

JAMES 3:18

A HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

“A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”¹

Canadians pride themselves on their perceived role as peacekeepers serving under United Nations mandates. Since Lester Pearson proposed an international peacekeeping force to supervise disengagement of Anglo-French and Egyptian forces during the Suez crisis, Canada has contributed significantly to the effort to advance the concept of peacekeeping. However, it is open to question how effective the peacekeeping efforts have been.

In part, doubt concerning the effectiveness of these efforts arises from the distinction between peacekeepers and peacemakers. In an earlier message I highlighted some differences between these two roles. In that message, I stated: “Peacekeepers do nothing to lessen conflict; peacemakers bring an end to conflict. Peacekeepers are willing to compromise in order to keep combatants apart; peacemakers will not compromise principle for the sake of momentary cessation of hostilities. Peacekeepers do not ultimately have any stake in the outcome of their actions; peacemakers invest their very lives in making peace.”²

I have no desire either to initiate a political fight or to impugn the valour of brave Canadians who have served under the blue banner; rather, I seek to emphasise a point that lacks clarity in the mind of too many Christians. The Bible does not enjoin us to become peacekeepers; though we are encouraged to be peacemakers. In fact, Jesus pronounces a benediction on those who are peacemakers: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” [MATTHEW 5:9]. James clearly esteems those who are peacemakers, and some translations understand the language he uses in our text as promoting this concept. For instance, one translation states, “Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”³

In the text, James summarises the instruction he has provided in the previous five verses. He has sought to encourage the people of God to be wise in their walk. He has distinguished the wisdom that the world values and the wisdom which reflects the character of the Father. The former is attractive and it is easily implemented, but the impact of that wisdom is chaos and spiritual filthiness. The latter almost always requires courage to implement—it will be opposed, but it results in divine peace within the Community of Faith. It should be obvious that James esteems heavenly peace as the pre-eminent mark of righteousness. Because this is the case, we will do well to discover the peace of which James speaks and do all within our power to promote that precious commodity among the people of God.

PEACE DEFINED — How should we define peace? To a surprising degree, our definition reveals our understanding of the will of God. You see, our definition of peace reveals our worldview. Peace has numerous connotations. For instance, the term is often used to refer to an absence of conflict. When we speak of a nation at peace, we mean that the nation is not currently engaged in an armed conflict with neighbouring countries. Similarly, peace can refer to the normal state of public order and security. When we say Canadians value peace and good order, we are speaking of the absence of civil commotion and violence within the community.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from **The Holy Bible, English Standard Version** © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² James 3:17, 18; **Divine Wisdom**, preached 31 August, 2008

³ **Holy Bible, New International Version** (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI 1984)

Indeed, “peace” can convey the meaning that parties in question are not in conflict with another party or that civic order prevails, whether throughout the nation or in a smaller political entity. As this present age progresses toward its consummation, Paul points to a period of unprecedented peace throughout the entire world. He writes, “Concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, ‘There is peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape” [1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-3].

Such a prospect of worldwide peace now seems far removed from reality; but you must remember that there is coming a great deliverer who will unite the European nations under one banner, bring resolution to the continuing conflict in the Middle East and impose on all nations a period of global peace and security. However, the momentary absence of conflict serves only as an opportunity for this Antichrist to work out his agenda of setting himself up as very God, compelling all mankind to worship him.

More often, we use the term “peace” to refer to a state in which the party in question is undisturbed. Whenever an individual says, “All I want is to be left in peace,” she is really saying that she does not want to be disturbed. Really, this is a self-centred expression in which the one speaking seeks isolation from all concerns other than personal fulfilment. This is not necessarily a statement reflecting contentment, nor even an expression of the desire for contentment; rather, this is most often a self-serving desire for withdrawal from accepting normal responsibilities.

