

Peter's Theology of the Cross (1 Peter 3:18-4:6) Martin Williams

Introduction

“Living for Christ in a Post-Christian World: Lessons from 1 Peter.”

- **Why are we experiencing such hostile cultural pushback?**
- **1 Peter 2:21:**

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

- **1 Peter 4:12-14:**

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

A Difficult Text!

- **Karen Jobes:**

This intriguing passage is fraught with problems that obscure its interpretation—text-critical problems, grammatical ambiguities, lexical uncertainties, theological issues, as well as the question of what literary and theological background the author is assuming... The exegetical questions basically boil down to these: Where did Christ go? When did he go? To whom did he speak? What did he say? ... Different answers to each of these questions can be found, resulting in a labyrinth of exegetical options, each of which has no clearly overwhelming claim to certainty. Erickson calculates 180 different exegetical combinations, in theory.¹

- **Martin Luther:**

This is a strange text and certainly a more obscure passage in the New Testament. I still do not know for sure what the apostle means....I do not understand this. Nor can I explain it. Nor has anyone ever explained it.²

¹ Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Baker 2005), 237,39.

² Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, Volume 30, the Catholic Epistles*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1967), 113.

1. Be Detectives in Reading for Clues

- **Adler and Van Doren:**

Think of yourself as a detective looking for clues to a book's general idea or theme, alert for anything that will make it clearer. ... You will be surprised to find out how much time you will save, pleased to see how much more you will grasp, and relieved to discover how much easier it all can be than you supposed.³

- **Adler and Van Doren:**

Ask questions while you read—that you yourself must try to answer in the course of reading. ... The art of reading at any level above the elementary consists in the habit of asking the right questions.⁴

- **Questions to ask:**

- ❑ What is the book about as a whole?
- ❑ Does our passage have a general theme or idea?
- ❑ What is being said in detail, and how?
- ❑ Is there something within the structure or flow of thought that provides a framework for understanding its more complex parts?
- ❑ What is the theological principle in this text?
- ❑ How does this contribute to the strategy of 1 Peter?

1.1. Clues from the Surrounding Context

- **Adler and Van Doren:**

Every book has a hidden skeleton between its covers. Your job as an analytical reader is to find it. A book comes to you with flesh on its bare bones and clothes over its flesh. It is all dressed up. You do not have to undress it or tear the flesh off its limbs to get at the firm structure that underlies the soft surface. But you must read the book with X-ray eyes, for it is an essential part of your comprehension of any book to grasp its structure.⁵

³ Mortimer J. Adler, and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*, Completely revised and updated ed., ed. Charles Van Doren (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), 36.

⁴ Adler and Van Doren, *How to Read a Book*, 46.

⁵ Adler and Van Doren, *How to Read a Book*, 75.

- **Three major themes:**
 - ❑ **suffering** (2:19-20; 3:9,14,17; 4:1,13,15,19; 5:9-10)
 - ❑ **sanctification** (1:2,14-16; 2:9,15)
 - ❑ **salvation** (1:1-12; 2:1-3; 3:18-4:6; 5:4,10)
- **Undergirding these major themes is the person and work of Christ:**
 - ❑ Enduring unmerited suffering for the sake of subsequent glory, follows the model and shares in the experience of Christ himself (1:11,21; 2:21; 3:18-22; 4:1,13; 5:1).
 - ❑ Like Christ, believers submit themselves to unjust suffering when they cannot avoid it, depending on God’s ultimate vindication (2:18-23; 3:18-4:6; 5:6).

1.1.1. Election and Exile (1:1-2, 20; 2:4-10)

- **Believers and Christ as Elect:**
 - ❑ **Believers** are “**elect**” (1:1) and a “**chosen**” (2:9).
 - ❑ **Christ** was “**chosen and precious**” (2:4,6).
 - ❑ **Christ** “was **foreknown** before the foundation of the world” (1:20)
 - ❑ **Believers, also**, “are **elect** according to the **foreknowledge** of God” (1:1-2).
- **Believers and Christ as Rejected:**
 - ❑ **Christ** wasn’t merely God’s elect; he also lived in the world as an exile. The stone God chose *was rejected by people*.
 - ❑ **Christ:** “As you come to him, a **living stone rejected by men** but in the sight of God **chosen** and precious” (2:4)
 - ❑ The believer’s solidarity with Christ is signalled in the very next verse where, like him, they are “**also**” (*kai*) called “**living stones**” (verse 5).
- **Peter compares the identity of believers to that of the exiled but exalted Christ:**
 - ❑ **Like him**, they too are “**elect exiles**” (1:1).
 - ❑ **Like him**, they too were **chosen** (“elect”) by God but **rejected by society** (as “exiles” [1:1; 2:11] and “sojourners” [2:11]).
 - ❑ **Like him**, they too will be honoured if they do not lose heart and give up (1:7; 2:6,7).

