A King will reign in Righteousness

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Date: 01 January 2017

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[0:00] Let's turn together now to the prophecy of Isaiah and to chapter 32 and we're going to read at the beginning of the chapter. Isaiah 32 and at verse 1.

Behold, a king will reign in righteousness and princes will rule in justice. Each one or a man will be like a hiding place from the wind, a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place.

Like the shade of a great rock in a weary land and so on. I'm sure as we enter into a new year that we all agree that we would like to make things better.

We would like to change ourselves to be better. We would like to live in a better world and perhaps we should also say we would like to live in a better church in the world.

We are looking to be better than we were before. And when we read this prophecy we see that there were those who lived in the days of Isaiah.

[1:11] And their policy seemed to be one of forgetting about God. They were God forgetters. And because they were forgetting God they continued on a course of associating with other nations.

Of associating with other gods. And turning their back on the only true and living God. And in some small or some great way I'm sure that all of us are at some time guilty of forgetting about God.

And when we look at the world in which we live, the society around us, that's what we see. We see a world, a society that is forgetting about God. And that is taking on other gods and other God replacements.

And as was the case in the days of Isaiah, it is often true that we don't realise that we are forgetting God unless God himself makes that known.

And that's what the prophecy is about. There are these dark things happening and into the darkness God speaks. And around this chapter, in the previous chapters at least, there is great darkness, there is great chaos.

[2:30] And here, into the centre of that, God wants to make known that he is going to change things. Change them for the better and align them with what he wants and what he has for the world.

And so, we enter into this chapter and there is that sense of, Behold, this is what you're like, but this is what I'm going to do. And tonight, I want us to look at these two verses against that background.

And as we look forward into this year, to ask ourselves, what are we looking for in 2017? I want to suggest, first of all, that we are looking at God's plans.

Our own plans simply are not working. We are looking at God's plans. And what is God's plan? God's plan is that a king will reign in righteousness.

And when God proclaims that, he's drawing attention to the profile that he has been building up in this prophecy of his own special king.

[3:46] In Isaiah 7, he is coming into the world as the one who is God with us, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son. She will call his name Emmanuel.

He builds up the picture in chapter 9. And to us, a child is born. And to us, a son is given. Wonderful counsellor. Mighty God. Everlasting Father.

Prince of Peace. In chapter 11, he is the king who is going to come from the house of David. And now we come into this chapter and he tells us the kind of king this king is going to be.

And especially the kind of government that he is going to establish in the world. And the kind of government that he is going to establish is one in which he will reign in righteousness.

In other words, he is going to do exactly what the kings in Israel were not doing. They were not doing the things that God wanted them to do.

[4:50] They weren't righteous. Here is what God is saying. Here is his model for kingship in Israel. They are not carrying out that model. They are not putting that model into place.

They are going down their own paths and having their own form of kingship. And here God's plans seem to be up in the air. Because the more they are dependent on human kings, the more they are not going to come to pass.

And because of that, God is proclaiming that his king, that his son is going to come and he is going to be righteous and he is going to reign in righteousness.

And when you think of him reigning in righteousness and we think of God's plan for the world, Isaiah makes it clear that righteousness is very close to salvation.

In fact, in chapter 51 and verse 5, he says that my righteousness is near, my salvation is about to come forth. So I look at God's king and he is going to govern the world.

[5:56] And he is going to do that in accordance with God's plans. And I see that God's plans are the salvation of the world. And I see this king is going to do exactly what God wants him to do in reigning in the world.

And as I look forward into 2017, that's the kind of government I'm looking for. That's the kind of king I want in my life. The king who is God's king.

Who is doing God's will. Who is faithful to God in the first place. That's the priority. He is faithful to God. And in his faithfulness to God, he is bringing about salvation.

He is bringing about right relationships. He is bringing about righteousness. Not only will he himself be faithful to God, but he is going to implement a government that will make people faithful to God as well.

And is that not what's at the very side of our hearts tonight? That that's the kind of world we want to live in. Where God's king is righteous and where he makes people like yourselves righteous as well.

[7:09] And in his plans and in his government, the princess will rule in justice. Everything that he purposes to do, it's going to be put in place.

The whole of his government, the king and his princes, they are going to implement God's plans. They are going to put God's plans into the world to change the world.