Throughout the New Testament, “peace” is often used when speaking of confidence or of contentment. An example of such use is demonstrated when Jesus said to His disciples, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” [JOHN 14:27]. Here, the Master contrasts the peace that is the heritage of each disciple with that which the world is able to confer on the individual. According to Jesus’ words, the peace that is offered by the world is apparently distinct from that which the Master gives. In order to discover what divine peace is like, we must examine the context in which Jesus spoke.

The Lord Jesus had just informed the disciples that He was going away [JOHN 13:33], and this knowledge disturbed His disciples. Therefore, the Master encouraged them by saying, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me” [JOHN 14:1]. Then, Jesus made one of the truly great assertions concerning the salvation God provides when He said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” [JOHN 14:6]. Soon after, He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit.

Listen to His promise. “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” [JOHN 14:18-26].

The words that followed gave the promise of divine peace which is distinguished from peace as the world is able to give. Obviously, Jesus is speaking neither of an absence of conflict nor of the civic order, because He had acknowledged that their hearts were troubled. Moreover, He had only recently dispatched His disciples as agents of the Kingdom. Jesus instructed the disciples as He sent them out to fulfil the labours of the Kingdom, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. Acquire no gold nor silver nor copper for your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics nor sandals nor a staff, for the labourer deserves his food. And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. As you enter the house, greet it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the Day of Judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town” [MATTHEW 10:5-15].

Because we are disciples, we will have conflict. Because we follow the Saviour, we will experience tribulation. Paul warns, “All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” [2 TIMOTHY 3:12]. These words summarise the warning of Jesus who told His disciples, “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause’” [JOHN 15:18-25].

It is a common perception that Christians will never have any trouble; nothing could be further from the truth. According to the Master’s own Word, because you are a disciple, you may anticipate trouble. Jesus cautioned those who would serve Him, “Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues” [MATTHEW 10:17]. Opposition does not simply arise from those who are openly aligned with the world according to the Word of the Master. Jesus warned, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword... A person’s enemies will be those of his own household” [MATTHEW 10:34, 36].

Opposition comes from those who are openly identified with the world; and as we have just seen, opposition is certain to come from those who are related to us. Perhaps most tragically, Jesus warned that opposition would come from fellow worshippers—people who are religious and who superficially appear to be serving God. As He prepared for His exodus from this life, Jesus said to His disciples, “I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you” [JOHN 16:1-4]. Scope in on that assertion that conveys certainty—“when their hour comes.” Godly people will be opposed by the religious!

In light of the certainty of opposition and trouble, the Lord encouraged His disciples to receive the peace that He would give. Soon after this, the Master would again contrast His peace with the continuing conflicts His disciples could anticipate from the world. In **JOHN 16:32, 33** Jesus is recorded as warning, “The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave Me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me. I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace.” Now underscore the words that follow. “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” Though tribulation and conflict mark the walk of the disciple, they are promised peace in the midst of the conflict. Nor should you imagine that this is a peace that is somewhere in the distant future; it is a present peace promised to those who walk with the Master.

Jesus offers peace that may be identified with confidence or certainty in the midst of chaos; His is a peace that speaks of contentment regardless of circumstances. This is the heritage of believers—confidence, certainty and contentment. If these admirable qualities do not mark our lives, we cannot claim to know the peace of God. Many professing Christians fail to understand this, seeking instead an absence of conflict or trouble. “Why can’t we just get along,” is a rather common whine from individuals who seek to avoid conflict. One can find peace in a graveyard—there is no conflict in a cemetery. However, the peace of a graveyard is the peace of death; this is not the peace that we seek nor is it offered by the Living God.

I well remember some church leaders who bleated that there had been no conflict before I began preaching the Word. That plaint was reminiscent of an incident that occurred early in Jesus’ ministry in Judea. Jesus and His disciples “went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ‘What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.’ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be silent, and come out of him!’” [**MARK 1:21-25**]!

Before Jesus’ ministry in that synagogue, there had been no problems there. People had worshipped there without conflict, even though a demonised man worshipped in their midst. Yet, as soon as Jesus began to minister, the demoniac cried out, complaining at His presence and complaining about His service. An old saying in the southern United States says, “If you don’t want trouble, don’t say anything, don’t do anything, don’t be anything.”

