

True Believers Never Quit

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: John 6:66-69

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This message is entitled, "True Believers Never Quit." And the message will be divided into four simple parts. The first part is this. There are plenty of preachers all over the world today. They are almost, I would say, more preachers in this country alone than there ever has been in the world prior to this day, preachers everywhere. But there are some true God called, God sent, God anointed messengers of the Lord. And those men who are sent of God are concerned for three things. Their main and genuine concern is for the glory of God, first. That's their honest concern and care, the glory of God, not their popularity, not their possessions, not their own influence and accomplishments, their concern for the glory of God almighty.

And, secondly, their concern for the well being, the spiritual well being of their hearers. They are frightened that they should lead any man contrary to the gospel of Christ. They want so desperately and earnestly to be true to the gospel of Jesus Christ for the well being of their hearer. They just must, must be true to men's souls.

And, thirdly, as the apostle Paul said, "I have nothing to glory of if I preach the gospel. There is nothing for me to glory of. If I preach the gospel, God taught me the gospel. God gave me the gift to preach it. God gave me the hearers. I have nothing of which to glory. Necessity has laid upon me. I must preach the gospel. Woe is unto me if I don't preach the gospel." They just must preach the gospel. They cannot be happy not preaching the gospel.

Now, as I say, there are some true preachers. There are not a log of them. There are not a lot of them, but there are a few. And those men know, they know that salvation, salvation, true salvation is not, I repeat, is not an isolated religious experience. They are not impressed when someone comes up and says, "Well, I was saved when I was 14 years old." That doesn't impress one of God's creatures.

"Well, I know I am saved because I was there when it happened."

That doesn't impress him either. He is not the slightest bit impressed because he knows that true salvation is not an old isolated experience that you had long years ago. And he knows also that conversion is not even a one time profession of faith. That is not conversion. He knows that. And he is not impressed with it at all. Conversion is not a one time profession of faith. That is what is being...we are being sold a bill of goods today by

preachers. You come down the aisle, pray the sinner's prayer, shake my hand, make a profession of faith and you are saved. It is just not so. It's just not so because those men know that faith that does not keep on believing and actually grow in understanding and grow in fervor is not faith at all. It is not faith at all. Faith is not an isolated experience. Faith is not an acceptance of mental facts. Faith is not a one time profession of faith. Faith is a state of being. "I have believed. I am believing. By God's grace, I shall continue to believe if I ever did believe."

And those men know that repentance is not an isolate act, that repentance that does not keep on repenting is not repentance at all. I repented this morning. I repent tonight. I will be repentant tomorrow if I am one of God's own. If I am not repentant tomorrow, I never did repent. And grace that does not mature and does not grow is not of God. If it is not grace at all. Salvation is life. Salvation is a living fountain of water. Salvation is a divine nature. Salvation is a new creation. It is not just a profession of faith.

Now let me just share with you some verses. Don't turn. Let me go quickly through these. The apostle Paul says, "You," speaking to the Colossians, "that were at one time alienated and enemies in your mind by your wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death to present you holy, unblamable, unreprouvable in his sight if you continue in the faith, if you continue in the faith, grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel."

In the book of Hebrews the apostle Paul writes, if he is the writer of Hebrews, this. "Christ is a son over his own house whose house we are if we have made a profession of faith?" No, sir. If we have been converted? No, sir. "If we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of that hope firm unto the end." Verse 14, "We are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

In chapter 10 of Hebrews he says, "now the just shall live by faith. If any man quit, if any man draw back if any man quit, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who quit, who draw back unto perdition, but of them that keep on believing to the saving of the soul, that keep on believing."

Yes, there is a starting point because four things are true. Now here is the second part of the message. That first part, just file it away in your mind. There are some true prophets and preachers. God never left himself without a witness. And they are aware, for the glory of God and the good of their hearers and the preaching of the gospel, they are that this ting of conversion, of repentance, of faith, of grace, is a state of being. It is a new life. It is not just religion. It is not just a reformation. It is not just a turning over a new leaf. It is not just getting religion or joining the church or getting fixed up for heaven. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. He is a Son of God. He is a child of the king.