And they will rule in justice. And in moving on, I want to simply to see that justice in the Bible means this.

It means that I have rights in my relationship with you. You have rights in your relationship with me. God-given rights. God has a right over me in my relationship with him.

And I have a right that he has given to me in my relationship with God. Justice is about everyone having their own rights in their proper relationships.

[8:13] And here is the absolute marvel of this government. That this king is going to come into this world. And he is going to make sure that you and I have a proper God-honoring relationship with each other.

And he is going to ensure that we have a proper God-given relationship with God. He is going to establish order and justice. And this plan is about changing the world back to what it was like when he made it before we spoiled it.

What a plan. Tonight, if I have a hope for this world. And if I am looking forward with the kind of spectacles that the word of God gives to me.

I want Jesus to reign as king in the world. I want Jesus to reign as king in my world. And I want him to reign as king in my world.

And I want him to do that so that I will love the Lord my God with all of my heart. With all of my soul. With all of my strength. And with all of my mind. And also so that I will love my neighbor as myself.

[9:24] That's a master plan. How different the world will be when Jesus does this. The chaos will be gone. The evil will be gone.

Everything will be peace. And righteousness. And so what am I looking for in 2017? I am looking at God's plan for the world.

And God's plan for the world. That includes myself. In this righteousness and justice. And salvation. Secondly.

And if I am doing that. I am also looking at God's program. How is he achieving this? How is he going to do it? And when I think of God's program.

And I look at my own calendar for this year. I begin to look at God's calendar. Because in his program. I see in his calendar that he has three key days. Key events.

[10:25] In his program. To ensure that this world is the way. That he wants it to be. And if I am going forward into 2017. I really do want. To have his days. Imprinted in my mind.

And firmly fixed in my heart. And the first of these days. That God is going to do. As the one who intervenes in my world. He is going to.

Send his son into the world. Each. Will be like a hiding place. Or a man. Will be like a hiding place.

And that's the. The first marvel. That God. Shows and does. In the experience of my world. That. He sends forth his son.

Born of Abelman. Made under the law. Where do I find him? I find him. In. In Bethlehem's manger. And the Lord of glory. Has come to.

[11:24] To inhabit my world. In all of its sorrows. And in all of its griefs. In all of his lowliness. He has come down. He has emptied himself.

He is the rich one. Who has become poor. What an event. If I am going to understand. God's plans at all. To transform my world. And this world. I must begin.

In the manger at Bethlehem. Where God is with us. Where Emmanuel. Is in my world. And I follow his story. As somebody. Who marks this day.

I follow his story. And I see him. Like myself. Like those. Around him. And my Bible tells me. That he was tested.

Like you and I are. My Bible tells me. That he went through. So many things. That you and I go through. And my Bible tells me. That he did all of that. So that he would be sympathetic.

[12:19] So that he could have compassion. So that he would understand you. What a day. And the experience.

Of the Son of God. And what a day. That's worthy. To be marked. To synchronize. My life. My diary.

My calendar. My whole experience. To synchronize it. With the day. That God came down. And was born in Bethlehem.

To Joseph. And to Mary. I remember. I will never forget. That great moment. In God's. Calendar. And the second.

Significant event. In which God. Works in the world. Is. I find. When I follow this child. From the manger. To Golgotha. From Bethlehem.

[13:18] To Calvary. And. And I say. I'm self. Once. All of us readers. To come to that place. Where. In chapter 52. Into chapter 53. They want to see.

That this king. Is a suffering king. And this king. Is going to be crucified. And he's going to suffer. For the sins of the world. And that's the picture.

That. That we have. In that whole chapter. He is. Going to make his soul. An offering. For sin. And when I come.

To. To Calvary's cross. And. In the awful. Horribleness. Of the suffering. Of Jesus. Of Nazareth. God reminds me.

In that portrait. In chapter 53. That it was. The will of God. To bruise him. To bring him to grief. And that he laid.

[14:14] My sins upon him. That he was wounded. For my transgressions. That he was bruised. For my iniquities. And there. He died. For my sins.

And here is. Here I am. In this world. And in my world. And my relationship. With God. Is upside down. My relationship. With God. Is all wrong.

And. The chaos. Of my life. Is because. There is something wrong. Between me. And God. And when I come. To this. Day in God's calendar.

