
The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON CXXVII : THE HAUSTAFEL / THE ARMOR OF GOD / FINAL GREETINGS (6:1-24)

Ephesians 6:1-9 — The Haustafel (conclusion)

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: ³ “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” ⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

⁵ Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. ⁹ And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

“As with the passage on marriage, this section is ultimately tied to Paul’s exhortation to ‘watch carefully how you walk’ (5:15). These household instructions are directly dependent on Paul’s subsequent command to ‘be filled with the Spirit ... by submitting to one another in the fear of Christ’ (5:18, 21). **Paul is convinced that properly ordered domestic relationships lived out under the lordship of Christ are foundational to the free and unhindered work of the Spirit in the lives of believers in the community. An attitude of self-denial and a deep concern for the needs of others is essential to living as a Christian in the household and in the larger community of faith.**” [Arnold, 411]

STRUCTURE —

- vv. 1-3 **‘to the children’** centers around two present imperative verbs: ‘obey’ and ‘honor’ This is supported by one of the Ten Commandments.
- v. 4 **‘to the fathers’** likewise centers around two present imperative verbs (‘do not provoke to anger’ and ‘nourish, rear, bring up’)
- vv. 5-8 **‘to the slaves’** is longer than the previous sections (59 words compared to 35 in the first section) but is only one sentence with one verb, ‘obey’. This one command is modified by prepositional phrases and three participles, all expressing how that obedience is to be worked out.
- v. 9 **‘to the masters’** is also controlled by one present imperative verb, ‘do the same things’. This is followed by an explanation as to how this is to be worked out, followed by the reason to obey.

THE CHILDREN — The ‘children’ are those who are still in the home. They are old enough to understand instructions from their parents and are capable of deciding whether they should obey or go their own way. They are still being ‘brought up’, receiving instruction and correction from their fathers (6:4) and have not gotten married and left home (5:31). This would most likely place the age range of the children from early elementary to the late teen years or early twenties. Children

were under the control of their parents, particularly of the father, until either the father died (the normal pattern in Greek society) or was sixty years old (normal in the Roman world). When children are addressed in Judaism they may be adults for no upper limit is put on their age.

It is significant that Paul addresses them directly and not through their parents, implying they are present when the community assembles to worship, to hear the reading of the Word, and to receive teaching. Note it is the God-given duty of parents to set boundaries for their children and expect them to obey. The reason is not *'because I said so'*, *'we have lived longer in the world and know better what is good'*, *'you owe a lot to us for we brought you into the world'*, but motivated out of respect for the Lord Himself. It is *'right'* because obedience is what the Lord expects. Christians sometimes viewed lack of respect as an indication of depravity (Rom 1.30).

Paul quotes Ex 20:12 as reinforcement for children *'to obey your parents'* but also goes beyond it since it extends to adult children who have left home. Christ Himself rebuked the Pharisees for effectively overturning this by their traditions (Matt 15:4; Mark 7:10). For younger children still in the parental home, honoring their parents would involve obeying their rules and instructions. For adult children who have left the home (or who are married and still a part of the larger household) it would entail showing respect and taking care of the parents in their old age.

The commandment is the *'first commandment with a promise'* which is debated. It could refer to *'first in significance'* but this is difficult since that could refer to all the commandments (Is *'obey your parents'* more significant than *'do not have idols'* or *'have no other gods before me'*?) But the problem with *'the first with a promise'* is that it is the only commandment with a promise! Probably the best answer to that difficulty is that Paul views the Decalogue as but the beginning of the many commandments contained in the Torah.

The two-fold promise given is prosperity and a long life. It is important not to over-spiritualize the promises and see them as referring solely to the inheritance of eternal life; otherwise Paul would not have included the phrase *'upon the earth.'* This cannot be applied in a meticulous way to every single case, for like any proverb, this is to be understood as a general pattern. Exceptions to the rule will take place.

FATHERS — While the word Paul uses could refer to both fathers and mothers (cp. Heb 11:23), it is significant Paul uses a different word than he used in v. 1, thus he is specifically referring to the fathers here. In Jewish as well as in Roman society, fathers were responsible for the education and discipline of their children (this is not to deny the importance of the mother's influence, especially in the younger years, but the ultimate responsibility is upon the father). Since in the ancient world fathers had great authority over their children they might tend to speak in a bullying manner, lay down the law and thus enrage them. Paul here teaches that fathers need to exercise a sensitivity and care in how they interact with their children, and especially in how they discipline them. Fathers should carefully weigh the potential impact of their words and actions before responding to their children. This passage effectively rules out reactionary flare-ups, overly harsh words, insults, sarcasm, nagging, demeaning comments, inappropriate teasing, unreasonable demands, and anything else that can be perceived as provocative.

