seemed to be very quiet, almost eerily silent, as if, I don't know, maybe they knew what was before them, as if they knew what was coming.

There was, anyway, for me that day it was, and I'll never forget it, there was this silence in the slaughterhouse. And it immediately reminded me of this verse in verse 7.

[11:22] Because what we're being foretold and foreshadowed about the cruel cross of Calvary is that he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, like a sheep before its shearer is silent.

So he opened not his mouth. He opened not his mouth. I'm sure you've also heard of the horror film that came out in the early 1990s.

It was called The Silence of the Lambs. The Silence of the Lambs. Now, I don't like horror films because there's enough evil in the world without having to be entertained by it.

And truth be told, the reality of all these horror films and the horrors of hell that they try to present and portray to us, they are only a fraction of what is reality, of what God has really invented when it comes to the horrors of hell.

But you know, The Silence of the Lambs, I've never watched it, but I always thought it was a very interesting title for a film. The Silence of the Lambs, it was hailed as one of the greatest and influential films of all time.

[12:28] But its title, The Silence of the Lambs, it's a metaphor for the innocence of the victim, that the victim is innocent, The Silence of the Lambs.

And as you can guess, the metaphor, the phrase, the title of the film, it's derived from this verse, The Silence of Jesus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world.

Because as you know, Jesus, He was the innocent victim. He was the innocent victim of the cruel cross of Calvary. He was without sin. He was sinless, the spotless, suffering Savior of sinners.

We're even told there down in verse 9, we're told there that He had done no violence. Neither was there any deceit found in His mouth. Even the thief on the cross beside Him confessed, This man hath done nothing amiss.

He knew no sin. And yet the wonder of wonders is, He became sin for us, all so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

[13:34] And you know, the silence of the suffering Savior, His silence, was a solemn silence, really. His silence was a solemn silence. You know, you come to this verse and you think, well, He opened not His mouth.

Jesus knew what the Bible says. Jesus knew what Solomon taught in the book of Ecclesiastes, that to everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven. And that there's a time to speak and there's a time to keep silent.

And you know, that's foretold and foreshadowed here too because we read in verse 8 that He was taken from prison and from judgment or as it is in the ESV, oppression and judgment.

He was taken away. But if you're using the authorized version, it says He was taken from prison and from judgment. And you remember that after Jesus was betrayed by Judas, arrested by the chief priests, denied by Peter, He was then put on trial six times.

He was put on trial six times where He had three religious trials and three Roman trials. And what's remarkable is that when Jesus stood before Herod, Herod, you remember, He longed to see Jesus.

[14:48] He had listened to John the Baptist for so long. He had longed to see Jesus. And when He finally met Jesus, He questioned Jesus at length. But Jesus gave Him no answer.

He opened not His mouth. His silence was solemn. And then when Jesus was brought to Gabbatha, the stone pavement, the judgment seat of Pilate, the Roman governor, Pilate asked Jesus, Pilate said to Jesus, Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?

And what do we read? Jesus gave no answer. He opened not His mouth. His silence was solemn. And the silence of Jesus was solemn because both Herod and Pilate had silenced their conscience. The silence of Jesus was solemn because both Herod and Pilate had silenced their conscience. Herod silenced his conscience, you remember, by beheading John the Baptist, the voice of God in his life. And he silenced that voice. He beheaded John the Baptist.

[16:01] Pilate, he silenced his own conscience by listening to the crowd and all the chants of the crowd. They silenced their conscience. And so when they met Jesus, the silence of Jesus was solemn because they had silenced their conscience.

And you know, my unconverted friend, here or at home tonight, beware of silencing your conscience to the voice of God.

Beware of silencing your conscience because God is speaking in his word. But the question is, are we listening?

Are we listening to what he's saying? Beware of silencing your conscience to the voice of God. And so we see his silence.

But then secondly, we see his sacrifice. His silence and then his sacrifice. Look at verse 10. It says there, it was the will of the Lord to crush him.

[17:12] He has put him to grief. When his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring. He shall prolong his days. The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Octavius Winslow was a 19th century preacher and pastor both in England and in America. And with a ministry that spanned nearly 50 years, he was a contemporary of Spurgeon, who was the prince of preachers, and also my good friend J.C. Ryle.

