

# Which Churches Get The God Of Peace?

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Yeah, let's turn to Philippians 4. And our sermon text today begins at verse 4, goes through verse 9.

1 Timothy 3 says that the Word of God is breathed out by the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 4 says the Word of God is living, powerful, and piercing.

If you receive it that way, when I'm done reading our sermon text, I'll say this is the Word of the Lord, and you can say thanks be to God. Philippians 4, 4 through 9.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to all. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Verse 8. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things.

[ 1 : 2 3 ] The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do. And the God of peace will be with you. The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Isaiah 40 says that the grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of the Lord stands forever. Luke 1 tells us that no word from God shall be void of power.

Would you pray with me? Father, I ask simply today that we will know your presence. We will know what it is to be in the presence of the God of peace and to have the peace that can only come from being in your presence.

Please teach us this, Father. For your glory we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, brothers and sisters and friends, air is everywhere, but only some species can fly.

They use the air to fly. You know, think of birds and bats. Are those the only two really that can fly? And then we, if we're very generous, we can say certain types of special squirrels can fly, but it's really more like gliding.

[ 2 : 4 6 ] And then even human beings that copy what the squirrels did and put on wingsuits, they can glide like that too. But God didn't make every species to fly, even though the air is everywhere.

Jeremiah 23, verses 23 and 24, have a declaration from the creator. And he says, I am the God who is everywhere, not in one place only.

So air is a wonderful illustration for us of God. He's everywhere. But we also see in scripture, for example, in 1 Samuel, the devastation of the nation when the glory of God departs.

But the glorious presence of God no longer with his people. And if you look at our sermon text in verse 9, he says, do these things and the God of peace will be with you.

So while God is everywhere, there's a special promise for the church as they obey the calling of Jesus. And the promise is, I will then be with you. Isn't that what a church needs and depends on?

[ 3 : 57 ] We should want nothing else than the God of peace himself with us in a special way. So, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the question we need to wrestle with and understand is this.

Which churches get the God of peace? Which churches get the God of peace to be in his presence in a special way?

I see in these verses the promises. I want us to see together what is the exact audience that these promises are given to.

And then finally, the commands that we're called to respond to. The promises, the audience, the commands. Number one, God's spirit breathed out two glorious promises in this passage.

And it's a play on words. Look at verse 7. He says, And the God, I'm sorry, verse 7, And the peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

[ 5 : 04 ] And now look at verse 9. He says, And the God of peace will be with you. In verse 7, it's the peace of God. In verse 9, it's the God of peace.

So let's look at each of those. First, the peace of God from verse 7 that will guard you. The peace of God is only possible through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

And the reason for this is because in Adam all died. In Adam all live in constant terror and disruption and disorder. At enmity with God and in strife with fellow man.

That's the state we're born into under Adam. But in Jesus Christ comes the peace, the restored relationship with God and with man that is not possible outside of the person of Jesus Christ.

That's what the peace of God is. Romans 14, 17 says that the kingdom of God which Jesus Christ ushered in and inaugurated, it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

[ 6 : 11 ] This is exactly the mission of Jesus for his people. It's to bring the peace of God. Some of our greatest and favorite lines in our songs, the hymns we love to sing, they sing of this peace because we knew how terrible it was to be under Adam.

But now we have the peace that's only possible in Christ. For example, come O sinner, come rejoice. Mercy fills this place of scorn for he dies to save his enemies that all who draw near may know his peace.

That's his mission. The peace of God is greater than anything this fallen world can offer. We want the peace of God. But it doesn't stop with the peace of God.

He says in verse 9, this wonderful promise that the God of peace will be with you. Even better, as one pastor, Brian Voss, pointed out, to have the peace of God in verse 7 is to have the gift.

What a great gift. But to have the God of peace in verse 9 is to have the giver himself. In verse 9, the God of peace, church, will be with you.

