

The Motivation of God

Matthew Chapter 9-13

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Your Kingdom come Your will be done just like it is in heaven. When we look out into the stars we see they are in perfect order. Satan has no influence out there. But on this earth he sure seems to. This morning lets start in Matthew Chapter 9-13.

The Motivation of Christ

I will be skipping around a bit. We will be going through the next few chapters picking out some things that I believe expose the heart, the intent and purposes of God. He created us in His image so the more we know about God, the more we can really understand who we are. That's very important; almost everyone wants to know who they are. We used to say in the 70's, *"I need to find myself."*

You find yourself by losing yourself in Christ. You don't need a separate personality. You just need to be who you are and who He created you to be. A robin doesn't have to worry about being a robin. He's a robin. It doesn't matter. How silly we are when you think about it in the context of the history we live in now. How silly and stupid to come to any other conclusion than Jesus Christ is Lord and He has made all creation and what He has done is GOOD. As the snow was falling this morning I couldn't help but think about the righteousness of God covering the sins if the world, the message of the gospel.

And so, by the time we get to chapter nine, Jesus had already been through His fasting and His trip in the wilderness, tempted by the enemy. We get to the beatitudes and He begins the Sermon on the Mount. He begins to tell you that there is a different law than the traditions of what you have been used to. Over and over again He repeats and says, *"You have heard it was said . . . , But I tell you this."* He corrects the interpretation of the Jewish law. *"You have heard that you shouldn't murder, but I tell you it is more than that. If you just call your brother a fool, you are guilty before the court."* Whoa. Is He correcting the law? Yeah, the traditions and the ways men have interpreted it. These traditions do not reflect the heart, intentions and purposes of God!

So we see the message of Christ comes upon the earth. He turns to His ministry preaching the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God means that there is a Kingdom and there is a King in the Kingdom. There is only one King, King Jesus. Scripture says He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There is no other king higher than Him, no arch angel, no power, nothing. Nothing can hold a candle to or even be compared, no comparison. So Jesus begins His ministry:

*Mathew 9 ³⁵Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues (amongst the Jewish people), preaching the **gospel of the Kingdom**, . . .*

That He is God. There is only one Lord. You need to change your mindset. It isn't about the condition of the Rabbis. It isn't about how good you are and what you've done. Rather there was a Kingdom He was teaching about that was different than their traditions and rules of their society, of Roman origin. And, He did something else:

. . . and healing every sickness and every disease among the people . . .

So it says that signs and wonders shall follow the gospel. The signs and wonders that follow the Word of God are for the unbeliever that they would know and understand that it is the word of *God*. What was Jesus reaction to that though? Interestingly, what would be your reaction to that?

So you are there, laying your hands on people and they are getting healed. What would your reaction be? Wow, this is awesome, unbelievable, so sweet. This is what God the Father was talking about all along! We just need to multiply this. We need to advertise! But, God is NOT like us. He didn't look out on those multitudes and say, "*Wow, look at My ministry.*" He didn't look out and say, "*Look at what God is doing on the earth.*" He could have but . . . Can you imagine what it would've been like to lay your hands on an eleven-year-old girl and say, "*Hear.*" And she could hear! And a boy comes to Him who was blind and He would lay His hands on him and he could see! What would be your reaction? Wow, the world is now changed forever; it will never be the same. But, that was NOT His reaction because His heart, intent and purposes were not just for the healing of our physical bodies. There was something else He was after. Listen. *There was something else He was after.* He was so moved with compassion in the next verse. When He saw the multitudes, did He just heal more? No.

³⁶ . . . *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*

Even though they were being healed, even though they might have been excited about it, what Jesus saw was a people that were *weary and scattered* like sheep having no shepherd, crushed, cast down, weary, hopeless, having nothing they could hold on to. That's what He saw with His eyes. When He laid His hands on those who needed healing, He didn't see just someone who needed healing. He saw the brokenhearted. It wasn't just their bodies that He saw. He saw the spirit of not just one person, but the whole people, the multitude. And He was in trouble. He thought, "*I'm not doing what I want to do. This isn't it, just healing. This isn't it, just having a good service.*"

Wasn't He grateful? Yes He was, but, He saw something else, something much more eternal.

³⁷ . . . Then He said to His disciples, ***“The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”*** ³⁸ ***Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”***

Another words, He saw (maybe for the first time) that He in a human form couldn't “do it.” He couldn't reach the multitudes the way He wanted to. Wouldn't you have wanted to be here when He was walking upon the earth? And here He is thinking, “*I cannot do it alone.*” As one human being upon the earth, God incarnate, He still could not accomplish His task. “*These people are weary, crushed in spirit, scattered like sheep without a shepherd. And, even if I myself shepherd them all I can, I am only one flesh and blood person. Something else has to happen.*” He saw that all.