Now here is the second thing. And these four things are of vital importance. The Bible clearly states that believers—and I am not using the word "Christian" at all, because the word Christian has been driven in the ground and broken off. It has been abused and mis-

used and caused so much confusion. The word “Christian” means nothing today. But true believers, number one, have been regenerated and born again by the Spirit of God.

I want you to turn to John chapter one, John the first chapter. I am saying this that when I was born into the world, in the flesh, that is of my mother and father. I was born Henry Mahan 58 years ago of John C. and Atha Elieen Mahan. There was a seed from the Father planted in the womb of my mother. It developed. It was shaped, born in sin, conceived in sin, shaped in sin and brought forth. Our Lord said, “Flesh.” Flesh and bones and blood. And that’s all it is, flesh. The only thing I received from my father was a fallen nature. That flesh had in it no spiritual life, no spiritual knowledge, no spiritual desires, no spiritual concern, no spiritual understanding, dead. Dust thou art, to dust thou shalt return. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, nothing but flesh and that is all.

Now our Lord talks about a new birth, a new birth. It is called in the Bible regeneration. It is called a new life. It is called a new creation. And in that same body or person that is all flesh, the Lord God came upon that individual and I know this about the new birth. It is by the...it is of God. Look at John one verse 11. “He came unto his own. His own received him not, his own nation, people, tabernacle, sacrifice, temple. But as many as received him to them gave he the right, the privilege, the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name which were born not of blood, that is not of family inheritance. You are not a believer because your daddy was, not of the will of man, not of the will of the flesh, but born of God. In other words, this regeneration, this new creation, this new birth is by the purpose and will of God almighty. We were born of God, chosen of God, loved of God and born of God.

And this new birth, according to our master, is by the power of the Spirit of God. Mary was told by the angel she would have a son and she said, “It can’t be. I don’t know a man.”

And the angel said, “The power of God shall overshadow thee. The power of God shall come upon thee and that which is born in thee shall be called the Son of God.”

And what I am saying and most preachers don’t know what it means. They think you come to church and get born again. They think you make a decision for Jesus and get born again. But this thing of the new birth is of God and it is by the power of his Spirit and it is supernatural and miraculous and mysterious.

And our Lord said...Nicodemus said, “Well, how can I be born again? Can I enter my mother’s womb and be born again?”

Christ said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth. The wind bloweth where it listeth. The wind blows out there and you hear the sound. You see the results, but you don’t know whence it cometh or whether it goeth. Even so are those that are born of God. You don’t know when or where or who.” That is exactly right. And he gives divine light. Now the new birth, the seed is the Word of God. “Of his own will begat he us with the Word of God

being born again, not of corruptible seed, which is flesh, but of incorruptible seed by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.”

And this is what I am saying. A true believer can never quit being a believer. Anymore than a child of flesh can quit being a child of flesh. There is no way I can quit the human race.

You are saying, “Kill yourself.”

I’ll still be a dead human. I will still be a dad human. There is no way that I can cease to be a man, flesh and bones. We go back to the dust, but God is going to bring it back up again.

And I will tell you this. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. And in now way in time or eternity it will cease to be the life of God, born again. Now that’s so.

You say, “If I thought that, I would cry before the throne of God day and night that I would be regenerated by God’s Spirit.”

That would be a good idea. That would be an awful good idea, awful good idea. Because I will tell you salvation is of the Lord.

And I will tell you something else. Believers never quit because they have been born again. They have been regenerated. They have the divine nature. If you are saved out there tonight you are more than just a religious fleshly man. You are more than just a reformed fleshly man. You are more than just a so called Baptist Christian. You are a child of God. You are a son of God. You are a divine person with a divine nature in you. Now, that’s right, if you have been born again. If you haven’t then you are not saved.

All right, secondly, every true believer has a living union with Christ. Christ said, “I am the vine, you are the branches.” Now there’s trees out here. The life is in the trunk. The branches have n life in themselves. The branches have no nourishment of themselves. The branches bear no fruit of themselves. Cut the branch from off the trunk it’s withered and dies.