[ 7 : 26 ] In 1 Thessalonians 5.23, this is one of my favorite benedictions or blessings for God's people. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely.

May he preserve your whole spirit, soul, and body blameless until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We sing of this great truth also. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease, through God, my comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand.

I'm in his presence. It's the God of peace himself comforting me and ministering to me. Now the God of peace himself promises to bless his true churches with his own presence.

I will be with you. Aren't these wonderful, glorious promises that the Holy Spirit breathed out? Well the second thing I need us to see then is who are these promises for?

Are these just abstract things thrown out in general? Or do they have a specific audience in mind? I'll try to do this in as concise of a way as possible without you just taking my word for it.

[ 8 : 44 ] I want you to see this in your own word, your own copy of God's word. I think the audience here is a gathered congregation. collectively together.

And so here's my proposition then I'll walk you through and you see if you arrive at the same conclusion or not. And I'm sure it could be refined. But here's what I want to propose to you. As we see over and over we saw already this service.

There are the individual souls that Christ redeemed. They are forever secure in him. No disputing there. However, individual churches have no such security.

God's promises to a congregation hinge upon their collective obedience to God's commands. Should I run it by us one more time? While individual souls that Christ redeemed are forever secure in him, individual churches have no such security.

God promises to a congregation, you obey what I've commanded and the blessings that will come to you as a gathered congregation hinge upon your collective obedience to these things.

[ 9 : 57 ] So I want to show you the audience is the corporate gathered congregation. the first reason for this is because all of the times in these two paragraphs when Paul uses the word you or your, your, they're all plural.

So very quickly, verse 5, your reasonableness. I'm repeating it because it helps us to think of it the way he intended it. And in English we just have the same word, you or your, and it's hard to convey a plural sense to that word.

Your reasonableness, church together being reasonable. Verse 6, your request. What is burdening the congregation when we're together? That's what we lift up to him. Verse 7, your hearts and your minds.

Yes, it's the, the inward life of God's people in a special way in the plural when you're gathered together. In verse 9, you have learned together, you, you built this understanding, this faith.

You built it up in your own hearts and minds. You've held on to this together. In verse 9, he says, the God of peace will be with you in the plural, together, gathered in his name. I think if that's not enough to persuade you, his address, right here in the specific context in verse 8, is brethren, plural.

[ 11 : 15 ] He had, he had spoken to individuals, he caught out people by name, but here he's addressing the entire gathered congregation. The second thing we can use to answer this question of who is the audience is, is the verbs.

So the verbs in these two paragraphs, all of these commands are to all of the saints. All of the verbs are also in the plural. In verse 4, he says, rejoice. I'll say it again, rejoice.

The Greek word is best translated if, if we use that older English word that does have a plural sense of the second person. It would be ye, ye, or y'all, you know, but ye.

So rejoice, rejoice, it's be ye together rejoicing. That's how it would be translated. Verse 5, let your plural gentleness be known to all.

Modesty, reasonableness, that's a command, a verb for the whole congregation together to practice. In verse 6, do not be anxious. It would be literally translated this way, in nothing be ye worrying.

[ 12 : 21 ] Let your requests, your burdens be lifted up. In verse 8, think about these things, but it's in the plural as well. Be ye taking into account. All of you together, wrestle with, ponder, take into account this together as a gathered people.

And finally in verse 9, practice these things. It's be ye practicing. All of you as one gathered people, practicing, marching in a pattern together. And now if you'll turn back in Philippians, a couple pages, look at Philippians 1, second part of verse 1, he addresses this to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi with the overseers and deacons.

So he is addressing it to the entire church. Therefore, the promises are for the collective, gathered congregation as well. Now look at verse 7, this wonderful promise that the peace of God will guard you.

What's the very first word in verse 7 in your translation? And. It's a conditionality. So here are my commands and the peace of God will guard you.