Paul lays on the shoulder of the fathers not only the responsibility of raising their children to be decent and responsible people (which is likely assumed here as part of the cultural expectation) but of training and instructing them in the ways of the Lord. In other words, fathers are ultimately responsible for their children's spiritual and religious education.

SLAVES — Paul addresses the slaves in the Christian communities as free moral agents capable of thinking for themselves and acting with moral responsibility. This was unprecedented in the ancient world; given the context of Roman slavery, it is remarkable that Paul would address them at all. Slaves were of course accustomed to being addressed by their master and given orders, but probably not to being addressed on an equality with their masters. The fact that he does demonstrates that they were accepted members of the Christian community. There is even no reason to suppose slaves were refused *'ministerial'* positions in the church; the Pastorals do not list freedom among the qualifications for those eligible as bishops and deacons.

It is not surprising that Paul enjoins them to obey their masters; this was expected of slaves anytime and anywhere. What is unique in this passage is the manner and motivations that should inform their relationship to their masters:

- the first attitude Paul commends is that they should obey *'with respect and fear.'* It is probably saying too much to say Paul is teaching slaves obey with a foreboding terror and dread; while it could have that emphasis, these same words are used of the attitude people should have in serving the Lord (Ps 2:11).
- they should obey with a *'sincerity of your hearts,'* thus their service should be without improper motives.
- they should obey as they would obey Christ, with the same devotion as they as believers serve the Lord.
- the fourth and fifth ways are expressed by contrasting attitudes and behavior: negatively, they should serve their masters not just to make a good impression, *'serving to be seen,'* as *'men-pleasers.'* Then positively, they should serve their masters well because ultimately their service is to Christ alone, they are *'slaves to Christ.'* Their status and honor is thus ultimately derived from belonging to Christ and not their human masters.
- the final attitude could also be a summarization, *'serve with a good attitude as to the Lord.'* Service done to their masters is service done for the Lord Himself.

The motivation is eschatological, *'the assurance of God's blessing and reward.'* While this would have implications in this life, the larger fulfillment is when we stand before the Lord (Paul uses an unusual word for *'receive,'* outside of Eph / Col this word is only used in reference to the Judgment Seat of Christ, 2 Cor 5:10).

MASTERS — In some respects owners faced greater problems than slaves: could an owner whip, or have whipped, a slave with whom he had shared the bread and wine of the Lord's Table? Apart from one piece of concrete advice, that *'owners should abstain from a threatening attitude,'* the remainder of the advice to them is vague: *'act towards them,'* i.e. slaves, *'in the same way.'* But what is the same behavior which is required from owners as from slaves? It certainly cannot imply a reversal of roles and be equivalent to 5:21 with owners serving slaves; slaves remain slaves and owners owners. ***Paul envisages a solidarity as existing between slaves and owners, not because of their common humanity but because both have the same heavenly master.***

It is probably best to see Paul commending the various virtuous attitudes he has exhorted the Christian slaves to display as having equal applicability in the lives of believing slave owners. This would include having a positive attitude and goodwill toward their slaves (6:7), wholeheartedly committing themselves to doing the will of God (6:6b), and living under the recognition that they,

too, are slaves of an ultimate master, the Lord Jesus Christ (6:7). The principal motivating factor for slave owners to treat their slaves with goodwill and not harshness is the fact that the owners, too, are under the authority of a Master. Since their Master shows no preferential treatment based on socio-economic status or honor, neither should they.

Ephesians 6:10-20 — The Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints — ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Paul brings to a conclusion the moral exhortation he began with in 4:1, ‘walk worthily of the calling to which you were called.’ This call to give careful attention to how we live is repeated throughout this second half of the letter: 4:17; 5:2, 8, 15. “The aim of walking worthily of God is actually a profound struggle that goes beyond simply putting forth more effort or overcoming human obstacles. There are extremely powerful spiritual beings that strategize and carry out plans to derail the best intentions of Christians to live out God’s call in their lives. This theme of powerful supernatural opposition to the people of God can be traced throughout the letter. These are the powers who held humanity in bondage before the redemptive work of Christ (2:2) and now threaten to find an inroad and set up a base of operations in the lives of people who have come to know Christ (4:27).... Living a life pleasing to the Lord and engaging in the mission of the church is not easy because there are powerful supernatural beings that strategize and attack. Because of this, God makes available his power and divine resources to believers so they can resist the assaults of these hostile spirits and advance God’s kingdom into the world. Believers are called to appropriate these gifts, cultivate their corresponding virtues, and above all, pray in the Spirit as an expression of their dependence on the Lord to receive God’s enabling power.” [Arnold, 435, 437]