Christ said, “Even so, you cannot live unless you abide in me. I am the vine. You are the branches.” He is the light and I am in him. I am in Christ, just like this arm here. If you sever this arm, its dead. It can’t live. The life is in here. And it furnishes life to this arm. And if we...we are one with Christ. We are part of Christ.

You say...and he is the head and we are the body. That’s what he said. He is the head of the Church which is his body.

You see this hand right there and you don’t say, “Well, that’s a hand.” You say, “That’s Henry’s hand.” See what I’m saying? Well, there is a foot up there. No, that’s his foot. And when you are out there, if you are a child of God, you are not just an individual, you

are his hand or his foot or his ear or his toe or his finger. Do you see what I am saying? We are his body. And Christ is not deformed. He won't lose a member. I guarantee you. I guarantee you on the authority of God who sits in heaven and this Word which is his, no part of Christ's body will ever burn. Guarantee it. That's exactly right. And if you burn you never were part of his body.

John said, "If they had been of us no doubt they would have continue with us," because Christ never lost a son. He never lost a part of his body. Let me tell you something. If one person given him by the Father, redeemed by his blood and regenerated by his Spirit, should ever wind up in hell, our Lord is defeated. His is a full, complete victory or no victory at all.

I'll tell you this. If all four of your children of five were captured and off somewhere and you went to save them and you brought back four would you rejoice? Not very much. It would take all the joy out. One is still gone. You have got to bring them all home.

He said, "Of all that the Father hath given me, I will lose nothing." That's so. They will never quit.

Thirdly, the believer is a part of an eternal covenant. This is what David was talking about when he laid down to die. He said, "The Father God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. And this is all my salvation and all my desire though he make it not to grow."

Turn with me to Jeremiah 32, Jeremiah chapter 32. I am saying that God will fulfill his everlasting covenant. He will fulfill that covenant which he made with the Son in which he gave to the Son a people as the stars of the heaven and the sands of the seashore. He says in Jeremiah 32 verse 38, listen. "And they shall be my people and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me forever for the good of them and their children after them I will make a covenant, an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good. I will put my fear in their hearts and they shall not depart from me.

True believers will never quit. They have been born again. They are sons of God. They have been by the power of God made a part of the body of Jesus Christ. And, thirdly, they are a part of an everlasting covenant, a covenant of God's grace in which he gave his Son a people.

And as Judah said, "I'll bring him back or I'll bear the blame forever." And Christ will bring them back or he will bear the blame. But he will bring them back and he will get the glory.

All right, fourthly. These people will never quit because they are devoted not to a experience. They are devoted not to a denomination. That gets older than bad hay. Not to a feeling, not to a theological position. They are devoted to a person, a person, lock, stock and barrel, they are in love with Jesus Christ.

Turn to the Song of Solomon. Let me show you something. This is something that brother Gary Shepherd preached on the other night, Song of Solomon chapter five, chapter five and beginning with verse eight. This is the bride groom or this is the bride, the Church. And she says in verse eight, she said, "I charge you, oh daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, oh daughters of Jerusalem," that's the religious people, daughters of Jerusalem, that's the Pharisees and the Sadducees and all the other scribes and religious men and women. "If you find my beloved that you tell him that I am lovesick. I am so in love with him that it overcomes me. I am sick because of love," is what she is saying. "I love him so much that without him I am absolutely totally unhappy."

And here is what they ask her. They said in verse nine, "Well, what is your beloved more than another beloved? Why are you so in love with him? We've got our lovers. We are in love with the law."

"Oh, I could never be in love with the law. He is too strict and harsh and unkind and without mercy."

"Well, we are in love with our feelings."

"Oh, I could never...I could never trust feeling. Feeling is too deceitful. It is high one moment and low the next."

"Well, we are in love with experience."

"Oh, I could never be in love with experience. Experiences are... you can't trust them."

"Well, we are in love with the ordinances or works or rituals."

"Well, what is your beloved more than any other beloved? What is your beloved more than another beloved that you charge us so?"

Listen. She describes him. "My beloved is white. He is pure. He is without sin."