Now look at verse 9. That's what these two words have in common, these two verses with promises. Verse 9, obey these commands, think of these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

[ 13 : 47 ] Church, if we don't have the presence of God with us, we cease to exist. I mentioned in the Old Testament in 1 Samuel, the greatest fear of the people of God was to lose the glory of God in their presence, in their midst.

And the name of the child in the Old Testament was Iahabod, which means the glory of God has departed. While God's everywhere, this is a real warning, a real invitation.

Practice what God has called you to. Stay close to Christ. Don't take for granted His presence. Without Christ, you are not a church. You're individuals that are saved and He'll take care of you somewhere else, but for a local church, obey these things if you want the presence and the peace of God with you.

In Revelation 2, 5, to the church in Ephesus, which was solid in doctrine, but had become all about the wrong things. Jesus Christ Himself speaks these words.

He says, you've taken me for granted. You've lost the love of the giver of the good gifts. He says, remember therefore from where you have fallen.

[ 15 : 01 ] Repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place unless you repent. A lampstand represents the presence of God with His people and it's the lampstand being removed out of the heaven of heavens, out of the presence of God.

It's this congregation no longer enjoying that access as a gathered people. And to the church in Smyrna, it's even stronger warnings about the church being mixed with the world.

Revelation 2.9 Jesus says, I know the blasphemy of those who say they are God's people and are not but are a synagogue of Satan. So don't mess around with this church.

What you do as a gathered collective people in the plural together, that's the hinge upon which God's promises to a local church depend. So those are the promises in the audience.

Now what are these important commands that have so much at stake? Well the first command is this, God promises His peace to congregations that rejoice in the Lord.

[ 16 : 10 ] God promises His peace to congregations that rejoice in the Lord. He says in verse 4, rejoice in the Lord always.

He's already warned them in this little letter that many rejoice in their own interests instead. Many use Christ's name only for selfish ambition, in Philippians 1.15 out of envy and rivalry, in Philippians 1.18 in pretense, not sincerely, Philippians 2.3 only for vain glory, any glory that does not go to God is vain glory.

In Philippians 3.19 He says, many walk whose glory is their shame, who set their minds on earthly things, and these are enemies of the cross. But you, church, rejoice in the Lord always.

the times when I've had the least peace in my own life, my own soul, it's when I was not with a church that consistently rejoiced in the Lord.

And our flesh wants to pull us away from rejoicing in Christ, doesn't it? It's too easy for churches and for us to rejoice in some program, rejoice in the success in man's eyes, rejoice in visible, numeric growth.

[ 17 : 30 ] It's too easy to want to make sermons or make our teaching or our Bible study therapeutic, making it all about sinful man tickling the ear.

One of our dear brothers here shared with me in a town nearby that we all know, he's witnessed 30 churches closing their doors, and in every single case, they were not rejoicing in the Lord.

The lampstand goes out. Now there's true believers, there's true believers that God will place them somewhere else, he'll find green pastures, they might have to commute a bit more, but there's a world here that's dark, and churches that don't rejoice in the Lord become another graveyard for the pulpit.

Paul says, rejoice in the Lord, and you're wanting to say in your own mind, when, when do I not have to?

He says, always, and you're trying to think, but what about five, ten years from now when this is there? Rejoice in the Lord, always, I will say again, even if I'm dead, the verb is in the future tense, I shall be declaring.

[ 18 : 45 ] So Paul's saying, even if my head gets chopped off, you can still hear this echoing, there's no excuse, no conditions upon which our church should stop rejoicing in the Lord. I will say it again, and I'll keep saying forever, rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone, the Lord is at hand, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Church, do you want to enjoy God's presence with you? Do you want to enjoy God's presence when you come together in His name every Sunday morning?

Then rejoice in the Lord, always. I will say it again, rejoice. And you'll be reminded of this every time you open up our bulletin or liturgy, and someone stands up here, picks up the microphone, and reads when it calls to worship.

Because that's what the Bible constantly calls God's people to do. Think of some that we have used. Psalm 95, 1 and 2. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

[ 19 : 54 ] Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving. Let us shout joyfully to Him with songs. Psalm 101-3.

Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God.

It is He who has made us and not we ourselves. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

Everything we do, gathered in His name, it's with the Lord at hand. If we're having a Bible study or a discussion or prayer, how can I say something that would be out of step with the mind of Christ if I remember that the Lord's at hand?

When we're singing, when we're praying, when we're doing our best to disciple our children and the flesh or the pride wants to creep in and distort it, the Lord is at hand.

- [ 21 : 01 ] We minister to one another in that way. And by remembering that the Lord is with us, His people, we will be reasonable with the help of His Spirit.
- We will be gentle. We will do it in such a way that brings Him glory. So Reformed Heritage Church specifically has one very small little lampstand in the courtroom of heaven.
- Let us pray. Let us sing. Let us listen. May we talk and eat and fellowship and serve knowing that the Lord is at hand with us together as His gathered people.
- And then we can be such a church that knows with confidence these promises are for us too. The peace of God which passes all understanding will guard us.
- So we don't live anxious or fearful about the future even of this one little congregation. We trust this promise. We are rejoicing in the Lord by His grace with His help.
- [ 22 : 03 ] And we're not afraid. We're not anxious. He's guarding us together. To guard in this way in verse 7. He will guard your hearts and your minds.
- It means to garrison. It's like an ancient citadel. A walled castle. The banner over this, if you make it through the gates, the bridge comes down.
- You make it inside. The banner over us is the peace of God. And as the world mounts all around it and shakes and shoots, we're under siege.
- They're baffled because this little outpost of the kingdom of heaven is unrattled. It's beyond understanding. It's Christ guarding His church with His peace.
- Well, God promises also His peace to churches that bring their requests to Him in thankful prayer. God promises His peace to churches that bring their requests to Him in thankful prayer.
- [ 23 : 10 ] It's good for us as a church to have requests. What are the requests that we all share that would be the requests of this congregation? And it's good for us to discuss that. Learn from one another.
- Let the burdens that God has put on the hearts of a gathered congregation become our shared burdens. That's important. We ought to have shared requests that we bring before the Lord.
- But we should not be anxious about those things. That's what Jesus came to preach. God the Father loves you. In Matthew 6, Jesus said, Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for it will be anxious for itself.
- Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you because the Father loves you.
- Paul says, So in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.
- [ 24 : 12 ] Yes, God knows all, but He's a loving Father. He wants you to make your requests known when you're together gathered in His name. Then the peace of God, who surpasses all understanding, will minister to you.
- Isn't it true you've been most settled, most at peace before the Lord and with your family, your loved ones, when you're with a church that prays in such a way, when you're with God's people gathered in His name, and you know the Father loves us.
- We comfort one another by praying this way. It's that simple childlike faith depending on the love of my Father in Heaven. Polycarp, a very, very early saved sinner, hero of the faith, he ministered to the church this way.
- He said, Don't worry, just pray. I love how simple it is. And it's also very deep, very true. Because the Lord is near you, church, pray.
- His Spirit is so close to you. Every need that comes to you through your body, through this fallen world, it reminds you you need your Savior, and He's near to you.

[ 25 : 33 ] So those things don't become the problem to get out of anymore. They become God's gracious, gentle shepherd's rod, bringing you back to lie down in the presence of your good shepherd.

And He says, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God. How do we pray to a triune God?

What is it that Scripture reveals about Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? And how we, His people, get to be part of that and commune with Him? Every time we pray, we are practicing the presence of the triune God with His people.

Every time we pray, we are communing as a human being, body and soul, with our Creator. How do we pray to our triune God?

This little book by Fred Sanders on the Trinity was so helpful to me this week. And that's what I want to try to briefly summarize for us. How to pray as a church. We pray following the order of our redemption.

[ 26 : 51 ] God is a God of order and His own Word gives us the order by which He redeems us through Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God. So here are the three persons of the one God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now, the New Testament, God's full and final revelation, gives us helpful words to explain the order among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being one God.

