The Living Hope Lived Out

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[0:00] Amen. Thankful for those songs we just sang. Very good truth in there. I need to clear Hayden! Christy's name. She was not that critical. I was just trying to embarrass her. I think I did. You! Okay Hayden? Forgive me. I'm sorry. But anyway, just trying to be funny. Okay, any math people in here? Any math people? I know I liked you guys. I know I liked you guys. Hey Johnny. Hey.

Yeah, I can't estimate the height of the ceiling, but anyway. Anyone who is a math person, anyone like word problems? Oh man, just a few. Lots of groans, PTSD. Yeah, word problems are okay. Some of them are annoying. You know, it feels like, especially for non-math people, feels like some of the questions are like this. If train A is moving north at 70 miles an hour and train B is moving south at 62 miles an hour, how many apples does Sally have left? You're like, what? Okay, this isn't fair.

There's no way I'm missing that much. And even if you do know the answer to that word problem, some philosophical thing that doesn't make sense. A question often asked in math is, when am I ever going to use this? Like, how is this relevant to my life at all? Maybe you've asked that question before. Math can be like that sometimes. Well, it's good to develop your thinking skills, so just stick with it. But thankfully, when it comes to the Bible, we're not left asking those kinds of questions very often. So the Bible contains a lot of deep, deep theology, and we're never left asking, how does this affect my life practically? Because the Bible, its theology is rooted in the very practical details of our daily lives. And we'll see that in our passage in 1 Peter this evening.

So you can open with me to 1 Peter chapter 1. We'll be in verses 13 through 25. And if you were here last week, Peter, in one long sentence from verses 3 to 12, was just explaining our salvation, was explaining what living hope is, was explaining what grace is ours through the death and resurrection of Jesus. And this was even predicted centuries ago by the prophets who looked forward to this day. And if you were paying attention last week, you might have noticed there were zero commands given. Peter doesn't tell them to do anything. He is pointing them to Christ. He's pointing them to what God has done through Christ for them and just calling them to believe that. Here in our passage this evening, the second half of chapter 1, he gives about five commands. And it's a little bit tough to tell exactly what commands count because he words them uniquely. But there are about five commands in this passage. And so what we see is that based on what [3:09] God has done for us in Christ, we should live according to God's word and not according to our sin. We need to live out who we are in Christ. And so he says we've been born again to a living hope. We are now children of God if you're a believer in Christ. And so you need to live in a way that's consistent with your status as a son or daughter of God. And so our title tonight is the living hope lived out.

The living hope lived out. And we'll break this, the rest of chapter 1, up into three portions. So the first one is hope and holiness. Hope and holiness in verses 13 through 16. And he starts this section off in verse 13 by saying, therefore. And you may have heard me say this before, it's obviously not new to me, but if you come across a therefore, you need to ask, what is it there for? Get it?

Funny. Thanks. I came up with it myself, actually. So when these words appear in the text, it's a conclusion or an inference from what he's just been talking about. And so in this case, he's been talking about this living hope we have in Christ. And he says, therefore, based on the gospel truth that we are new creatures in Christ, preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded, here's the first command, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So based on God's love for us, how should we live? He says, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. And something so important

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to note, especially in the New Testament, is that the facts of the gospel come before the commands of the gospel.
And so when you're reading through places like Romans, Romans for 11 chapters, Paul is just exalting God and explaining the gospel, and he gives very few commands. And then in chapter 12, he gives like six or seven in that one chapter. And so the facts of the gospel, what Jesus has done for us is the truth that comes first. And based on those facts, based on that truth, it informs how we should live as Christians. And the order is very important. If you get that backwards, you're trying to do something in order to become a child of God. But instead of what the New Testament is teaching us is that this is how we live because he has made us children of God. We live out of what is true of us in the gospel.
So Peter shifts here from describing the blessing of salvation to describing the commands that this salvation places on our daily lives. And the gospel should change your life. You will not be perfect. [6:19] You will still struggle with sin after believing in Jesus. But the gospel should have an impact on your life. And I'm sure you've heard things like this before, but there are a lot of awkward situations at our church, especially when someone from outside of our church wants to do a funeral for a loved one who's passed away. And we hear things all the time like, yeah, he was a really horrible person, but we're thankful that when he was six, he placed his faith in Jesus. We hear things like that all the time. And based on the New Testament, that's not how it should be. The gospel should have an impact on the way we live. And it can be tempting for Christians to just view the gospel as like, oh yeah, that's how you get in. And then you just kind of leave that truth behind. And then you go into the really important stuff. No, the gospel is our life. The gospel isn't just the start of our life. The gospel is our life in Christ. And so how is it that we set our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us? That's the command he gives in verse 13. And he tells us how to do it. Firstly, by preparing your minds for action. And if we translate this literally, it's girding up the loins of your mind.

