



April 19, 2026 | Matt Ott

Series: Fully Equipped: Pursuing Christian Maturity (2 Peter)

Sermon Title: Caught in the Conflict, Carried by the Cross

Main Scripture: 2 Peter 3:14-18

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CHURCH BODY HIGHLIGHTS

1. [Past Newsletters](#)
2. Transforming Prayer Seminar – April 20th
3. Get connected to a small group / Next Steps
4. Opportunities to disciple and come alongside new believers

1. Opening

What is something in your life—a reliable friend, a sturdy piece of climbing gear, or even a trusted family recipe—that you place absolute, unquestioning confidence in? Why is it so easy to trust that specific thing?

Matthew said that the Word of God is our "compass," rather than our feelings or experiences. Can you share a time when your feelings led you in one direction, but God's Word provided a different, more stable path?

How does knowing the historical and archaeological reliability of Scripture help you "stay stable" when cultural "false guides" try to carry you away?

Read 2 Peter 3:14-18

2. Problem: The conflict of the soul is the choice between God's way and our own – and too often, we choose ease over edification.

Peter warns against being "carried away with the error of lawless people" and losing our own stability. Matthew reminded us that our compass needs to be the Word of God, not our fleeting feelings or experiences.

- What are some of the cultural currents, everyday distractions, or internal feelings that tempt us to drift away from the truth today?
- Why is it often easier to let our feelings dictate our reality rather than resting in the objective truth of God's Word?

3. Gospel: The conquest of the Cross provides victory over sinful choice – Jesus is the decisive choice.

While Christ has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves, we are responsible to choose and follow Jesus.

Contrary to Benjamin Franklin's coined phrase, "God helps those who help themselves," the gospel says that God helps those who CANNOT help themselves – here again is the discernment of right vs. almost right.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 8:1-4; Romans 5:6-8; and John 15:5.

- What do these passages teach us about the power of Christ toward sinners-turned saints?

4. Principle: The character of the saved is revealed through loving choices – marked by a pattern of selflessness.

Mathew said, "A true believer is one who has been made new by God's grace through genuine faith in Jesus Christ, trusting in Him alone for salvation, united with Him, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit; this new life begins with repentance and continues in a posture of ongoing repentance, as they pursue holiness and even perfection while humbly acknowledging they cannot attain the perfect standard set by Christ, and yet press on—running the race with endurance and disciplining themselves in

submission—so that their transformed heart increasingly produces obedience to God’s Word, love for others, and visible spiritual fruit, demonstrating a living and active faith sustained by God’s power." (Supported by a few verses: Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8–10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Acts 3:19; Luke 13:3; Matthew 5:48; Philippians 3:12–14; Hebrews 12:1–2; 1 Corinthians 9:27; John 15:4–5; Romans 8:9–16; Galatians 5:22–23; James 2:17; John 14:15; Mark 12:30–31; Matthew 24:13).

Take a few minutes to review and discuss that 10 marks of a true believer.

1. New Life Begins by Grace Through Faith - A true believer is made new by God’s grace through genuine faith in Jesus Christ, trusting in Him alone for salvation (Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8–10; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
2. United to Christ and Indwelt by the Spirit - They are united with Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, which becomes the source of their transformation (John 15:4–5; Romans 8:9–16).
3. Repentance: The Starting Point and Ongoing Posture - Their life begins with repentance and continues in a pattern of ongoing repentance—turning from sin and toward God daily (Acts 3:19; Luke 13:3).
4. Pursuit of Holiness with Humility - They pursue holiness—even perfection—while recognizing they cannot fully attain Christ’s perfect standard (Matthew 5:48).
5. Pressing On in the Faith - Despite weakness and failure, they press on toward the goal, refusing to turn back (Philippians 3:12–14).
6. Running the Race with Endurance - They live with intentional perseverance, fixing their eyes on Christ and enduring through trials (Hebrews 12:1–2; Matthew 24:13).
7. Disciplining the Body into Submission - They actively fight sin, disciplining themselves to live under the lordship of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:27).
8. Obedience Flows from Love - Their transformed heart produces increasing obedience to God’s Word—not out of duty alone, but love (John 14:15).
9. Love for God and Others - They demonstrate genuine love for God and others as a defining mark of true faith (Mark 12:30–31).
10. A Life Bearing Spiritual Fruit - Their life increasingly displays the fruit of the Spirit, revealing a living and active faith (Galatians 5:22–23; James 2:17).

A true believer doesn’t just start on the road—they stay on it, because they trust the compass, reject false guides, and never forget where they’re going.

5. Response: The affirmation of the Amen has always been – and will always be – a shared choice of God's people.

Read 2 Peter 3:17-18

Matthew challenged us with this thought: *"Amen isn't just something you say—it's a choice you make."* Because we are fully secure in Christ and have been given everything we need, we don't have to strive for our standing. Instead, we are empowered to live out our agreement with God.

Living the "Amen" looks like:

- *Amen means I won't drift—I will walk in what God has called me to.*
- *Amen means I won't be deceived—I will hold to the truth.*
- *Amen means I won't wait—I will live for eternity right now.*
- *Since Jesus is enough, I won't live like I'm lacking.*
- Discuss: What does it practically look like to walk in this new way—motivated by grace and empowered by the Spirit—rather than falling back into old habits of self-reliance?

Wrap-up & Pray: Take a moment to share burdens. How can the group pray for one another to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" this week? Pray that each person would experience the freedom and joy of living out their "Amen" because of what Jesus has already accomplished for them.