But Octavius Winslow, he was known to many and he was loved by many as he was called the Pilgrim's Companion. The Pilgrim's Companion. That was his name as a preacher. And he was given that name because he had this unique ability to make the truths of Scripture accessible and applicable and even appealing to his audience.

And one such truth was God's plan and purpose of salvation. Where Octavius Winslow in a book that he wrote, he asks the question, who delivered Jesus up to die?

And boys and girls, are you listening? Octavius Winslow asked the question, who delivered Jesus up to die? It was not Judas for money, he says, not Pilate for fear, not the Jews for envy, but the Father for love.

[18:38] Who delivered Jesus up to die? It was not Judas for money, Pilate for fear, the Jews for envy, but the Father for love. And you know, with his pastor's heart, Octavius Winslow, he says, this is a truth, this is a truth we should never tire of hearing and to which we must often return.

This is a truth we must never tire of hearing and to which we must often return. Who delivered Jesus up to die? It was not Judas for money, or Pilate for fear, or the Jews for envy, but the Father for love.

And you know, that's what we've been reminded of returning to in verse 10. Because as you can see, verse 10 is bookended by another phrase, it's bookended by the phrase, the will of the Lord. The will of the Lord. This is what God's will was. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him. Now we're all familiar with the concept of God's will because we pray about God's will every week in the Lord's prayer.

We all pray together, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And as we go into a new week, we make plans and preparations for the week ahead.

[19:55] But we do all of it God willing. All of what we do is *deo valente*, God willing. All of our plans and preparations, they are subject to the sovereign will of the Lord.

And that was certainly true about the cross of Jesus Christ. Because as we mentioned last night, our suffering Savior, he was delivered up to die because it was all perfectly planned and prepared and procured and put in place according to that wonderful covenant of redemption.

Where God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, they all agreed and they all arranged that God the Son would humble himself from the crown of glory down to the cradle in Bethlehem all the way down to the cruel cross of Calvary.

It was the will of the Lord. It was all part of the Lord's will. Even this part. Verse 10. It was the will of the Lord to crush him.

It was the will of the Lord to crush him. And you know, that word crush, I love how words stick out in passages of Scripture. That word crush, it's the same word that was used earlier in verse 6.

[21 : 15] No, sorry, verse 5 where it says, He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed.

Then you know, the word crush there in both verse 5 and verse 10, it expresses the idea of almost a seed as you would making flour.

The seed's been crushed and ground down to powder. So the idea, it's almost like you could say the image of a pestle and mortar. I don't know if you have them at home, if you use them when you're making your steaks or whatever it is.

And you'd crush and grind down the ingredients into powder and then you'd add it to whatever you're cooking. And as the ingredients are being ground down and made into this fine powder, as they're being crushed, as you know, when you crush these ingredients, they give off a sweet fragrance.

They give off an aroma. And you know, that's how Paul described the death of Jesus. That's how Paul describes the crushing of Jesus. That's how he describes the crushing of our suffering Savior.

[22 : 31] He says in Ephesians that Christ loved us and gave himself for us as a sacrifice and sweet-smelling savour to God. When Jesus was crushed, says Paul, when he gave himself for us up as a sacrifice, it was all a sweet-smelling savour to God.

It was the will of the Lord to crush him. So who delivered Jesus up to die? Not Judas for money, not Pilate for fear, not the Jews for envy, not even the Romans for the hardness of their heart, but it was all the Father, the Father for love.

God so loved that he gave and Christ loved us and gave himself for us as a sacrifice and a sweet-smelling savour to God.

And you know, it's a sacrifice that's emphasised in this verse because the sacrifice of the suffering Saviour on the cross is described there as a guilt offering. We'll read there in verse 10, he makes his soul an offering for guilt.

It's a guilt offering or a sin offering. And again, the word that's used, it's very interesting because the word for a guilt offering or a sin offering literally means to carry or to bear.

[23 : 56] So it's the idea of carrying something or bearing something, bearing a weight or carrying something, which is a word that's repeated. It's actually a word that's repeated throughout the song of the suffering Saviour because we're told that our suffering Saviour earlier, we're told that he was a man of sorrows.