Note Paul’s use of repetition:

- four times in these verses Paul urges the believer to ‘stand’ to point out the need for divine enablement and the goal of the struggle (6:11, 13, 14; and a different form of the same word in 6:13)
- he also uses a variety of terms and expressions for power to stress the availability of divine power for believers in the midst of the battle (ἐνδυναμόω, endunamoō, ‘enable, empower, make strong’ / κράτος, kratos, ‘sovereignty, power, might, dominion’ / ἰσχύς, ischus, ‘strength, power, might’ in 6:10 / δύναμαι, dunamai, ‘power, be capable of’ in 6:11, 13, 16)

- Paul also uses an array of terms to highlight the importance of prayer (προσεύχομαι, proseuchomai, ‘a request for help, prayer’ in 6:18; προσευχή, proseuchē, ‘prayer’ in 6:18; δέησις, deēsis, ‘an entreaty, prayer’ in 6:18; ἀγρυπνέω, agrupneō, ‘stay alert, watch’ in 6:18)
- prayer receives further stress with the fourfold repetition of the word ‘all’ in connection with it (6:18)
- to stress the believers’ responsibility to grow in their knowledge of their new identity in Christ and to appropriate it, Paul uses a variety of terms to express the notion of ‘putting on’ something; i.e., the metaphorical armor (ἐνδύω, enduō, ‘put on’ in 6:11, 14; ἀναλαμβάνω, analambanō, ‘take up’ in 6:13, 16; περιζώννυμι, perizōnnumi, ‘gird, strap on’ in 6:14; ὑποδέω, hupodeō, ‘to bind under, put on, wear’ in 6:15; and δέχομαι, dechomai, ‘receive’ in 6:17)

‘Be strong in the Lord’ (v. 10) serves as a summary exhortation that stands over the entire passage. The passage can be divided into three sections:

- vv. 10-13 emphasizes the need for dependence on God because of hostile powers. Paul uses the word ‘against’ six times to delineate the range of spirit beings that believers must contend with.
- vv. 14-17 lists a range of spiritual weapons needed to engage the enemy. Paul begins with a command, ‘stand’, which flows directly out of his three previous purpose clauses (6:11, 13), stating that ‘standing, resisting’ is the reason for dependence on God and His armor. He then describes six pieces of weapons and armor representing God’s provision for believers, the means by which believers are enabled to stand.
- vv. 18-20 emphasizes prayer as a foundation to preparing and engaging in the spiritual struggle, the present participle being dependent upon the main verb, ‘stand’. No metaphorical weapon (such as a bow or spear) is attached to prayer. It is also the only present tense verbal item, is paralleled with the present tense participle ‘watching’, and introduces a 56-word cluster and phrases elaborating on prayer. Thus praying in the Spirit is foundational to the warfare of the believer and is essential to the use of the pieces of armor / weapons Paul mentions.

v. 10 — Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. — ‘be strong’ is a ‘passive voice command’, the passive voice stresses the idea of receiving inner strength from an outside source; but since it is a command, it does imply volition and action on the part of the hearers to seek God and present themselves to Him for filling with His power. **Paul thus urges believers to a relationship of dependence and not urging them to draw on their own internal fortitude and strength.**

v. 11 — Put on the whole armor of God, — Paul now explains how believers are to gain strength and spiritual power from the Lord: in addition to drawing on their present dynamic relationship to the risen Christ, they are also to appropriate a set of divine gifts and cultivate some important virtues. ‘Put on’ is the common word for putting on clothing; cp. 4:24. “Essentially, then, to ‘put on the new self’ is the same as donning the armour of God.” [O’Brien, 462] This involves the ‘complete armor’, implying a picture of a fully equipped soldier rather than a person merely holding a few weapons.

that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. — This conveys purpose and gives the reason why believers need to be strengthened by the Lord. The goal is to ‘stand’, an important word that Paul uses here in four different forms. The believers under attack need to defensively stand their ground and not retreat (however this does not preclude the offensive attack dimension to the warfare).