Let me give you this illustration. If I wanted to tell you about my car, the Eisenhower Tunnel, and the Western Slope, those are three different things I want to tell you about.

I'm going to use these other words to show how they're related one to another. I think they're called prepositions. I could say I came from the Western Slope through the tunnel in my car.

Those three words are a helpful way for us to understand how the Triune God redeemed us and then walking it back the other direction, how we pray to a Triune God. from God the Father through God the Son in God the Holy Spirit.

[ 28 : 03 ] That's how we pray. Let me try to show you this from Scripture. 1 Corinthians 8.6 tells us that salvation and life are from God the Father. This passage says, there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist.

We also read in Scripture the same passage, salvation and life are through God the Son. In 1 Corinthians 8.6, Paul writes, there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made and through whom we exist.

And then salvation and life are in God the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12.3 says, no one can say, Jesus is my Lord except in the Holy Spirit. How?

1 Corinthians 6.11, after telling the church, you were all the worst kinds of sinners, such were some of you, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit of our God.

So God redeems us from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. since life and salvation are from God the Father, we ought to pray to God the Father.

[ 29 : 22 ] Luke 11.2, Jesus taught His disciples that. He said, when you pray, pray like this, our Father who is in heaven. We address it to God the Father.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. So we pray to God the Father.

Now salvation and life are through God the Son, and so we pray through God the Son, Jesus Christ. John 14.13, Jesus said, ask in my name that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

And we ought to then enjoy life in God through the Spirit. And so we pray in the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 6.18, we're told this, pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers and requests.

And Romans 8.26 says, the Spirit helps us in our weakness for when we do not know what to pray as we ought, the Spirit Himself intercedes for us.

[ 30 : 29 ] So that's how we pray as a gathered congregation. We practice this on our own as well. We pray, going back the opposite direction, in the Holy Spirit. By His power working in His people, we pray through God the Son, Jesus Christ.

And we pray to the Father. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

So God promises His peace to churches that bring their requests to Him in thankful prayer. that practice pondering the praiseworthy one.

God promises to be Himself, His very presence with churches that practice pondering Him, the only praiseworthy one. Would you look with me at verse 8?

He says, finally, brethren, or could be translated for the rest, brothers and sisters, or beyond that. Here's what else I want to add.

[ 31 : 40 ] I want to conclude with this, He says. Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any virtue, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Well, knowing that the audience is the whole church, the collective gathered congregation, I think we can conclude this. Our thought life as a gathered church strengthens our thought life as a scattered church.

It's downstream. How we think individually scattered out in the world, stuck into this decaying carcass of this fallen world, it will be directly strengthened by what we ponder.

The more excellent, the more praiseworthy is our time when we're gathered together, the more strength each of us will have as God scatters us back out into His mission field. What we uphold, what we discuss, what we meditate on together, this is what God uses to guard our thoughts and our hearts when we're not together, to meditate on means to deliberate, evaluate, compute, ponder over and over and over again.

And He wants the church together to uphold only that which is excellent and praiseworthy, what is true, good, and pure. He uses the word virtuous among others to describe what it is the church ought to give their thoughts to.

[ 33 : 21 ] The word virtuous in 1 Peter 2.9 is used to describe God Himself, the only perfectly virtuous One.

We are to proclaim the virtue or the excellencies of God who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. And this is one of the only other places the word virtue is used in this sense.

2 Peter 1.3 teaches that God's divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us to His glory and His excellence, His virtuousness.

And it's only by His divine power. So I think there are a lot of applications for this truth, but here's what I want to draw out for us today in light of this passage.

Every one of these noble things that we ought to give our thoughts to, it ought to begin with the thought of God Himself as the supreme good behind each one. And then we think rightly about God, we're free to go into the world and think rightly about other expressions or reflections of God Himself that we see.