That's a strange way to think about it. But in the ancient world, it made sense because in the ancient world, as well as in the East today, the Middle East, people wear what are called man dresses. Okay. That's the actual name of them that I call them. So it's, you know, it's not like weird, like one direction guy kind of stuff, but it's just like a big garments that we would describe as looking like a dress. And, you know, we can make fun of them. I would never wear one today, but they might be onto something in terms of comfort. But anyway, so they wear these big man dresses and that can look super stylish in certain cultures, but it's really impractical when you need to run. It's really impractical if you get into a fight. It's really impractical if you go into a war. And so what they would do is they would kind of gather up the hem of this and kind of turn it into shorts, like a man romper thing. And they would tuck the loose ends into their belt and they were ready to run. They were ready for war. They were ready for battle. They could squat. They could run.
They could do anything they needed to quickly. And so that's the idea of getting ready for war. And so they go from man dress to like, this is Sparta in like five seconds. It's amazing. But this is the idea that Peter has here for our minds. You need to prepare for war. You need to get ready for battle. And the Christian life is a fight. It's a fight on multiple fronts. We're fighting against darkness, against Satan as we believe the gospel and as we tell the gospel to others. It's also a fight against our sin. It's also a fight against temptation that assails us and attacks us.
And so Peter says, if you're going to set your hope fully on this grace, you need to prepare your mind for action. And if you as a Christian don't know that you're in a battle, you're losing. If we as the church don't know that we're engaged in a war, we are losing. And so Peter is telling us, prepare your minds for action. Get ready for war. This will take some intentionality. You don't just roll out of bed and fight a war. It takes preparation and planning and a scheme and a strategy. And there are people in our culture that we call preppers. Anyone know a prepper in their life? I'm a low-key prepper. Like, I want to be ready for like a week if something bad happens. But if it goes on longer than that, I need a friend badly. But these preppers will build underground bunkers, kind of like tornado shelters, but think like for nuclear apocalypse. And they're like, I've got six million gallons of water that will always stay fresh forever just in case I need it. And all this stuff. And we can kind of make fun of them, but they're ready for something bad to happen. They're prepared for things to go south. And so they're prepared. We can make fun of them and psychologically analyze them. But they're prepared for something to go bad. And Peter is calling us to be prepared for war.

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Be prepared for attacks. Keep your mind ready. And he describes it in other ways, being sober-minded. And what he actually says here is just be sober. But in the New Testament, it's always got this metaphorical use. Peter's not just like, hey, don't be drunk. He's saying, think clearly. Have your minds clear. So don't just prepare your mind for action, but be able to think clearly. Don't let your mind be clouded by sin or temptation or the busyness of this world. Things that can just kind of be a fog on your thinking. And so sobriety is a good example of this, as opposed to being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. And after my surgery in July, they gave me some powerful stuff. And it really messed me up. I was like, could not think clearly to save my life. And so I had this like splint on my leg that I couldn't get like in the shower, swim or whatever, obviously. And like I was talking to
[11:55] Lacey one night and I was like, could you go get a trash leg for my bag? And she was like, are you okay? And so I just was not thinking clearly enough even to talk. I did win an online Sudoku tournament though. I was cooking. But this being sober-minded is critical to our life in Christ. It's possible for us as believers to live in this world in kind of a muddle-headed way. And this can happen in a couple of ways. One is by indulging in sin. If you're giving into temptation, you won't think clearly. And so when I was taking pain medicine, like everything on the outside seemed fine until I opened my mouth and Lacey was like, okay, let's go back to bed. The bed is this way. She would walk back there. So we can, our minds can become clouded through allowing sin to flourish in our lives.