What was His reaction then? He stops everything and says, “*You know this is not making it.*” And immediately in the next chapter it says He went out and called His disciples to Him, “*We have to have a crisis meeting now.*”

Matthew 10 ¹ *And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.*

So He is distressed. He voices His distress to His disciples, “*We need more. We need more pastors out there, etc.*” Actually, He was saying, “*We need to have more people pointing to the Shepherd.*” He sees a huge deficiency in His ministry while He was walking upon the earth. There has to be something else. So He gives His disciples power, unlimited power. There is no record in the bible, no historical record of any of the disciples using any of that power except later on when He sent them out and they reported back. Then even the demons were subject to them. But at this time they were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit. They didn't start their *own campaigns* across the Jordan river, starting healing services like Jesus did.

There is no historical record of any of that. So why was Jesus mentioning the need for more laborers? Often God gives us the power to do things but we have no idea of *how to use it*. My personal advice to you, “*Don't use it until you do.*” Let the Lord show you. It is really about *your heart* not just the power you may have. If you just wield power alone you are only going to reap the result which can often be destruction. But if you use the power under the grace and mercy of Christ that is something else altogether.

Jesus Gives True Rest

Matthew 11 ²⁵ *At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.”* ²⁶ *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.* ²⁷ *All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.*

This should put to rest any idea that there is another way to God the Father. There is no other religion, no other pathway except through the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. You cannot get there any other way.

Then (here is the will, intent and purpose of God) He says, “*Come to Me,*” said today more powerfully than at that moment in time. For then, in His human flesh, He could only do it as one person. Now He can say it universally through the Holy Spirit.

²⁸ “*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

There is a heavy yoke that has been put upon you, to get a career, to get money, to pay taxes. In the Old Testament if you had more than 10% tax on anything it was considered usury and against the Law. In Boston Massachusetts in 1776 people thought that way also and rebelled (The Boston Tea Party).

The answer isn’t revolution. The answer is not even forming a new government or new concept. **The answer is Jesus.**

He says just that,

²⁹ “*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, . . .*”

Who are you going to learn from? Me, Peter? The elders, the home group? The testimony of the Lord is certainly in the mouths of the saints. But He says, “*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me,*” the Lord Himself. How are we going to learn from You, Lord? Well the bible speaks of the Lord. When you read through the gospel of John or any of the gospels,

“*. . . learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*”

How? Haughty, proud, glad, happy? Reveling in the glory of His Father? No. ***Gentle, gentle and lowly of heart.*** He isn’t going to stuff anything down your throat, not pushing through the door. But gentle. Isn’t that the way He called you?! Maybe your circumstances weren’t so gentle but the calling of the Holy Spirit was not one that pushes but He LEADS you on, with one hand extended to you. Just like He did with his disciple Peter who was really frightened in the midst of the storm when he saw the Lord come walking on the water. The disciples cried out in fear! But Jesus said to Peter, “*Come on,*” and He held out His hand. Peter began to walk but when he saw the wind he started to sink. Immediately Jesus reaches out His hand and Peter never even went under the water.

Jesus is there for us. “*I am gentle and lowly of heart.*” That means He is not haughty. He is not one bragging about who He is but He empties Himself. So if we want to be like Jesus we ought to be gentle and lowly of heart also, not haughty and proud, not pushing our ideas or our latest doctrine. If God is sensitive to what is going on in our lives, let us be sensitive to what God is doing in

somebody else's. You don't really know it all and you are asking the Holy Spirit to give you a *revelation* of truth.

Then Jesus says that you will find something that everybody is looking for. **You will find rest**, not sleep, not just laying down on the couch, but resting . . . for your soul! For your soul has been searching dramatically, desperately for something and finally your soul can rest in the gentle humility of the Lord Jesus Christ. Your soul can finally rest.

Circumstances may still be boiling, turbulent and crazy but your soul can rest through the whole thing. Was Jesus not in turbulence? Oh yeah. "*For My yoke* (the Lord's yoke) . . ." Is He kidding? The sins of the whole world came upon Him. ". . . *and My burden is light.*" You know why His yoke and His burden was light? Because He was in the will and the purposes of His Father. He knew the heart of His Father, *where* He was going and *why* He was going there.