Where the message of life is preached in power, there will be opposition. The lives of untransformed individuals are exposed wherever the message of life is declared. When the death that passes for life among earth dwellers is compared with the life that is rejected by the world, untransformed individuals respond with anger. Rebuked by the truth, unchanged individuals react with choler. Thus, there will always be conflict where the church is advancing in power. When the missionary band preached in Thessalonica the complaint of the burghers was that the missionaries had “turned the world upside down” [**ACTS 17:6**]. Had they not preached the truth that transforms, there would have been no conflict. There is no conflict in a mortuary. However, there is plenty of chaos and conflict in a nursery. Where there is life, there will be tension.

If your idea of Christian ministry is that everyone gets along and there is never any tension, then you are opting to model the church after a mortuary. In this instance, you are attempting to act as a peacekeeper, and the consequences are grave. There will be an underlying conflict between righteousness and evil which is left unaddressed. You will esteem the absence of conflict so much that you will willingly compromise in order to avoid conflict. Ultimately, you have nothing invested in the lives of those you are attempting to keep under control.

However, if your model for Christian service is that the church will be a nursery teeming with new life, there will be constant demands and constant tension. In this instance, you will meet conflict openly, knowing that it is a sign that things are happening. You will not compromise truth in order to avoid tension. You will do this because you have invested your life in the work of making peace. As pastor, I want our church to be a nursery where souls are saved and lives are transformed and tensions are met openly to the glory of God. The future lies with the nursery and not with the mortuary. Better the tension and the stress and even conflict, for these speak of advance and righteousness; whereas quiescence and compromise that avoids all trouble speaks of death.

SOWING AND HARVESTING — “A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” Refresh your memory of James’ teaching, especially throughout this chapter. He has spoken of practical Christianity, urging those who read the letter to rein in the tongue. His argument in this third chapter is that life controlled by the Spirit of God cannot give free rein to the tongue—it is incongruous that blessing and cursing should be found in the same mouth.

Beginning with the thirteenth verse, James segues into a complementary argument that implies that wisdom and understanding are reflected through efforts as a peacemaker. Whatever our understanding of James words, he has intimately connected peacemaking and righteousness. Thomas Manton is undoubtedly correct when he said, “Peace without righteousness is just sordid compliance; righteousness without peace is just rough austerity.”⁴

This final verse serves as a summation of James’ teaching. James is urging us who are Christians to labour at planting seed that holds the promise of a godly harvest. The Apostle Paul has stated that “whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” He continues that train of thought by pointing out that “the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life” [**GALATIANS 6:7, 8**]. It is an axiom of the Faith that, “Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity” [**PROVERBS 22:8**]. Similarly,

Sow for yourselves righteousness;
reap steadfast love;
break up your fallow ground,
for it is the time to seek the LORD,
that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.”

[**HOSEA 10:12**]

That is, those who make the effort to do what is right will find God to be gracious. In this same vein, we need to know that “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” [**2 CORINTHIANS 9:6**].

The metaphor of sowing and harvesting would have been familiar to James’ readers. This was a common picture drawn through the words of the prophets. For instance, Solomon spoke of sowing and harvesting when he wrote,

“The wicked earns deceptive wages,
but one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward.”

[**PROVERBS 11:18**]

⁴ Thomas Manton, **James: Crossway Classic Commentary** (Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL 1995), Logos Electronic Edition.

His words anticipated those of Isaiah, who wrote centuries later. This man of God wrote,

“The effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.”

[ISAIAH 32:17]

Though we have considered the words of James, which in turn echo the words of the Master, you should know that the concept of sowing and harvesting was employed by the Apostle to the Gentiles as well. My prayer, said the Apostle, is “that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the Day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God” [PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11].