We can also be not sober-minded by being distracted by things that aren't necessarily bad. So think like sports or school or bands or choir or work or friends or fortnights. Actually, that is bad. Okay, never mind. But be thinking of things that aren't necessarily bad but will just weigh you down. Things that will cause you to not think clearly, to not prioritize your time correctly. And so what will happen if we fail to prepare our minds for action, if we fail to be sober-minded, we won't be able to set our hope like Peter calls us to next. He says, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is really the main point of this entire passage. Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, hope isn't just a wish. It's not just a fleeting thought. Hope is the result of cultivating your mind. Hope is the consequence of you using your mind like the Lord intended it. And so it's not just playing, you know, brain games on your phone so you don't get Alzheimer's. It's meditating on the second coming of Christ. It's focusing on the grace that will be brought to us when we see Jesus riding on the clouds with glory. It's meditating on what will be true on that day.
What will be ours on that day? And no one knows the day or the hour that Christ will return. Jesus himself said that. But if you did know, if you knew that Jesus would come back in two hours, what would you do with your time? How would your life look different in any major way? That's the kind of anticipation that Peter's wanting from his readers. Set your hope fully on that day. Be convinced that day is coming soon and live accordingly. Prepare your minds for action. Be sober-minded. And we've experienced salvation now, but we haven't yet fully experienced everything that will be ours on that day. We will then experience salvation in the full. We'll experience every blessing and every benefit that is ours in Christ when we see him face to face. And so hope is really a synonym of faith. John Piper has said that hope is faith in the future tense. And so faith is trusting God today. Hope is trusting God for tomorrow and forevermore into the future. And the way we'll do this is preparing our minds for action and thinking clearly.
In verse 14, he says, As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance. But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. Since it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy.
[16:10] As obedient children, we've been born again as a result of what the Father has done. We are his children. And so as being obedient to him, we should not be conformed. And that phrase, do not be conformed, only shows up one other place in the New Testament. Any guesses on what it is?

Does anyone know? Yes. Romans 12. Excellent. He says, do not be conformed to the pattern of this world. Don't let your mind be warped to the mold of this world. But here he says, don't be conformed to the passions or the desires or the lusts of your former ignorance. So he seems to be writing to Gentiles. And they would have lived throughout this area of Asia Minor. And so it's very likely that these Christians in all these churches and all these different cities that he's writing to had at some point in their life offered sacrifices to idols, had at some point worshipped multiple gods.

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And that seems foreign to us today, but that was very much a reality of daily life in the ancient Roman Empire. And so Peter is saying, do not go back to that ignorance. Don't go back to your former manner of life. Don't be conformed to that. But instead, just as he who called you, that's God, is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. So don't go back to that pattern that you used to live your life by. Instead, conform your life to who God is and what he's like. And the word holy does have ideas of purity, does have ideas of cleanness. Ultimately, it describes something that is set apart. The word itself kind of means to cut or to be cut away. And so God himself is holy. He is set apart from us. He is other than us. He's the one who made us and we are just creatures. And so he is holy and he is the one who called us. He's called us to put away our former sins, to get rid of them.

And this is really difficult. If you've ever tried to get rid of sin, you know that. Sin is not a kind grandmotherly figure. Sin is a dragon that's hunting us. Sin is a lion that's prowling around seeking to devour us. Satan himself is described that way in this book. And if you were or are entrenched in sin, it's not easy to walk away from. But it is necessary. And this is what God has called us to. Just as he is holy, he calls us to be holy. And it says he called us. And in the Bible, this word for called isn't just like an invitation. It's not like a call on your phone. You're like, oh, not answering that one. Oh, that's mom for the fifth time. Got to answer. It's not just a call that you can, you know, decide to accept or reject. This is God's sovereign will being carried out in the life of his children. And so don't think about like a phone call or an invitation. Think about creation. We're in the beginning and there's darkness and God speaks. And it's through his word, the calling of his voice, that he brings light out of darkness. And it's through his word that he brings life out of death in his children. That's the kind of call Peter's talking about here. The one who called us is holy.