So we see here, Jesus is healing people, sickness, disease, casting out demons, etc. A successful ministry. It isn't about just having a successful Church or a successful ministry is it? It isn't even about having a successful life. It is about what we can give. It is about what God wants us to give to others. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, giving to others. They loved not their life even unto death!

Jesus Teaches in Parables

Matthew 13

Now Jesus begins to speak to the multitudes, healing and preaching the Kingdom of God, only one King. Change your ideas, traditions and laws, come under the rule and the authority of Christ at last. He begins to speak to them in another way. He didn't speak in the way of the Pharisees and Scribes just bringing up scriptures and text, ideas that rabbis had in the Torah. Rather He spoke in **parables** that anyone could understand. This was revolutionary. This was never done before. Why did He do this? Because His heart was for the people. He saw that they were weary and scattered like sheep over the hills without a shepherd. They needed healing but they needed more than that. They needed to know who was King and they also needed something else.

A parable is to make you *understand* the heart, the intent and purposes of the Father. He saw that if you come to *understand* who you are, then you can know how to behave and how the Kingdom of God can come into your life. The **understanding** is so important. If you are called to be a teacher for the Lord, one should say, "*Amen.*" That is exactly what I am trying to do, help make you *understand*! If you walk in the Kingdom by just feelings and emotions, it is so hard. The following parable of the Sower actually says you will not really succeed walking that way.

Matthew 13 ¹*On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.* ²*And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.*

I can imagine there were mostly Jews sitting there. He did this so that they could hear more easily, not gathered so close that His voice wouldn't project. There were no microphones in those days.

³ *Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.*

What is a sower sowing? Seed, but what is that seed? Seed is the Kingdom of God.

⁴ *. . . And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

Now the disciples were concerned,

¹⁰ *And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"*

Maybe the people will understand but maybe they won't.

¹¹ *He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, . . ."*

So the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven is what it is about, the heart, intent and purposes of God.

" . . . but to them it has not been given. ¹² For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³ Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

It is almost like a taunt from heaven, from God saying, "You need to have ears to hear and eyes to see and a heart to understand. You need to have it! If you don't have it, you won't get it." This is actually from a prophecy by Isaiah.

¹⁴ *"Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,
And seeing you will see and not perceive;*

¹⁵ *For the hearts of this people **have grown dull.** (The clue)
Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed, . . .*

Doesn't that sound like our society today? It sure does.

*. . . Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest they should **understand** with their hearts
and turn, So that I should heal them. . .*

You cannot just understand with your mind. You need to understand with your mind and then it goes into your heart, **to quicken**, to make alive in your spirit, into your soul, *to quicken*. When something makes it there it is written on your heart and will not go away ever!

¹⁶ . . . *But blessed are your eyes (the disciples) for they see, and your ears for they hear;* ¹⁷ *for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."*

So you could come to Church and say, "Yeah, another Church service." Or is your heart open? Are you plowing up the fallow soil of your heart for that word of God to come into you and to quicken, not just your mind understanding but understanding in your heart? But Jesus then explains the parable to them. I want to go through this because it is important and fundamental. And yet, we still struggle with these things as mature Christians. It is fundamental for the newborn Christians but it is also something we struggle with day to day throughout the process, coming under the authority of Christ.

Parable of the Sower

¹⁸ *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the Kingdom, (The seed is the word of the Kingdom of God). and does not understand it, . . .*

So we see it is your duty, your goal this morning to listen to the word, to understand it. Then the wicked one comes. Do you see a wicked one in your life? He is always at the door.

. . . then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

Some soil but not very much.

²¹ *. . . yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises **because of the word (of God)**, immediately he stumbles.*

We need to stay focused. That's what He is warning here. We need to stay focused on what the word is and what it means to us. Then "*he stumbles.*" Haven't we been there? We still go through these things.

²² *Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. . .*

He has the word but cares and riches . . . If you live in the United States of America, guess what! You are there. It isn't that you lose your salvation. But, you don't bring much fruit around; that's the whole purpose of the seed. Re-

member at the beginning He said, *"I wish there were laborers in the field. I wish someone would come help."* It wasn't happening. You were called to tune in, to hear what the Lord is saying in the Holy Spirit in you!

²³ . . . *But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

Unlimited Compassion

So what have we learned? I've learned from these passages that Jesus has *unlimited compassion*. He doesn't have *just so much* compassion and then gives up. He doesn't look at the multitudes saying, *"Well, I just don't know what to do now."* No. His compassion continues to reach out. He begins to speak parables. He begins to give understanding and maybe there was no other way. They would hear rabbis read scripture and not get it. But anyone can understand parables. And yet, so many didn't. But Jesus has unlimited compassion. Aren't we thankful for that?