I read. Paul's. Great words. In writing to Corinthians. In the second epistle. In chapter 5. And I read these. Fascinating words.

That God. Was in Christ. Reconciling. The world. To himself. And. That he made him. Who knew no sin. To be sin.

[15:10] So that I might become. The righteousness of God. God's plan. This is the king's work. And here he is. The king is the servant. The king is the suffering servant.

The king is the one. Who lays down his life. For his people. He is the one. Who bore. My sins. In his own body. To the tree.

What am I looking for? I'm looking at God's calendar. And at the center of gravity. Of all that God is doing. Brings me to this important moment.

In the life of Jesus. Because it is the defining moment. In all that God is going to do. In changing the world. And I go forward.

Into 2017. And I'm looking. For the love of God. To fill my heart. I'm looking for. What John says. In the first epistle.

[16:07] I'm looking to be able. To get caught up. In what Jesus has done. And to be able. To say. That I love him. Because he first loved me.

That I'm able to say. That. For me to live is Christ. That I'm able to say. That his love.

Has won my heart. And I don't want to go. Any further tonight. Into this new year. Until I'm sure. That my heart has embraced. This glorious moment.

And embraced this great king servant. And the work that he has done. In my place. At Calvary's cross. Because.

If I see and recognize. That. I see that. In the horribleness. Of his suffering. There is none. As beautiful as him.

[17:06] He is all together. Lovely. He is. The most attractive. Person. Because of his love. And because of his suffering. And because of his readiness.

To go to death. For me. And already. This great day. Is engraved. In my mind. And tonight.

The gospel. Wants to. To ensure. That you have the same. That this day. Is so. Written in your thinking. That you will never forget it.

That it will control. Every moment. Of your experience. And that you will rejoice. In God's great love. Day number two. Day number two. Day number two.

Day number two. And there is of course. Finally. Another day. And it's. The last day. It's when.

[18:01] This Jesus of Nazareth. The king who suffered. And to win the glory. It's when he returns. To judge the world. And we can read chapter 63.

Of this. Of this. Prophecy. We can read. The final chapters. In the book of Revelation. We can see. That this king. Is going to return. And in that gruesome picture.

In chapter 63. It's going to come. With vengeance. And it's going to come. To crush his enemies. And it's going to come. To save his people.

And. On that great day. In chapter. 25. I read. That when the people of God. Will see him. They will save. This is our God. He has.

Come. To save us. Let us. Rejoice in him. He's going to stand. On the last day. On the earth. And. Part of humankind.

[19:01] Is going to. Flee. And try and hide away. In the rocks. And under the mountains. Because of the glory. Of his judging power. And there will be.

The people of God. And they will rejoice. At the glory. Of his coming. And they will. They will welcome him. They in the words of Isaiah.

Chapter 33. They will see the king. In his beauty. The city. Lovely. That. Great encounter. That. Stands. Ahead.

In the. The journey. Of the people of God. When the son of God. Will return. And stand. On the earth. And judge you. If you're without Christ.

And bring you home. If you are one of his. I'm looking at. God's program. Tonight. Friends.

[19:54] As we go forward. We cannot afford. To spend. Another moment. Of life. Living in this world. Without grasping. And embracing.

These three moments. In God's program. Of changing this world. And putting his plans. In place. Never forget. That. The son of God.

Was. Born in the manger. Never. Forget. That on Calvary's cross. Truly. This was the son of God. Never forget.

That the son of man. Will return. And stand. On the last day. On the earth. In all of his glory. And with the clouds. And with the angels. Surrounding him.

As he comes. To save. His people. And thirdly. If I'm going into.

[20:53] 2017. Looking for God's. Program. Looking for his. Government. Looking for his. Plans to be put in place. I'm looking to God's.

Promises. I cannot live my life. In this world. Without. The promises. Of God. And we have promises.

In the second verse. That speaks to us. Of that great day. In the future. Future. And that speaks. To us. Of our journey. From now. Until then.

And with regard to. That great day. In the future. I hear God saying. That a man. Each. A man. Will be like. A hiding place. From the wind. And a shelter.

From. The storm. Hiding place. From. The wind. In the Hebrew.

[21:51] The same word. Is used for. Wind. For breath. And for. Spirit. And here. There is. To be a hiding place.