[20:07] And so we should imitate him and be holy ourselves. And this is really the primary calling of the church, of any church anywhere, they need to be holy because the God who called them is holy. And one of the critiques of the church I hear a lot, not necessarily our church, but just the church in general, is the church is just full of hypocrites. And in some examples, in some cases, in some churches, that's sadly true. And so if the church is not holy, the evangelism of that church will be completely dead. If a church is not holy, the disciples it makes won't be holy. And so evangelism and discipleship are critically important, but holiness is primary. And that's the primary thing for the church. And so you, as a Christian, should strive for holiness above everything else. Seek to be like God. Seek to be conformed to him. Imitate him and his character of holiness being set apart from sin. And he quotes here Leviticus 19.2, you shall be holy for I am holy.

And so if we can say anything, it's the Christian life is not passive. It's not something you just like, ah, we'll see if I get to it. It takes preparation. It takes discipline to prepare your mind, to be sober-minded, to set your hope fully on Christ, and to devote your life to being holy like God is holy. Old sins and temptations will entice you. They will tantalize you. You must fight them. And you fight them with hope. The hope that Christ will return and our works will be exposed.

And that leads us secondly to fear and faith in verses 17 through 21. Fear and faith. faith. Verse 17, and if you call on him as father, who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile. So he's saying if you call on him as father, if you claim God as father, then you need to live with fear. Now, do fear and father go together? It seems odd for him to be like, God is your father, and you also should live in fear. It seems kind of maybe counterintuitive, but I hope if you have a dad, you love him. And if you disobey him, I hope there's a sense of fear in your heart. And if you understand that, if you get that, I think you understand exactly what Peter's talking about here. I think you get where he's going. God is our father, but he also judges impartially. So that means he does not give thoughts to rank or status or wealth or authority or privilege. There is zero favoritism with God. You can't be like, hey, God, you know my dad, so... No, that doesn't work. He judges impartially according to each one's deeds. And we as believers will be judged by God according to our works. Now, that judgment won't be to determine whether we go to heaven or hell. Christ has paid for our sins, and so as believers, we won't go to hell, but it will be an evaluation of our lives. And that judgment will be thorough. That judgment will be impartial. That judgment will be in accordance to what we've done with our lives.

[24:02] And so Peter is saying, think about the coming of Christ. Think about the hope that that gives you. Also, you should live in fear because of that truth. That truth, he's coming back, and he will judge each one according to his deeds. And so make sure that throughout this time of your exile, you're living in holiness. Fear here isn't terror. It's an awe and reverence of who God is, but

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it's also a recognition that we are accountable to him. We will have to give an answer to him for how we've used our time, how we've spent our lives. So there's a healthy fear of God that's not the same thing as terror or crippling panic. It's a fear that motivates us to godliness. It's a fear that motivates us to holiness. Many of you have started driving just this year, and more of you will start driving as the year goes on. And, you know, many of you are confident drivers. And, you know, many of you have learned how to drive, and you feel confident. Maybe wrongly so, but you feel confident. And, you know, you're not like as experienced as like a 20-year-old who just drives perfectly all the time, but you are getting better. And if you understand how to drive a car, you understand that there's a role that fear plays. Maybe when you started out, fear was like the predominant feeling that you had behind the wheel.

But as you grow more confident, as you grow more skillful, that fear is helpful. Because even if confident, the fear of what could happen if you don't pay attention motivates you to drive well. And that's kind of the fear, what fear does for us in the Christian life. Knowing we'll give an account to God helps us use our time well, helps us cultivate our minds to prepare them for action like God has called us to. So why do we do this? Verse 18, knowing that you are ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. And you're ransomed not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. Ransomed means to buy out of slavery. And these people, these Christians, were ransomed from what Peter describes as the futile ways inherited from their forefathers. And so these were pagan religions. These were sacrificing to false gods. These were worshiping these false gods, hoping they'd be favorable to them. And Peter does not honor that. He's not saying, I know you come from a very revered past. He says it was pointless.
It led nowhere. It didn't give you a knowledge of God. It didn't make you right with God. And so it was futile. It was pointless. It was in vain. And you were purchased out of that. You were bought out of that slavery. And it wasn't like an actual slave market where slaves are bought for silver or gold or set free by that price. But you were ransomed with the precious blood of Christ. Because he died, you can live. Because he died, our sins are paid for in full. This living hope comes to us for free, but it was very costly. Jesus shed his blood and it was precious blood like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. And under the Old Testament system, a lamb that was to be sacrificed couldn't be gimpy.
It couldn't be mangy. It couldn't have any defects. It had to be flawless in order to be a proper sacrifice. And Peter's saying that's what Jesus was for us.
[27:58] He was without any trace of sin. There was nothing sinful that ever crossed his mind. He was without out a spot. And he paid the sacrificial cost to redeem us out of our former lives. And I think he's going all the way back even to the first Passover where the Israelites are in slavery in Egypt. And God tells them to sacrifice the Passover lamb and take its blood and put it on their doorposts.