A man of sorrows who's not only acquainted with our griefs, but he also bears our griefs. He bears them. He carries the weight of them and he bears our griefs and carries our sorrows.

But this suffering Saviour not only came to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows, he also came to bear our sin and carry our shame. He came to bear our sin and carry our shame.

He is our sin offering, our guilt offering. He came to make his soul an offering for sin. He came to make his soul an offering for sin.

Why? It was all for the many, which is what I want us to see lastly. I want us to see about his soul. His soul for the many.

[25 : 09] We've considered his silence, his sacrifice, and lastly, his soul. His soul. Look at verse 11. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied.

By his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, shall make many to be accounted righteous. And he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many.

And he shall divide the spoil with the strong because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. Yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Now as you know and as we've said throughout our study of this song of the suffering saviour, we've said that it divides into three sections. There is the mission and then the message and now there's the many.

And we see the emphasis upon the many in these closing verses. We see it again and again. It's mentioned. The many. Make many to be accounted righteous. He will divide the portion with the many.

[26 : 10] He will make intercession for the transgressors. He will bear the sin of many. So we see the emphasis upon the many. But as we saw and as we said last night, the reference to the many, they act as bookends to the entire song.

The many is mentioned at the beginning and the many is mentioned at the end. Because at the beginning of the song, if you go back to chapter 52, we see that there in verse 14, many were astonished at you or many were horrified at your appearance because you were so marred beyond human semblance.

And then it says, verse 15, he will sprinkle many nations. And then here, now we come to the end of the song. We're coming to the conclusion of this wonderful song of the suffering Savior and we're told that he will make many to be accounted righteous.

He shall justify many. He shall divide a portion of his inheritance with the many because he bore the sin of many.

And as we were saying last night, our suffering Savior is all about the many. Our suffering Savior is all about the many.

[27 : 25] And that's what Jesus reminds us. That's what Jesus reassures us in his gospel that the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many.

It's all for the many. For the many people who are still strangers to this wonderful Savior. It's for the many. It's all for the many.

All that the suffering servant does is for the many. He makes his soul a sacrifice and sin offering for the many. He pours out his soul unto death for the many.

He bears the sin and carries the shame of the many. He justifies the many. He provides a portion of his inheritance and inheritance says Peter that is incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the many.

He makes intercession. He intercedes, ever lives to make intercession for the many. All that the suffering servant does is for the many. So we cannot exclude ourselves.

[28 : 30] It's for the many. It's for the whosoever. The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. But you know, the song of the suffering servant, as we said, it ends as it began.

The phrase, he shall sprinkle many nations at the beginning of the song is actually almost identical to the phrase, he bore the sin of many here at the end of the song.

He shall sprinkle many nations there in verse 14 at the beginning of the song and he shall bear the sin of many right at the end of the song. And I say that both these phrases, I highlight both these phrases to draw our attention to the same image, the same illustration.

In fact, both these phrases at the beginning and the end of the song, they're actually drawing our attention, boys and girls, to the same day, the Day of Atonement.

Yom Kippur. As we mentioned last night, the first phrase we were looking at when we were looking at the mission in verse 14, or verse 14, yeah, we saw there that that phrase, he shall sprinkle, verse 15, sorry, he shall sprinkle many nations.

[29 : 51] It draws our attention to what was on the Day of Atonement, the first goat. There were two goats on the Day of Atonement, you remember. The first goat when the high priest would enter through the veil into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the blood of the goat upon the mercy seat in order to make atonement for the people.

He would sprinkle many nations because without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. But then you come to the end of this song and we see the second goat.

Here's the second goat, the scapegoat. And we're all familiar with the concept of a scapegoat because it's used in everyday speech. When someone at work takes the blame or bears the guilt of other people, they're the scapegoat which is what our suffering Savior did for us.

He bore our guilt. He took the blame. He carried our sin and our shame all the way to the cruel cross of Calvary. And you see that. This whole song points us to one day, the Day of Atonement.

The song of the suffering Savior highlights one day in the year when atonement would be made for the people. It's a beautiful song that reminds us about both goats.

[31 : 06] One that sprinkles many nations and the other goat that was to carry and bear the sin of many and take it away from them. This is who he is.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many.