Jesus paid it all . . . All to Him I owe.

The Kingdom of God is not Just Provision

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is not just provision for us, wealth, healing, prosperity. The gospel of the Kingdom is accepting His kingship, His authority in our life. We are no longer in charge; He is. We need to get into the word to understand that, day-to-day. We need to be in fellowship with one another in a *real* way. That's why home groups are there, where we have one-on-one conversations. When we come to Church we are not here just to enter into worship and music, but we enter into conversations with our brothers and sisters too. That is part of Church.

Man is Weary and needs to find Rest

The multitudes, not just the Jews, that we face every day in the malls, the stores, at work, they are weary and scattered like sheep without a Shepherd. They are weary, many of them crushed in spirit. They don't understand. They need something. They need to find the rest of God.

So what is our job? He has given us, His disciples, power over demons. He has given us His power, the power to bring healing to our brothers and sisters and those who are unsaved. Don't feel awkward if you have to lay hands on people to do that. That's your job. He has given us that ability. He has also given us the job to point them, everyone, saved or unsaved to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is The Good Shepherd. There is no one better than Him.

Point to the Shepherd

People may have a tendency to come to you like they do to a doctor. People fall in love with their doctors looking to them for advice. *"They were so good to me and this medication works so well."* Well just so, we may have peo-

ple thank us and look to us for uplifting their spirits. We have a duty and responsibility of making sure they know, *“Well, it wasn’t me. He is the One Shepherd, the One Doctor, the One Healer, Jesus Christ.”* Let’s remember this.

Satan is still at Work

Lastly Satan is still at work. He hasn’t given up. This is not dispensational . . . only in the Old Testament or from the New and maybe into the Dark Ages, but not for where we are now. Now we are enlightened and educated. No. When I was in highschool and college there was an idea hanging around that the bible wasn’t really true. The concepts and the ideas of the bible were just fairy tales or metaphors of who God could be but not real. In fact when I listened to Oral Roberts (no offense to him, a valid ministry of healing from the 50’s), he didn’t appeal to my *understanding* of the gospel. But when Billy Graham came along, he confronted that which was being preached at Yale, Harvard, or Princeton Seminaries. The big ones, Oxford and all such places, the Anglican Church, all saying, *“There is no virgin birth anymore. It is just a figurative metaphor of what God can do.”* But Billy Graham responded to that, ***“Either the bible is true or it is not true! We have a choice. Either believe it or not believe it.”***

It was documented that Thomas Jefferson actually rewrote some of the bible, actually taking out the part of the virgin birth and others, especially the miracles. They thought one could learn about God without those things. Wow. What a tragedy!

What do you think is the most popular song in the world today? Almost immediately somebody might mention some Country Western tune or something else they might happen to like. However the most popular songs were found to be Christmas Carols! THE most popular Christmas Carol is *“Silent Night”* which repeatedly talks about the virgin birth! How can that be?! What a crazy world we live in. The most popular song of all time is *“Silent Night,”* the virgin birth and yet they don’t believe it!!

What have we learned from the Parable of the Sower?

- 1) We need to hear and *understand*. My first responsibility.
- 2) We need to hear, understand and *stand fast*.
- 3) We need to hear, understand, stand fast and remain in His *meek and humble nature* not focused on the cares and riches of this world.
- 4) We need to hear, understand, stand fast, focused and *produce fruit*.

Some of us might get discouraged with that one. But think, bearing fruit might just mean being how he made you, God expressing Himself through you. When my father had a stroke, he said to me, *“I don’t know why I’m still alive. Why doesn’t God take me?”* His attention span was less than twenty seconds. He couldn’t pay attention to commercials, etc. One might ask, *“What fruit could he possibly bear as a Christian man?”* He was asking that. *“Why am I still alive?”* I said, *“Dad, as long as you can smile, as long as you can make that nurse a lit-*

the happier when she goes through her duties with you, you have brought the Kingdom of God upon this earth. That is the fruit of the Kingdom for you now in this hour, in this day. And by the way, Dad, you are not dying. You cannot take your life. Only God can." I didn't feel too good about doing that since I don't know how many lectures I had from him in the past. I mentioned that to him as well.

Understanding the Motivation and Compassion of God is Key to Understanding

Therefore, I hope this morning you understand my heart. It isn't about the New Year ahead and the promises you make yourself or whatever expectations are in your life. This is not your typical year-end sermon. This is about what God is doing, knowing God in a greater depth than you have before. I've already been walking with the Lord for a long time and might say I don't need to know any more. One might not actually say that but you might think it.