And that blood would cause death to pass over their households. That lamb died in place of the firstborn sons of those families. And so when we get to the New Testament, that picture of a spotless lamb is kind of the key to the sacrificial system. And when Jesus comes on the scene, John the Baptist says, behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And interestingly, at that Passover meal, God commanded them, hey, when you sacrifice this lamb, make sure your shoes are on your feet. Make sure your belt is around your waist. Make sure when you're eating this around your table, your staff is in your hand. You've got your bag packed. Be ready to run because I'm going to deliver you out of this slavery. And so this image of the lamb of God being spotless also with what Peter's commanded to prepare your minds. Get your minds ready to go. Get your minds ready for war. He is reminding them that just like God redeemed his people out of slavery in Egypt, so they've been redeemed from their former false religions and their false and pointless way of life. And he describes
Christ in verse 20, he was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world. And we, as believers, are foreknown by God, chapter 1 verse 2 says, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.
And so in what way is Christ foreknown? Well, when this applies to us, when it says we are foreknown by God or in the foreknowledge of God, he knows that he is purposed to redeem us as his people, even before the foundation of the world. That doesn't mean we existed before the world

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was made, but that means that we as his people were part of God's intention for the world that he was going to make. When it describes Jesus as being foreknown, he did exist before the foundation of the world. He was there when the world was created. And so foreknowledge, when it refers to Christ, implies his pre-existence. And if anyone knows any Mormons, they believe in the pre-existence, not just of Jesus, but of all of us. So they would say, you existed for all eternity and became embodied here in the last 12 to 18 years, roughly.
That's a false doctrine. That's heretical. God is the one who's eternal, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world, and he existed then. We are creatures, but he is the creator. And before the world was made, the Father and the Son knew each other perfectly and fully and had perfect fellowship and communion. But he was made manifest in the last times. He took on flesh when the time came. He had existed for all eternity, but appeared in the flesh in the last times. And this isn't a reference to the very end of time, but just in the last days that he kicked off with his death and resurrection. And it says, he was manifested for the sake of you. Now we need to be careful when we read phrases like this, because this isn't demonstrating like our worthiness. This isn't saying like God just saw you and you were so valuable to him that he would do anything to redeem you and to have you with him. There are some songs that are like this. [32:28] I don't know if anyone knows the song Above All. I know some adults might. The lyrics say this, crucified, talking about Christ, laid behind the stone, you lived to die, rejected and alone.

Like a rose trampled on the ground, you took the fall. Okay, so far so good. And thought of me above all. That's a little too far in my opinion. I think it's a good song. It's catchy. But he's saying that Christ died and this song is saying that the first thought on his mind was us.
And you think, what about the Father's glory? What about God's justice? What about the people's wickedness? What about the price of sin? What about fulfilling the Father's will? Certainly he had us as his people on his mind, but he was seeking the glory of his Father above all. And so when we read phrases like this, what does this mean for the sake of you? This is a demonstration of his love for his people, not necessarily our worth. If you remember verses 10 through 12 last week, the prophets were recognizing they were serving the church in predicting Christ and his sufferings and his glory. In verse 21, who through him, that's we who through Christ are believers in God, God who raised Jesus from the dead and gave him, Jesus, glory so that your faith and hope are in God. And so hope really brackets this section here. He started with it in verse 13, ends with it in verse 21. And our only hope is in what God has done. Okay, lastly, number three, love and the living word. Love and the living word. And there's a shift here in verse 22 from talking about our relationship with God and this vertical aspect of salvation to the horizontal effects it has. So now he shifts to talking about how this gospel not only impacts our lives as individuals before God, but as how we treat others in the community. So he says, having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart. Love one another earnestly from a pure heart. These churches are being persecuted.
These churches are about to be persecuted much more severely in the coming days. And what does Peter call them to? He doesn't ask them to do anything heroic. He doesn't ask them to do anything crazy. He commands them to live the Christian life. Love each other. Love one another. The flames of persecution cannot squelch this love. Love one another earnestly from a pure heart. And this is what Jesus called his disciples to in John 13. By this will the world know that you're my disciples if you have love for one another. And this can be really challenging in your teen years and in your 20s and 30s and 40s. I haven't been there, but it seems like a dark place.
[36:06] But this can be a difficult thing to live out. And so are you obeying this command? Are you loving each other? Are you loving God's people? And he gives a reason for this in verse 23.