But you know, saying that Jesus gave his life as a ransom for the many, it's not very personal, is it? Just talking about the many. Because the many could refer to any and yet we know that Jesus, he's a personal Savior. He's one who speaks to you personally.

He's one who saves you personally. which is why the gospel calls us to put our name in this song. You have to put your name into this song and see that you are part of this song.

And I want you to see that the song of the suffering Savior is actually all about you. That's how personal our Savior is. The song of the suffering Savior is all about you.

[32 : 25] Because when you read through this song, and I want you to read it again, I want you to sing it again with adoration and affection and appreciation. But you know, when you read through this song, you see, yeah, there was a time, there was a time in my life when I looked at Jesus and there was no beauty in him that I should desire him.

And yet now you've come to discover that this Jesus, he's one who bears your griefs. He's one who carries your sorrows. More than that, you read this and you see that, yes, he was wounded for my transgressions.

He was bruised for my iniquities. I had gone astray, I turned, like everybody else, I turned to my own way, but the Lord laid on him the iniquity, my iniquity. He was stricken for me.

He made his grave for the wicked, for me. He was crushed for me. His soul was made a sin offering for me. In order to make me righteous.

In order to give me an inheritance. In order to intercede on my behalf. My friend, this suffering Savior poured out his soul unto death, and you can say it tonight, for me.

[33 : 37] Yes, it says he will sprinkle many nations, but he has sprinkled me. He has covered me in his blood. More than that, not only covered me in his blood, he has carried my sin away from me.

And you know, you look at this song of the suffering Savior, and you realize, it's all for me. It's a personal, he's a personal Savior because he came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for me.

Can you say that tonight? I want you to say that tonight, that he came not to serve, to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for me.

And I want you to be able to say, who has believed what he's heard from us? I believe in this. Who has believed this report? I want to believe this report. And I want you to believe it and confess it, to confess that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior.

You know, what a song. We should be singing this song with adoration, appreciation, admiration of our suffering Savior. What better song to sing than this song about a Savior who came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for me.

[35 : 10] For me. And is it for you? Yes, it is for you. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. Oh, Father, we thank thee for thy precious word, and we pray that we be blessed to our souls, that we would be able to sing this wonderful song with adoration and appreciation of our wonderful suffering Savior who loved us and gave himself for us.

Lord, lead us into the week that lies ahead, that we would see that everything that is before us is all God willing. Help us then to trust, to trust that the Lord knows what he is doing and that he is doing all things well.

Bless us then, we pray. Go before us, take away our iniquity, receive us graciously, for Jesus sake. Amen. We're going to bring our service to a conclusion this evening.

We're going to sing the words of Psalm 103. Psalm 103 in the Sing Psalms version, page 135. Psalm 103, Sing Psalms version.

[36 : 27] We're singing from the beginning down to the verse marked 11. But before we sing, I nearly forgot.

Question one, when was the song of the suffering saviour written? 700 BC. Good job. What did Jesus do when he met Herod and Pilate?

He stayed silent. You're not to stay silent just now. Who planned for Jesus to die on the cross? God the Father, out of love?

What day does the song of the suffering saviour refer to? The day of atonement. Well done. Good job. That means you get extra pizza tonight, Anna.

Okay. Psalm 103. Praise God my soul with all my heart. Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits.

[37 : 31] His praise my soul and song proclaim. The Lord forgives you all your sins and heals your sickness and distress. Your life he rescues from the grave and crowns you in his tenderness.

We'll sing on down to the verse marked 11 of Psalm 103 to God's praise. Praise God my soul with all my heart.

Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits.

His praise my soul in song proclaim. The Lord forgives you all your sins and tears your sickness and distress.

Your life will be rescued from the grave and crowns you in his tenderness and crowns you in his tenderness.

[38 : 45] He satisfies your deep desires from his unending stores of good so that just like the eagle's strength your youthful figure is renewed.

The Lord is known for righteous acts and justice to them thrown in wants.

To Moses he made known his ways his mighty deeds to Israel's sons his mighty deeds to Israel's sons.

The Lord is merciful and kind to anger slow and full of grace he will not constantly reprove or in his anger hide his face.

He does not punish our mistakes or give our sins their just reward.

[40 : 14] Our greatest love as high as them towards all those who fear the Lord.

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

Amen.