From. The wind. And the spirit of God. Brings life. But it is also. Sent into the world. To execute. God's commands.

And also. To come in judgment. Right. And when. When I read. Chapter 40. Where people. Are mourning. And where people. Are been. Suffering from loss.

And. And the voice. Says. What shall I cry. All flesh is grass. Humankind. Is like the grass. The wind blows.

The grass withers. And the flower fades. All flesh is grass. The grass withers. Because the spirit. Of the Lord. Blows. Upon it.

[22:50] It's appointed. For man wants. To die. And I don't know tonight. If that will be this year.

And nor do you. But I do know. That it will come. That death will come. With all of its.

Pain. At some point. In my life. Because. It is appointed. For man. Wants. To die. I cannot. Avoid it.

And. It brings. Its pain. To all those. Around. But. Tonight. If my trust. Is in the Lord.

Jesus. When. The wind. Of death. Comes. He is like. A hiding.

[23:47] Place. And one thing. About a hiding. Place. Is that. If it's a real. Hiding. Place. The person. That's pursuing.

Me. Is never going. To find me. I'm going. To be. Somewhere. Where. The person. Pursuing. Cannot. Touch. Me. And I.

I go forward. Into. Into this. New year. And. There is this. Great. Last. Enemy. Of death. That is waiting. At somewhere. On my path. To.

To come. For me. And take me. Out of this world. And here. Tonight. If. My trust. Is in Jesus. He is. My hiding. Place. Death.

Is not. Going. To find. Me. Of course. I'm going. To die. But when death. Comes. For me. There is that. Great. Proclamation. No death.

[24:42] Where is your sting? Oh grave. Where is your victory? See. Jesus. Has. Has destroyed. The one. Who has the power. Of death. That's the devil. He has raised.

With. He's been raised. With power. Over death. And over the grave. He is. The living one. And in. The mystery.

And the intimacy. Of my relationship. With Jesus. I am in him. And when death comes. It cannot find me.

I know where to be seen. Because. Jesus is the resurrection. Of the life. And. I face that. Inevitable. Departure.

From time. Into eternity. And death. Speaks to me. Of. Of victory. And of. Of. Taking on. Immortality. And power.

[25:37] And being raised up. In God's power. Hidden. In Christ. My life. Says Paul. In Colossians. Is. Head. With Christ. In God. As we go forward. Friends. We need. To know. That we have. The friendship.

Of Jesus. That we have. A. Saving relationship. Of faith. With him. Because. When death comes. It makes. Our death.

So different. It makes. Our death. A day. Of triumph. And a day. Of victory. And the day. Of our death. Will be better.

Than the day. Of our birth. A hiding place. From the wind. And at the same time. In my future. There is this. Great.

[26:31] Storm. Storm. The storm. Of the wrath. Of God. The storm. That comes. Because of.

Of the power. Of God. That is going to be. Unleashed. In the world. When he comes. To. To find all those. Who are his enemies. All those. Who are not his people. He is going to come.

With his. Powerful voice. To. To summon. The dead. To summon. All the peoples. In the world. And to call them all. Into judgment. And we see something of that.

In chapter 30. The way in which. His. Furious anger. And. And his wrath. Is like a. A flame. That is a devouring fire. It's going to come. And it's justice.

Requiring. Judgment. And the penalty. For sin. Is death. And. And here is. The great judge. Coming into the world. Lord. And.

[27:30] No wonder. Isaiah says. In chapter 33. The sinners. In Zion. Are afraid. And.

Jesus. Reminded us. People of this. And. Down. Through the New Testament. We see. That Paul is saying. That he knows. The terror of the Lord. Therefore.

We persuade men. And we read. In Revelation. That the. Throne of God. Descends from heaven. And that. That the judgment. Of the world.

Begins. And that the books. Are opened. And everyone. Receives. According to. What they have done. Everything. Every detail.

Every thought. Every action. Every wrong desire. Judged. In accordance. With what. They have done. And tonight.

[28:25] For. The person. Who. Trusts. In the Lord Jesus. When that. Storm comes. He will be. A shelter. He will be.

Like. A canopy. This read. In Psalm 91. Dwelling. In the secret place. Of the most high. Under the shadow. Of the almighty. And.