The devil is an intelligent being that carefully strategizes plans against the churches, God’s plan of redemption, and individual believers. His ‘*flaming arrows*’ could be best described as an expansive variety of ways that the devil hatches his attacks. This could come through people who teach things contrary to the ‘*one faith*’ (4:5), through temptation, difficult physical trials, or through any of a limitless array of intelligently designed plots.

v. 12 — For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, — after the references to armor and weapons, it comes as a surprise that Paul uses ‘*wrestle, struggle*’, an athletic image related to wrestling, to characterize the nature of the battle when words for ‘*warfare*’ might seem more appropriate. But Paul often uses mixed metaphors, and there was a tradition in the ancient world of the advantage a fully armed soldier had if he was also trained as a wrestler. If this is what Paul had in mind, then both images combine to express the notion of close, difficult, tiring, hand-to-hand combat. ***The fact it is not against flesh and blood underlines the spiritual nature of the warfare. It highlights the fact believers should not consider their fight as one against Roman rule or any of the local civic rulers who might oppose them or cause them harm. Paul here unmasks the ultimate source of many of the evils they experience.***

but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. — The opposition is not one powerful supernatural being but a whole range of evil spiritual forces of varying rank, authority, and capabilities. The first two categories (rulers and authorities) are Paul’s most common expression for demonic spirits, already used twice in this letter (1:21; 3:10). The third expression (world powers of the darkness) is unique, never appearing elsewhere in the NT or LXX. Paul may have been drawing on a word for spirits that was current both in Graeco-Roman and Jewish folk belief and astrology. ‘*Of the darkness*’ casts these spirits as thoroughly evil, for they belong to the realm of darkness, the place wherein believers were formerly held captive and were delivered from (5:8; Col 1:13). The fourth expression (evil spiritual beings) could be understood as a comprehensive designation for all classes of evil spirits.

v. 13 — Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. — Since believers continue to live in the present evil age and face powerful hostile spirits, they need to depend completely on the power of God. Successful resistance means drawing on the resources God provides. ‘*Take up*’ occurs frequently in ancient literature in connection with the taking up weapons. The singular ‘*day*’ is any one of the many ‘*evil days*’ (5:16) when extraordinary trials or intense periods of temptation in the lives of believers when demonic assault appears to come with unusual force. Consider Peter when Jesus warned him, ‘*Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat*’ (Luke 22:31). ***Note the preparation for battle does not take place once it begins but well in advance.***

v. 14 — Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, — The first of six weapons Paul commends is ‘*truth*’, referring probably to both the objective elements of ‘*the faith*’ (4:5) as well as the subjective sense of practicing honesty and living with moral integrity. Paul says again ‘*stand*’ — ***God not only makes it possible for believers to stand but expects them to do so by***

depending on his divine resources. ‘Girded, strapping around your waist’ could refer to strapping a weapon (cp. Joab with a dagger strapped around his waist, 2 Sam 20:8) or it could refer to no specific weapon but merely being prepared for action or travel.

having put on the breastplate of righteousness, — The second weapon is ‘righteousness’, referring to both a deepening appreciation of God’s gracious conferral of the gift of righteousness and to the acquisition of moral integrity. Note Isa 59:17, *‘he put on righteousness as his breastplate.’* One of the strategies of the accuser or slanderer (the meaning of our word ‘devil’) is to call into question our status before God as righteous. Paul also calls believers to cultivate righteous living, *‘taking off the old and putting on the new self which is created in the likeness of God in righteousness and holiness’* (4:24).

v. 15 — and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; — The third form of preparation for believers is to ready themselves to share the gospel, which contains the message of peace with God. Once again Isaiah stands behind this passage: *“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”* (Isa 52:7) Believers are thus called to prepare themselves to share the gospel. This involves becoming well acquainted with the heart of the gospel message, preparing themselves in how to proclaim it and seeking directions from Christ as the head of the churches on where to go to share the message. The proclamation of the gospel represents a major assault on the kingdom of Satan. ***It is ironic in the context of warfare to find a reference to peace as a weapon, but this reminds believers that the warfare we are to engage in does not view people as the enemies but as the victims. Spiritual warfare has nothing to do with literal, physical warfare against human enemies. Spiritual warfare is the solution to human warfare.***