1.1.2. Suffering and Enduring (2:18-25)

In this section Peter provides a Christological basis for doing what is right despite suffering. The believer's own suffering, endurance, and vindication *is wrapped around the skeletal structure of Christ's*:

Note here the relationship between 2:18-20 and 21-25:

- (1) The Suffering of Slaves (vv 18-20)

In 2:18-20 Peter commands Christian slaves to be submissive to their masters even if they are treated unjustly.

- (2) The Suffering of Christ (vv 21-25)

In 2:21-25 Peter holds up Christ as an example of patient endurance under unjust suffering (vv 20- 21):

But if when you do good and **suffer** for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ **ALSO suffered** for you, leaving you an **example**, so that you might follow in his steps.

- ➔ **Note:** The word translated “**example**” (*hypogrammos*), literally “**write under,**” means a “**model**” or “**pattern to be copied in writing or drawing.**”⁶
- ➔ Ancient teachers would write out the letters of the alphabet in faint outline over which young children, who were learning to write, would trace their own letters.⁷

Karen Jobes:

[Christ] is the paradigm by which Christians write large the letters of his gospel in their lives. If Christians are to live as servants of God (2:16), the essence of that identity is a willingness to suffer unjustly as Jesus did, exemplifying in suffering the same attitude and behaviour he did. Jesus left us this pattern over which we are to trace our lives, in order that we might follow in his footsteps. This is a strong image associating the Christian's life with the life of Christ. For one cannot step into the footsteps of Jesus and head off in any other direction than the direction he took, and his footsteps lead to the cross, through the grave, and onward to glory.⁸

⁶ William Arndt, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1036.

⁷ Plato, *Prot.*, 362D; *1 Clem.* 16.15. See LSJ, 1877.

⁸ Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Baker 2005), 195.

- (3) The Hope of Vindication (2:23)

Christ left his vindication to God (v 23):

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, *but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*

Peter doesn't say anything further about this vindication but rather waits until **3:18-4:6** to develop that in some detail.

1.1.3. Suffering and Vindication (3:13-22)

Now we come to **3:18-22**, and once again we see exactly the same pattern that we saw in **2:18-25**; **both have the same skeletal structure**. Note first the relationship between vv 13-17 and 18-22 of ch 3:

Suffering of Believers	Suffering of Christ
<p>1 Peter 2:18-20</p> <p>But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. (v 20)</p>	<p>1 Peter 2:21-25</p> <p>For to this you have been called, because Christ ALSO suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps (v 25)</p>
<p>1 Peter 3:13-17</p> <p>For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. (v 17)</p>	<p>1 Peter 3:18-22</p> <p>For Christ ALSO suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit. (vv 18-19)</p>

- (1) Godly Conduct Despite Suffering (3:13-17)

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? (3:13)

- ➔ **Note:** The words “**what is good**” denote **good** or **godly Christian conduct** which conforms to the standards of God's Word.⁹
- ➔ Peter was concerned that persecuted Christians be bold witnesses while maintaining full integrity (**vv 16b-17**):

So that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behaviour in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to *suffer* for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

⁹ See: Travis Williams, *Persecution in 1 Peter: Differentiating and Contextualising Early Christian Suffering* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 258-75; Travis Williams, *Good Works in 1 Peter* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

- **(2) The Suffering and Vindication of Christ (3:18-22)**

In **verses 18-22** Peter holds up Christ as an example of innocent suffering and divine vindication (verse 18):

For Christ ALSO *suffered* once for sins, *the righteous* for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being *put to death* in the flesh but *made alive* in the spirit.

The “**for**” (ESV), or better “**because**” (*hoti*), at the beginning of **v 18** provides the motivational ground or basis for the foregoing exposition (**3:13-17**) for doing what is right despite suffering.

Christ’s innocent suffering (v 18) is presented as both:

- the basis for the believers’ salvation (v 18b-c), and
- the model and encouragement for innocent suffering (cf. 4:1).

Although Peter’s Christology focuses on the suffering and death of Jesus, an equally important element is the vindication and victory of Jesus through his **resurrection, ascension, and exaltation**.