The peaceable seed that Christians are responsible to sow has been previously presented. The peaceable seed are acts of mercy that mark New Testament churches wherever they exist. Summarising James’ teaching to this point, these deeds may be identified as evangelism through presenting the message of life to the lost, support of missionary advance throughout the world, offering hospitality to those who are distressed, showing compassion for the vulnerable, providing counselling for those who are troubled, encouraging the discouraged—in short, doing the things that have always marked the churches as holy entities set apart for God’s service. Wherever a church is doing these things, the Kingdom of God is evident.

Doing the things that make for peace ensure that God will bless by giving His peace. Churches and Christians that invest in pursuit of acceptance by the world reap what the world can give, but they can never know the peace of God. Churches that make peace by doing what God commands will reap the reward of peace. This is assuredly the meaning of Jesus’ words to “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” [MATTHEW 6:33].

Though the seed which is planted are peaceable acts, we also know from our studies in James that the context in which those seeds are planted is also peace. Peace is the soil and the seed planted are the peaceable deeds of the people of God. Moreover, those who do the planting are those who make peace. Those who make peace are the individuals who are dedicated to the concept of biblical peace in the fellowship. Do we really believe this? Is it evident that this is our belief by review of our lives? Are we doing the things that make for peace?

The point is vital precisely because so many Christians are obviously confused about the peace that God seeks. Many saints are so determined to implement peace as defined by the world that they are incapable of understanding God’s ideal. They are so determined to have an association built on their feelings for other professed Christians rather than seeking a relationship founded on doctrinal truth they are prepared to make any sacrifice—including sacrifice of doctrinal integrity—to achieve what they want. In their estimate, the absence of conflict is preferable to doctrinal integrity; soothing their feelings trumps pleasing God.

There are those who believe that Christians must simply get along at any cost with any group calling themselves Christian. You should have serious reservations about such an approach to the Faith. Compromising truth is not a solid foundation on which to build lasting peace. Ignoring error in order to avoid conflict only delays the inevitable conflict and ensures that we dishonour the Father in the process. Much of what passes for cooperation among the churches is superficial at best and phoney at worst. Simply playing games together or gathering in a communal setting does not constitute fellowship, and it does nothing to bring lasting peace.

John boldly says that “If anyone comes to you and does not bring [the teaching of Christ], *do not receive him* into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works” [2 JOHN 10, 11]. Remember, he is speaking about professed Christians who are doctrinally deviant. Paul insisted that Alexander the coppersmith had done him great harm and warned Timothy to beware of him [2 TIMOTHY 4:14, 15]. Again, this man was a professed Christian. There could be no peace in simply ignoring error. Hymenaeus and Philetus were identified as individuals who introduced doctrinal error among the churches and thus brought upon themselves apostolic censure [2 TIMOTHY 2:17, 18].

Likewise, the Apostle did not hesitate to identify Phygelus and Hermogenes as individuals who had turned away from avid pursuit of righteousness [2 TIMOTHY 1:15]. Neither should we imagine that heterodoxy was the only danger pointed out by the Apostle, for he spoke of Hymenaeus and Alexander (each of whom was identified previously as doctrinally errant) as guilty of herteropraxy; these men had rejected righteousness and were thus “handed over to Satan” so that they would learn not to blaspheme [1 TIMOTHY 1:20].

The point is that peace comes through ardent pursuit of righteousness—both doctrinal righteousness and practical righteousness. There can be no peace arising from compromise in doctrine, morals or ethics. Neither does peace come through ignoring error. Peace results when we identify error, exposing it as the evil it is. We shrink from applying the apostolic injunction, “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light” [EPHESIANS 5:11-13]. Far too many of the professed saints of God fear disappointing mere men more than they fear displeasing God. Shortly, James will confront that evil tendency when he writes, “You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” [JAMES 4:4].

A CHURCH WHICH PLEASES GOD — I wish to speak briefly about peacemakers—“those who make peace.” Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” [MATTHEW 5:9]. It is easy to pass over familiar verses so quickly that we miss important points that are vital for spiritual vitality. Notice that it is the endeavour and not the successful outcome that is blessed. We focus on the outcome, but Jesus focused on the endeavour. In other words, it is the attitude, and not the success that is vital in the Kingdom of Heaven. If we labour to make peace, God pronounces a blessing on us, whether our efforts are immediately successful or not. To be a peacemaker requires a strong and heartfelt desire for godly peace.