v. 16 — above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. — The fourth weapon Paul describes is ‘faith,’ i.e., trust in God’s power and his assurances about our new identity in Christ. This is represented as a shield, which works well with the metaphor of Satan shooting fiery arrows, a representation of the power of his many and varied forms of attack on believers. The shield is an important piece of defensive weaponry used in all armies in antiquity and was often used in the OT to describe God’s power and protection of His people (Gen 15:1; 2 Sam 22:31; Ps 18:30). If the Roman soldier is in mind, the shield was large, rectangular and about the size of a door, behind which the soldier could crouch and be completely protected from enemy arrows. Paul adds here a statement about what this weapon can accomplish, something he has not done to this point. With the shield believers *‘will be able to quench all the flaming arrows from the evil one,’* i.e., by means of faith the attacks of the devil and his forces may be thwarted. ***“Both Origen and Jerome are correct in their interpretation of the arrows to be the devil’s interjection of evil thoughts into the minds of believers, but there is no reason to limit the metaphor to this one form of attack. In addition to what has just been said, the list could include persecution from political authorities, thoughts of accusation of sin that bring intense feelings of guilt, false teaching by those who claim to be Christians, direct demonic attack through sickness and dreams, and temptations to engage in behavior displeasing to God (e.g., spontaneous ‘thoughts of doubt and disobedience, rebellion, lust, malice or fear’). There can be no doubt that Paul’s expression conveys ‘the sense of extreme danger.’”*** [Arnold, 459]

v. 17 — And take the helmet of salvation, — The fifth weapon is salvation, not as much the certainty of deliverance at the end of time as the present dimension of salvation which is emphasized throughout Ephesians (especially 2:5-8 where *'you are in a present state of having been saved'* stresses the deliverance from the realm of the powers to which we were captive, 2:1-3). Paul's metaphor comes from Isa 59:17 where it is used of God as the Divine Warrior: *'he put ... the helmet of salvation on his head.'* Paul also used this same image in 1 Thess 5:8 where he encouraged the Thessalonians to put on *'the hope of salvation as a helmet.'* Putting on *'salvation'* thus means to realize and appropriate one's new identity in Christ, which gives the believers power for deliverance from satanic enemies on the basis of their union with the risen and exalted Lord. The helmet of salvation does also convey the assurance of future salvation but this is secondary to Paul's thinking in this context.

and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; — For the sixth weapon Paul urges believers to know and make use of the Scripture as a means of defense against every form of demonic attack. It is the *'sword of the Spirit'* not only because the Holy Spirit is the Author of the Scriptures but also because He dynamically empowers the words for maximum defensive and offensive impact. This sword was worn by every Roman infantryman and was a short sword (the word could even refer to a knife) in contrast to the large broadsword. In the offensive, Paul is speaking of the proclamation of the gospel empowered by the Holy Spirit; defensively, the Word of God is applied to every situation of testing or temptation as Jesus did in the wilderness.

v. 18 — praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, — *At the heart of spiritual warfare is prayer.* Paul does not present this as the *'seventh weapon'* but as a foundational and continuous activity that is crucial to deploying all the armor and weapons he has just described. *'Praying'* is not a finite verb but a participle dependent upon a preceding verb; here probably *'stand'* in v. 14, thus it should be interpreted as the means by which believers stand: *'stand ... by praying.'* *'With every kind of prayer and request'* indicates Paul is thinking of every conceivable form of prayer. *'At all times'* could be translated *'at every opportunity'* (cp. *'pray without ceasing'*, 1 Thess 5:17, and his own habit of praying *'always'* for his converts, 1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:4; 2 Thess 1:11; Col 1:13). To pray *'in the Spirit'* means to seek the Spirit's guidance, direction and help constantly in prayer. *The Holy Spirit stands by the side of believers to prompt them to pray, to direct them who to pray for and how to pray, as well as to energize them in praying for themselves and others.*

being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints — For Paul prayer is not a perfunctory obligation to be fulfilled two or three times a day, but an extraordinary opportunity to communicate with God and appeal to Him for help on behalf of all believers all the time. Praying and watching should be continuous activities. *'For all the saints'* underlines not only the focus of our prayers for others within our church body, but also points to the corporate nature of spiritual warfare. *"If prayer is foundational to the deployment of all the armor, then it is not simply a matter of individuals praying for themselves privately, but of Christians arming each other through prayer.... This corporate emphasis is in line with Paul's overall vision of the functioning of the body (4:7-16). He sums it up there by stressing that the church is 'held together through every joint that brings supply in accordance with the powerful working by the measure of each individual part' (4:16). This building up of the body occurs not only through each believer practicing his or her unique gifting in the community, but by everyone praying for the others."* [Arnold, 465f]

vv. 19, 20 — and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. — Paul ends this section by requesting prayer for himself, that he can resist the temptation to be intimidated by his circumstances and that he will be divinely enabled to declare the gospel with boldness and clarity.

Ephesians 6:21-24 — Final Greetings

²¹ But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; ²² whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts. ²³ Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.