And because the pattern of Jesus’ experience is the paradigm for the believer, **the resurrection, ascension, and exaltation not only vindicate Jesus, but also those who are united or joined to him**.

1.2. Clues from the Flow of Thought

- **Adler and Van Doren:**

Everyone has had the experience of struggling fruitlessly with a difficult book that was begun with high hopes of enlightenment. ... What is the right approach? The answer lies in an important rule of reading that is generally overlooked. **The rule is simply this:** In tackling a difficult book for the first time, read it through without ever stopping to look up or ponder the things you do not understand straight away.¹⁰

- **Adler and Van Doren:**

Pay attention to what you can understand and do not be stopped by what you cannot immediately grasp. Go right on reading past the point where you have difficulties in understanding, and you will soon come to things you do understand.¹¹

¹⁰ Adler, *How to Read a Book*, 36.

¹¹ Adler, *How to Read a Book*, 36.

Event	Text	Description
Crucifixion ↓	3:18b	“having been <i>put to death</i> in the flesh”
Resurrection ↓	3:18c	“having been <i>made alive</i> in the Spirit”
Ascension ↓	3:19a	“having <i>gone</i> [into heaven, v. 22]”
Proclamation ↓	3:19b-20	“he <i>made proclamation</i> to the spirits in prison”
Exaltation ●	3:22	“having <i>gone into heaven</i> and is <i>at the right hand of God</i> , with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.”

- **Dennis Edwards:**

This verse reads like a creedal statement, and affirmation of the suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. (*1 Peter*, p. 159)

- **1 Timothy 3:16:**

Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:
 He was manifested in the flesh,
 vindicated by the Spirit,
 seen by angels,
 proclaimed among the nations,
 believed on in the world,
 taken up in glory.

→ **Note:** It is important to focus on what we do know first; the biblical writers are not intentionally being cryptic or obscure in what they write.

Excursus: *Analogia Scriptorum* (Analogy of Scripture)

- **Interpretative rule:**

When interpreting a difficult passage of Scripture we should look to other Scriptures speaking on the same doctrine or theme in order to interpret the more difficult passages. ***In a word, we interpret the unclear passages of Scripture in light of the clear passages.***

- **Westminster Confession of Faith:**

The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), *it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.* (1.9)

1.3. Clues from the Specific Details

▪ Adler and Van Doren:

What is being said in detail, and how? You must try to discover the main ideas, assertions, and arguments that constitute the author's particular message.¹²

1.3.1. “put to death” / “made alive” (v 18)

- **Notice** how the experience of Christ provides the skeletal structure for the experience of the believer who fleshes this out in his or her own particular context.
- **Notice** one important set of parallels between **3:18** and **4:6** which show how the experience of Christ in suffering and vindication is mirrored by the believers' own suffering and vindication:

□ Christ (3:18):

- having been *put to death in the flesh* (v 18a)
- having been *made alive in the spirit* (v 18b)

□ Believers (4:6):

- they were *judged in the flesh* (4:6b)
- they might *live in the spirit* (4:6c)

- **Notice** how the relationship between the experience of Christ in suffering and the experience of believers in suffering is emphasised by the words “**you also**” and “**the same way**” that precede verse 6 in verse 1.

Therefore, *since Christ suffered* in the flesh *you also* must arm yourselves with *the same way of thinking* because the one having *suffered* with respect to the flesh has ceased from sin.

- Peter's aim is to highlight the solidarity between Christ and the believers. Note the following parallels in **3:18-4:6**.

□ **Christ:** “having been *put to death in the flesh*” (3:18a)

□ **Believers:** “having been *judged in the flesh*” (4:6b)

□ **Christ:** “having been *made alive in the spirit*” (v 18a)

□ **Believers:** “might *live in the spirit*” (4:6b)

¹² Adler, *How to Read a Book*, 47.

- **Note:** By using the word “**Spirit**” here Peter is affirming the basic New Testament conviction that it is the Holy Spirit who is the agent of both Christ’s and the believer’s resurrection (**Romans 8:11**):

If the **Spirit** of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, **he** who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will **also** give life to your mortal bodies through his **Spirit** who dwells in you.

- **Notice** how in **1 Peter 4:12-13** the author explicitly links the suffering and vindication of believer to that of Christ in terms of “**sharing in**” or “**participating in**” Christ’s suffering and subsequent glory: **[PP]**

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as **you share Christ’s sufferings**, that you may **also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed**.