A church that pleases God is a church in which the members labour to be peacemakers. They are more concerned for the glory of God than they are for the glory of man. They are more concerned to do the will of God than they are for the feelings of unregenerate individuals. They seek to evangelise the lost, provide biblical counsel to the troubled, protect the vulnerable and preach the Good News of the Kingdom. They do these deeds knowing that their actions will offend some who are unwilling to honour God. However, such a congregation is focused on the ultimate goal of the harvest of righteousness rather than seeking the accolades of earth dwellers.

An assembly that will please God will be careful to ensure that the soil where the seed is planting has been thoroughly prepared. The congregation knows the soil they work and they plough up the fallow ground. Such a congregation examines their own hearts, addressing error should it spring up among them. They will identify attitudes that dishonour God and firmly rebuke such attitudes, though for the moment such rebuke is painful.

Moreover, a congregation that pleases God understands that the time for planting is now. Focused on the day when they shall appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ, they know that they cannot allow themselves the luxury of waiting to plant the peaceable seed that God provides. They know that the harvest that is promised ultimately speaks of the souls of men made alive through faith in the Son of God. They know that though the Spirit of God is always at work among the churches, that congregation in which the soil is prepared and in which the members seek peace with all men is one that anticipates a harvest in due time.

The church that will please God is not easily deterred from planting righteousness or from seeking a harvest of righteousness. They understand that they will pass through trials and that they will be sorely tested because of their pursuit of peace that is pleasing to God. However, they know that the Lord of the Harvest will ensure that they reap a rich reward in due time. Among the Psalms is found a beautiful promise for those who sow righteousness and who plant the peaceable seed. The Psalmist has written,

“Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!
He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.”

[PSALM 126:5, 6]

The Psalmist has also promised,

“Light is sown for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart.”

[PSALM 97:11]

James has presented an opportunity for us to ensure a rich harvest of righteousness. According to the wisdom of this world, we can seek the approval of man, exalting bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in our hearts, boasting and proving false to the truth. However, this is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Rather, this wisdom is revealed as earthly, unspiritual, demonic. Tragically, this tack is often accomplished without realising what fetid sin lies mouldering in our hearts. Consequently, if that is the seed that we sow, we will assuredly reap disorder and every vile practise within the church. The church will then have been reduced to a mere organisation rather than being the holy bride of Christ.

Alternatively, we can strive to be peacemakers—people that follow hard after the Lord and who seek His glory in all things. In this case, we will labour to be a people that are pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. Here, in this congregation, if we enshrine the wisdom that comes down from above, Christ will be enthroned and His will shall prevail in all our efforts.

What sort of church shall we be? Shall we have godly peace? Or shall we seek the approval of man? Shall we embrace the Word and the will of God, doing what honours Him? Or shall we seek to ignore sin and compromise with error in order to accommodate the feelings of fallen people? Shall we be guided by the Word of God? Or shall we be guided by our feelings. As one appointed by Christ to declare His Word to His people, I am determined that I shall honour Him in all things in so far as I am able. As one who has received this ministry of the Word from the Master, I am determined to do the things that make for peace.

You, too, can be a peacemaker, sowing in peace and living in anticipation of a harvest of righteousness. You need but determine that you will discover the will of God and pursue that will with singleness of purpose. However, this can only be done if you have received the life that is promised in Christ the Lord. For this reason, I conclude each message with a plea to receive the life that is promised in Christ Jesus the Lord.

The Word of God promises, “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” That passage concludes with the promise that, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” [**ROMANS 10:9, 10, 13**]. Believe this Word and receive the life that is offered through Christ Jesus the Lord. Do it now. This congregation stands ready to receive all whom God appoints to life, rejoicing in the life He gives and giving Him praise for His grace that is extended to you. Amen.