Why should we love? Since you've been born again. We should love because we have a new nature as children of God. And as a child of God. And as a child of God, you should love other children of God because there are siblings in Christ. And we are born again, not with perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God. The way that God birthed us, the way that God gave us new life was through his living word. And this is imperishable. Earthly fathers give birth to perishable children.
Earthly fathers will eventually die. I will die. One day my children will die. They are perishable perishable because their father is perishable. But as children of God, that God forms through his word, these children will never die because his word will endure forever and because he himself does not change. And so this living word is living because it searches us, but it's also living because

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it gives us life and it remains forever. And then he quotes Isaiah 40 in verse 24.
For all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever. And this is quoted from Isaiah 40. And something fascinating is anytime the New Testament quotes the old, it always quotes it in context. So they never change the meaning of it. They never just rip it out like, oh, hey, this is useful. This is what I'm talking about. I'll just use this. They're pulling in this whole thought that that passage has. And in Isaiah 40, Isaiah is saying, I will preach good news to you. Your exile is ending. This good news is that God's going to keep his promises. You're in a far off nation that seems unbeatable. This nation seems so stable and so lasting, but my promises are more lasting. My promises will come true and your exile will come to an end. You'll come back home. And Peter is applying this truth to these elect exiles.
In Peter's day, these Christians were facing exile. They weren't in their homeland because they belonged in heaven. They experienced hostility from the world around them because Christians belong to another world.
[39:11] And Peter's saying, your exile will soon be over and God's word will not fail. This Roman empire that seems so stout and seems so lasting, the Romans themselves claimed the sun will never set on the Roman empire. This empire that was supposed to last forever seemed so strong and so stable, but it would do nothing from keeping God's promises from coming to pass. And Peter says, and this word, this word of the Lord is the good news that was preached to you. This word is the gospel that was preached to them. This word was about Jesus and the Lord in this passage is Jesus. As we think about these themes, one day our exile will end and we'll be home with the Lord. We as believers will see Jesus face to face.

We won't be strangers anymore in a distant land. We'll be a family at home in the presence of King Jesus and our Father. And so how do we live until then? We hope, we have faith, and we love one another.
And this is how Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 kind of summarizes the Christian life. He says, faith, faith, hope, and love, these three remain, but the greatest of these is love. One day our faith will be sight. The Jesus that we believed in without seeing him, like verse 8 said, our faith will be sight. Our hope, this longing to be set free fully will be realized, but we will never stop loving.
And so learn to love the Lord now. Learn to love each other now because that is something we'll do for all eternity as believers. So let us love one another earnestly, set your hope fully on the grace that we brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, and continue to place your faith and hope in God. Let me pray for us. Our Father, we thank you for this word that you've given to us, this good news that's been preached to us as individuals, is the same gospel that was preached to these believers scattered throughout Asia Minor. Father, I pray that we would learn to set our hope fully on the fullness of salvation that will be brought to us when we see your son Jesus returning on the clouds. And as he ushers his children into his kingdom, I pray that we would belong to that kingdom. I pray that we'd be accepted in, not because of what we've done, but because of the precious blood of Christ as a land without spot or blemish that was shed for us. I pray for these students as they go to small groups that they would believe that message and have fruitful conversations about it.
That's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen.

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