- **Peter’s readers can be assured** that their suffering will one day come to an end and that they too will experience resurrection life, vindication, and glory in Christ and through the Spirit.

1.3.2. “having gone” (vv 19 and 22)

- The **immediate context** and presence of **shared ideas** suggests that **verse 22** completes the thought of **verse 19**:
 - ❑ **3:19**: “in which **he went**” (*poreutheis*) ... Where?
 - ❑ **3:22**: “who **went into heaven**” (*poreutheis eis ouranon*)
 - ➔ The this same verb is repeatedly used to refer to Christ’s ascent to the Father in John’s Gospel (John 14:2,3,28; 16:28) and his ascension into heaven in the Book of Acts (Acts 1:10-11).
 - ➔ Both **verses 19** and **22** of **1 Peter 3** refer to the same event: **the ascension of Christ**.
 - ➔ This is supported by the logical relation of the three aorist participles:

Text	Description	Greek	Event
3:18b	“having been put to death ”	<i>thanatōtheis</i>	Crucifixion ↓
3:18c	“having been made alive ”	<i>zōopoietheis</i>	Resurrection ↓
3:19a 3:22	“having gone ” “having gone into heaven ”	<i>poreutheis</i> <i>poreutheis</i>	Ascension ↓

1.3.3. “the spirits in prison” (v 19b)

1 Peter 3:19	1 Peter 3:22
Having <i>gone</i> to the <i>spirits</i> in prison and <i>proclaimed</i>	having <i>gone</i> into heaven with <i>angels, authorities, and powers</i> having been <i>subjected to him</i> .

- **Note:** The parallel between “**having gone**” in vv 19 and 22 suggests another parallel: between the imprisoned “**spirits**” (*pneumasin*) of v 19 and the subjugated “**angels, authorities, and powers**” (*angelōn*) of verse 22.
- **Note:** The plural “**spirits**” always refer to supernatural beings in the NT (usually malevolent ones), but this is not the only time in the New Testament where we meet imprisoned angelic beings and a reference to the time of Noah.

- **2 Peter 2:4-5:**

For if God did not spare *angels* when they sinned, but cast them into hell and *committed them to chains of gloomy darkness* to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

- **Jude 6:**

And the *angels* who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, *he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness* until the judgment of the great day.

...the story so far

Text	Description	Event
3:18b	“having been <i>put to death</i> ”	Crucifixion ↓
3:18c	“having been <i>made alive</i> ”	Resurrection ↓
3:19a 3:22	“having <i>gone</i> ” “having <i>gone into heaven</i> ”	Ascension ↓
3:19a	He made proclamation to the spirits in prison	Proclamation
3:22	He subjugates angels, authorities and powers	Subjugation

Excursus: *Analogia Fidei* (Analogy of Faith)

The “analogy of faith” is a Reformed hermeneutical principle which states that, since all scriptures are harmoniously united with no essential contradictions, therefore, every proposed interpretation of any passage must be compared with what the other parts of the bible teach. In other words, the “faith,” or “body of doctrine,” which the scriptures as a whole proclaim will not be contradicted in any way by any passage. Therefore, if two or three different interpretations of a verse are equally possible, any interpretation that contradicts the clear teaching of any other scriptures must be ruled out from the beginning.¹³

As our interpretation is:

- ☑ (3) Supported by the *immediate context*,
- ☑ (2) Finds clear *parallel passages* in other letters (in this case another letter by the same author),
- ☑ (2) Does not contradict, but rather is *supported by the normal pattern of New Testament preaching and teaching...*

...we are most likely on the right track.

IN SUMMARY:

Because of the *context*, *objects of the proclamation*, and *the analogy of faith*, as well as Peter’s reliance on Jewish tradition (which we will look at now), most modern commentators rightly understand Christ’s proclamation as a cry of victory rather than a message of salvation.¹⁴

1.4. Clues from the Historical Background

- **Note:** The most important conceptual background for Christ’s proclamation to the Spirit’s in prison is Jewish book of **1 Enoch** (300-200 BC).
- **Jude 14-15:**

It was also about these *that Enoch*, the seventh from Adam, **prophesied, saying [1 Enoch 1:9]**, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

¹³ <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/qna/analogiafaith.html>

¹⁴ Edwards, *1 Peter*, 161.

- **1 Enoch 12:4-5:**

Enoch, righteous scribe, go and say to the watchers of—who forsook the highest heaven, the sanctuary of their eternal station, and defiled themselves with women. As the sons of earth do, so they did and took wives for themselves. And they wrought great desolation on the earth—“You will have no peace or forgiveness.”