However, the Lord says, *"You need to plow up the soil again. There is more fruit in your life that needs to come forth."* In Springtime that is exactly what we do to the soil that brought forth such great tomatoes last year, we plow it again. We all need to do that in our hearts this morning, because we want to know what motivates God. The reason He brought this universe into existence from the beginning and even before, is that there was something in His heart, who He was, that He wanted to express—**what it is that God Himself is all about!** So He created this time/space universe. He created the earth. He created human beings, Adam and Eve. They multiplied on the earth. It comes all the way down to 2019 and we are going to say, *"Who is God?"* He is the same God, the One who loves. *"Learn of Me,"* Jesus said, *"for I am lowly and gentle of heart."*

We are going to be able to stand fast, not because of what He says to us *only*, but because we are in the word of God. We are living the word of God. We are sharing the word of God in our testimonies. And, we are giving out the love of Christ in our lives, in ways that we might even know as yet. How is God going to do it?

More importantly, we think we are so *"on top of things"* because we have been walking with the Lord for so many years. With that kind of thinking, we are so close to walking away when temptation and evil comes into your life. It is going to be hard. There may be real temptations for you and you might say, *"That's it. I've had enough. I'm just going to rest in what I already know."* You won't lose your salvation. However there is something else the Lord was after. He looks out at the multitudes and the **compassion** in His heart grew and grew. He wants to share that compassion in and with you. So it isn't about you and your tribulation. It isn't about you and your circumstances. *"My job will never change!"* Well, maybe not. But *you* can change and you can change the hearts next to you, one by one.

There was a day during the “cold war,” when people were talking about Alexei Kosygin . It was a hopeless case. The Russians will always just take, come in and kill. The song came out then, “*Those Were the Days, My Friend.*” We felt like our dreams had been crushed, no longer any hope for those people caught behind the Iron Curtain.

Boy, were we wrong! Do you think the people next to you have no hope. In the natural that may be true. Do you think there are family members you know that you will never be able to reach? In the natural, that may be very well true. But in the mercies, the intent and the purposes of God, **it is NOT true!**

I was away on vacation having a good time and the whole Berlin Wall fell without my even knowing about it. I wasn’t checking the headlines. When I got back home I said, “*You cannot do this!*” God spoke back, “*I sure can.*”

He sure can because He is not just one flesh living on the earth today. He went up into heaven, sitting on the right hand of the Father and He sent His Spirit out upon us. And, when the disciples received that it was like a mighty, rushing wind, a mighty roar from the heavens as the Holy Spirit filled them. Then they were able to go out with healing in His wings. When they laid hands on people, they just got up. “*Silver and gold have I none. But such as I have give I unto you.*” They healed a certain guy and they turned the whole place upside down. Men could deal with Jesus doing this, but they couldn’t deal with the fact that His disciples had the same kind of power.

You’ve got it! ***You have that same power.*** I don’t have any silver and gold but what I have I give to you. Rise up and walk.

Summation

*Let’s Pray: So, Father, I pray this morning that you would open our eyes to see what we can do in Your compassion, under Your authority, the loving kindness of our Father in heaven. You truly have a place of rest for our soul, one that is no longer searching, one that knows where we belong and where we prosper. We prosper because we know we bear fruit in that place. There is prosperity in that place not in wealth but in what comes forth which is the love of Christ through a smile, through the words that we speak, the scriptures that we read that flourish in our hearts, the twinkle in our eye. For, Lord, you have given us eyes that **do** see and perceive. You have given us ears that do hear. You have given us a heart that no longer wanders.*

The enemy may come. In fact we say, he will come because of the word but he has found no open door. The door is closed because we read Your scriptures, devoted to the word of God, the text. The door is closed because we are devoted to one another. We truly love each other in this room. The door is closed because we know Your compassion to us personally, the healing of us personally. And how You have used us in praying for others. The door is closed to the enemy. But the door is open to

You, Lord, to do more, to increase, to bring fruit in a way that it won't just be marketable, but it will have eternal value in the heart of perhaps just one. One lost sheep may be all we bring but much more we pray because in this we know Your heart is being fulfilled. As you looked upon that multitude and said, "What can I do? They are weary and scattered. The sheep have no shepherd."

Lord, we stand here this morning as sheep with a Shepherd. You are our Shepherd. Thank You Lord for loving us, in Jesus' name. Amen.