[ 34 : 36 ] So for example, He lists truth, nobility, justice, purity, loveliness, what is commendable, virtuous, and praiseworthy. When we're gathered as His church, it's like the Scripture reveals by the help of the Spirit, God Himself, His attributes, His glory, His essence, and that's what elevates the thoughts of the church.

It's thinking of God Himself, the only praiseworthy one, the only virtuous one. But then when we go back into the world, He does help each one of you in different ways, in different fields.

Students, you'll see all of these maybe in one day in class, in your different subjects. You'll see truth. You'll see nobility. You'll see justice, purity, loveliness. You'll see examples, even in fallen sinners, of something commendable, something worthy of praise.

But it begins with the elevated thoughts of His people as a church on God Himself. Only then will we rightly read and interpret what we see reflected in His creation. In verse 9, He says, what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things.

To have learned something, it carries with it the two meanings. One is a clear understanding and number two, it's learning by habitual practice. Paul emphasizes both.

[ 35 : 57 ] He says, what you have seen and witnessed and understood and soaked up, now go practice these things. Practice what you have seen. Have you seen when you gather with God's people that God is praiseworthy?

Have you seen how God is patient and pure and good and He alone should be called good? Have you seen how Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life?

And how it does truly transform the lives of your brothers and sisters as they go back into the world? Think about these things. Practice what you have pondered here with God's people.

Psalms 145:3 says, great is the Lord and most worthy of praise. His greatness no one can fathom. A fathom is a measurement in the depths of the ocean.

So be with God's people wondering, fathoming how good and how praiseworthy He is. And practice that throughout the week when you're scattered.

[ 37 : 04 ] And this glorious promise that the God of peace will be with you. The peace of God with His church brings refreshing from His presence. But the God of peace as His people gather and proclaim Him in a hostile world, it's a language of victory.

You don't get to raise the white flag of peace in a war until the victory is secured. You know this familiar Bible verse.

Who is it that God promises will soon crush Satan underneath your feet? It's the God of peace. Peace for victory.

He will do this. My favorite fort, I've only visited a couple so it's not a big scale to choose from, but I'm so, I'm so mesmerized by a fort right on the waterfront in Baltimore, Maryland.

It's really cool because of the shape of this fort. It's like buildings in the shape of a pentagon, like a stop sign. And then the fort itself has these little mounds with grass on top and those form basically a star around the pentagon and then each of the points of the star has like a cool spear shape and you can go in the tunnels all underneath it or climb on top and looking down you see these big cannons firing out against the water.

[ 38 : 27 ] As some of you know already Fort McHenry is the site in the war of 1812 from where we get the star-spangled banner. That flag, the victory, it's still waving.

The war is over and it's the God of peace with His people inside the fort. He's crushing the enemy under your feet. You're part of this.

It's His cannons that are firing off. It's His gospel that's being proclaimed and His flag, His banner over His people of peace. It's not going to be gone because He is victorious.

He wins the battle. He is with us in His citadel, the kingdom of heaven. and His peace guards us. We're secure in Him.

He will crush His enemy. All things are being brought under the feet of King Jesus on His throne in heaven and He's doing this through the humble, self-sacrificing, foolish means of the cross proclaimed through His church, through His people.

[ 39 : 30 ] So Reformed Heritage Church, may we never stop rejoicing in the Lord. may we never stop encouraging and reminding one another we have pardon for sin and a peace that endureth.

May we enjoy forever, as long as we have days on this earth, God's own dear presence with us to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.

Blessings all ours in Christ with 10,000 beside. Let's pray. Oh Lord, thank you for these promises that you will be with your people and you will give your people your peace.

Please teach us to practice your presence, especially when we're gathered on the Lord's Day in a worship service like this, Lord, and may that be the strength that we need to march out your kingdom orders as you scatter us to different places throughout the week, trusting that according to your will you'll continue gathering people in your name.

You will never abandon your church. Lo, you are with us always, even to the end of the age. Amen.