- **1 Enoch 13:1-2:**

And, Enoch, go and say to Asael, “You will have no peace. A great sentence has gone forth against you, to bind you.”

- **1 Enoch 13:3:**

Then I went and spoke to all of them together. And they were all afraid, and trembling and fear seized them.

- **1 Enoch 14:5:**

From now on you will not ascend into heaven for all the ages; and it has been decreed to bind you in bonds in the earth for all the days of eternity.

- **Jude 6-7:**

And the **angels** who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, **he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness** until the judgment of the great day—just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

- **Jude**, just like **1 Enoch**, is elaborating on a traditional Jewish interpretation of **Genesis 6:1-4**, where

- ❑ a portion of the angels abandoned their heavenly dwelling,
- ❑ engaged in sexual immorality with human women, and
- ❑ perpetrated the evil that eventually led to the Noahic flood.

- **In Summary:**

Just as Enoch was sent by God to announce to the evil angelic spirits or “Watchers” their condemnation and doom, **so Peter presents Christ as the new Enoch** (or the antitype of which Enoch is the type), as going to the evil spirits and proclaiming his victory over them at the climax of the history of redemption.

- **Genesis 3:15 (NIV):**

And I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head**, and you will strike his heel.

- **Colossians 2:14-15:**

He cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, **by triumphing over them in him**.

- **John Calvin:**

Paul with good reason, therefore, magnificently proclaims the triumph that Christ obtained for himself on the cross, as if the cross, which was full of shame, had been changed into a triumphal chariot! For he says that “Christ nailed to the cross the written bond which stood against us ... and disarmed the principalities ... and made a public example of them” [Col. 2:14-15].¹⁵

2. Contribution to Peter’s Strategy

- **What is Peter’s primary purpose in including this passage in this particular letter? How is this passage relevant for his readers, and what is its inclusion designed to achieve? Answer:**

In this passage (3:18-4:6) Peter has presented Christ’s innocent suffering (3:18ad) as both the basis for the believers’ salvation (3:18bc) and as a model for believers who suffer unjustly at the hands of a persecuting world (3:18ad/4:6b; 4:1ab). God’s vindication of Christ’s innocent suffering through his resurrection (3:18e, 21d), ascension (vv 19, 22b), victorious proclamation (v 19), exaltation to God’s right hand (v 22), and subjugation and condemnation of the disobedient angelic spirits (3:129, 22), provides suffering believers with the assurance that God will one day vindicate them also by raising them from the dead (3:18e/4:6c) and bestowing upon them praise, glory, and honour (see 1:7).

John Elliott: “As Christ’s innocent suffering is the basis and model for Christian suffering, so his resurrection and presence with God are the basis for Christian hope.”¹⁶

- **1 Peter 4:12-13:**

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar **as you share Christ’s sufferings**, that you may also **rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed**.

¹⁵ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.16.6.

¹⁶ John H. Elliott, *1 Peter*, Anchor Bible, (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 689.

- **Note:**
 - ❑ The believer's solidarity with Christ involves both a **participation** in his suffering and an **anticipation** of sharing in his in glory.
 - ❑ **Primary significance:** the motif of continuity between Christ and believers: **So in suffering and death, so in life and vindication.**
 - ❑ **This contributes to the larger motif in the letter**, whereby Peter clothes his readers in the robes of the suffering and glory of Christ.

3. Peter's Theology of the Cross

Peter's unique presentation of the believers' future hope and final salvation in terms of future vindication and victory through suffering is designed to encourage perseverance, promote holiness, motivate fearlessness, instil courage, and engender hope, amongst a small minority group of believers facing the reality and reaction of a hostile world against their faith.

The resurrection, ascension, proclamation, and exaltation of Christ gives those who are united to him the certain hope that their own victory has been secured despite their present suffering and seeming defeat. All of the spiritual forces of evil and wickedness that oppose Christ and his people **cannot escape the reaches of Christ's comprehensive victory and vindication and absolute lordship and sovereignty.**

We resist the devil by means of our union with Christ. Because we are one with him, we participate in his victory over the demonic forces. **So, stand firm believers. Stand firm in this great faith** and arm yourselves with the purpose of Christ.

I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. (1 Peter 5:12)

Our victory is secured, our future is secure, our hope is certain, the distant shore beckons, the celestial city is in sight—and it is illuminated by the glory of Christ.

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:10-11)