The shelter. Is such. That it protects. The person. Who is being. Sheltered. From the might. Of the storm. And if a shelter.

Is worth anything. It will stand. In the storm. So that the person. Being sheltered. Is safe. And tonight. I can go forward. Into. Into the unknown.

Of that. Great day. Of judgment. With my faith. In the Lord Jesus. And when. The sword. Of God. Justice. Goes out. Into the world. To condemn.

[29:20] The guilty. And searching. For those. Who are guilty. I find myself. All around me. I see. As. As the Lord Jesus. In all of his glory.

And the sword. Of justice. Cannot touch me. It touched him. On my behalf. He absorbed. All of the wrath. Of God. When he died. For my sins. And now.

And then. There is no. There is no. Condemnation. Tonight. Friends. We. We can. Go forward.

Into. The events. Of that. Great day. With great. Confidence. That their trust. Is in Jesus. Death. It's.

A welcome. Stepping stone. Into the highest. Joy. Judgment. You shall not. Come into judgment. Says Jesus. In John 5. It's already.

[30:18] Over. And I hear. Nothing. But a welcome. And surely. As we go into. The unknown. We want to. Arrive in that.

And to hear. The welcoming. Words. Of Jesus. Come. Blessed. Of my father. As he says. To God. On. On. On. The throne.

Behold. Me. And the children. Whom God. Has given. To me. What security. To go forward. To that.

Definite end. To a journey. In the world. But there is. A journey. And on the journey.

I need this. Protection. I need. His promises. And the verse. Closes. As we close. With these words. Like streams of water.

[31:16] In a dry place. Like the shade. Of a great rock. In a weary. Land. Like. Streams of water.

In a dry place. The world is. An ungodly world. The world. The world. Is spoiled. By sin. My relationship.

With God. Is still. Affected. By sin. And all of these. Different ways. In which. Sin. Affects. The world. Makes it. A place. That I'm often.

More aware. Of. My hunger. For God. Than my. Satisfaction. In him. And in the last. Psalm. That we're going to sing. That's what we read. In that psalm.

Psalm 63. My flesh. Longs. In a dry. Parched land. Where there is no water. And. I go back. To Jesus. On the cross.

[32:13] And. And here he is. Himself. Crying out. Having been forsaken. By God. I thirst. His tongue. Was screaming. To the roof.

Of his mouth. Why? Because. In these moments. There was the. Experience. Of being without God. Of being apart from God. Of being separate from God.

My journey. Through a world. That is dry. That is godless. And where. In my relationship. With God. To sustain me.

And to give me energy. As I go on. I need something. That connects. My life. In this dry world. With where. Jesus is. There is.

Streams of water. Psalm 46. There is a river. The streams. Make glad. The city of God. And the picture here.

[33:10] Is. Is one of. Of. A river. With canals. And. And tributaries. And. So many things. Flowing out. Of this river. Whatever.

Whatever people are. That it waters them. And in all. That I will face. In the temptations. Of this world. And all of the different ways.

In which. Satan. And. The enemies of Christ. In my world. Will seek to rob me. Of. Of all that God has given to me. Nothing. Can separate me.

From him. There is. That which flows. From him. There is that. River. Of living water. Whoever is thirsty. He says.

In John 7. Let him come. To me. And drink. Because. Out of his heart. Will flow. Rivers. Of living water.

[34:06] And so. I go forward. Into. This year. And. I've got the promise. Of the. Abiding. Presence.

Of the life. Of Jesus. In my heart. In my soul. And of. The life. And the refreshing. Power. That only he can give to me. Connected with him.

In that unbreakable. Flow of life. And of power. With you. Is the. The fountain of life. And from that fountain. Flows the river of God.

And it's with me here. Tonight. And it's with me. Wherever I go. Tomorrow. And wherever I go. And the rest of this year. It's with. The people. Of God. Nothing.

Can separate you. From him. His life. Is in you. Forever. No matter. Where you go. And he is.

[35:05] The shade. Of a great rock. In a weary. Land. Do you ever feel weary? Do you ever feel.

Ready to faint? Do you ever feel. That you. Cannot go any further? That's the picture here. There is. There is. A high temperature.

There is. The sun blazing. There is. The wind driving. There is. Complete. Exposure. To all of the.

Forces of nature. Beating down. On this individual. In this dry patch land. And what's the greatest need? That there will be a shade.

That something will come along. Between me and the light. And will cast its shadow over me. What a relief. That I can find.

[36:03] Rest from this. Blazing sun. And if we holiday abroad. We know that we are advised. Not to go into the sun.

At the height of noon. It's dangerous for us to do that. We have to be in the shade. And to welcome. The shade is then. And this is what.

Jesus does for me. In. The afflictions. The bread of adversity. And the afflictions. That Isaiah speaks of. In chapter 30. They are.

The furnace. The trials. Of life. The pains. The afflictions. The illnesses.

The different ways. In which. My life. Sometimes. Is crushed. The different ways. In which. Sometimes. My heart. Is crushed. And I'm crying out to God.

[37:00] And I'm saying. This is too much for me. It's as is my. My whole. Experience. And life with God. Is. Is just. Being drained away. By the force.

Of everything. That has overtaken me. And then. Suddenly. There is the relief. Of his presence.

Where he. Where he. Puts his. Arms. Around me. And where he gives me. Shade. And shelter. From the high temperature.

From the wind. From the sun. And gives me relief. And there. I discover. The warmth. Of his love. And the.

The refreshing. Cooling way. In which he comes. And makes. This. Moment. Of high temperature. One. That is controlled. By him.

[37:55] And from which. I. Receive. Great. Benefit. Who knows. What. The year has. For us. We will have.

Our afflictions. In some way. We will have. Our pains. In some way. We may have. Our illnesses. In different ways. But what a. Promise. To lay hold.

Of the presence. Of Jesus. To know. That he will. Refresh us. At every step. Of the way. And to know. That. Every moment.

Will be a moment. When. He will guard us. And keep us. And will never. Allow us. To be tested. Beyond. What we can bear. That he will. Overshadow us.

With his tent. And when we. Thought that our life. Was drained away. At last. The faith. Was beginning to. Be burnt up. In the heat. It regains.

[38:52] New strength. That weight. Upon the Lord. Will renew the strength. And. We rise up. From the shadow. Of the rock. Like the great eagle. That soars. Into the heights. And so.

We go forward. To that great day. Until we meet with him. At last. So let's go forward. Into the year. Let's. Remember.

What God's plans are. Let's. Be sure. That we. Become more and more. Familiar. With. His program. And having a personal. Relationship.

With the Lord Jesus. And let's. Be comforted. By his promises. Because. Lo. He is. With us. Always. Even. To the very end.

May God. Grant that. The word. So. And may. Bless his word. To us. Let us pray. Almighty God. We rejoice. In you. As. Our great. Father.

[39:47] In heaven. As our great. Savior. As the one. Who. Has worked. In so. Many. Miraculous. Wonderful. Ways. To make known.

What your purposes are. And to make known. Your interest in us. And your love for us. And we pray tonight. And. We may. Firmly. Put our trust in you. Lean upon you.

With all of our hearts. And go forward. Into this year. As those who trust. In your promises. Who recognize. Firmly. What. Your purpose to do. And to go forward.

From this moment. Until the moment. That we meet with you. In that great day. Of your return. To go forward. Thrusting in you. And enjoying the victory. That you have secured.

For your people. And having joy in you. As we live our lives. In the world. From day to day. Bless your word. As we pray. To that end. And accept us. And our mercy. For Jesus sake.

[40:44] Amen. Amen. The closing psalm. Is that psalm. Psalm 63. And at the beginning. Of the psalm. Psalm 63.

And at verse 1. And we'll sing. Down to the end. Of the verse. Marked 5. I think. Lord thee. My God. I'll early seek.

My soul. The thirst for thee. My flesh. Longs in a dry. Parched land. Wherein. No waters be. From verse 1. To the verse. Marked 5. To God's praise. Lord thee.

My God. I'll early seek. My soul. The thirst for thee.

My flesh. Longed in a dry. Funds for thee.

[42:01] God's glazed. May I had found thee. The Lord, in thine holy place.

Sin di oh, the greth my lips Pearson shall live, I in thy name will it dry hands Come, let's be why I live He has with marrow and with power My soul shall fill in thee Then shall my mouth with joy For this she brings us unto thee 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