Do you see that? He is without sin. "And my beloved is ruddy." That is, he is a strong deliverer. "And my beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand. He is greater than the angels and greater than Moses and greater than the tabernacle and greater than the priesthood. He is the chief of 10,000. My beloved, his head, his head on...his head is as the most fine gold. He wears a crown. He is the king. And his locks are bushy and black as a raven, eternal youth. He never changes. His eyes are as the eyes of a dove, as doves by the river of water, gentle, nothing more gentle than the eyes of a dove. Washed with milk. They are clear and they are fitly set. They never change." He says, "I loved you with an everlasting love. I am the Lord I change not, therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed."

His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. His eyes are gentle as a dove. They are washed with milk. They are clear. They are not deceitful. And they are fitly set. They are unchanging. His cheeks are as a bed of spice so soft as a soft pillow for a weary head, as sweet flowers. His lips are like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh. From his lips flow nothing but grace, grace and forgiveness.

What is he more than any other? His hands are as gold rings set with beryl. He is so generous his hands just...just from his hands flow his gifts of grace and he is altogether lovely. Go on and on and on.

I tell you this. True believers will never quit. I am just sorry to be so harsh and so firm. But, as I said, I am not going to be any firmer than the book or any easier. True believers cannot quit because they are regenerated and born again and will never be unborn, because they are part of the body of Jesus Christ and that's a complete body and because they are a part of a covenant of grace which was fashioned and formed and purposed and planned in the mind of God before the world began. He declares the end from the beginning. And because they have been brought to find in Christ all they need, they are totally happy, totally satisfied, totally content and they can't...no substitute can take his place because he is perfect. He is my riches. He is my joy. He is my life. He is my healing. He is my sanctification. He is my wisdom. He is all things. I find in him all I need.

They say, "What's your beloved more than any other beloved?"

Well, I don't know. What you got to offer?

Oh, no. Oh, no. She said, "I don't want any part of you. I found in him all I need."

And if there is any doubt in your mind about that, you have never seen his glory; never, never, never, never, playing games.

All right. Here is the third part of this message. In a world of religion in which we live, in a world of superstition and there is more junk and superstition and tradition and custom and we'll praise the Lord, we'll hallelujah, we'll praise the Lord, we'll do it for the glory of the God, amen and amen.

I'm so weary of it, so nauseated. I want to throw up. Don't you? It is so phony. It is as phony as confederate money. It is not easy in this day of religion, in this day of self promotion, of denominational promotion, of moral promotion, of reformation promotion, of all this terrible, terrible junk that we have going on in the name of a holy God. It is far worse than the religion of the Pharisees in the days that Christ walked this earth.

It is hard to distinguish between saving faith and false faith. Do you know that? It is hard to distinguish, awfully hard.

Our Lord said, "In the last days antichrists shall arise and they shall perform great miracles and wonders and shall deceive, shall deceive, if it were possible the very elect, the

true believer, if it were possible.” It is impossible. But they are so cunning and crafty and subtle and deceitful and so religious and they use the same Bible we use and the same words we use. They just define them differently.

I will tell you this. False faith, it can excite the emotions. You see people waving their hands and waving banners and jumping up and down and shouting and running up and down the aisles. False faith can excite the emotions. Paul said in Romans 10 these people have a zeal for God, a zeal for God, a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

And our Lord said when he went forth to sow, the sower went forth to sow, the seed fell on the stony ground and sprang up, but withered away having no root. And he said< “These are people who received the Word with what? Joy. Joy.”

Oh, yeah. False faith can give you emotion, passion, joy, zeal, enthusiasm. False faith can reform the outward man. The Pharisees didn’t have saving faith, but they were some of the most moral men of their day. One of them said, “I am not unjust. I am not an adulterer. I am not an extortioner. I fast two times a week. I pray. I give alms of all I possess. I stand on the street corner and read the Scriptures.”

False faith can reform the outward man. False faith can attain to the highest religious offices. What do you suppose the highest office in the Church has ever known? The apostles. Right? The 12 apostles. Judas was an apostle.

False faith can become a theologian. False faith can be baptized with Simon, can give gifts with Ananias and Sapphira, can speak well of Christ with Nicodemus, will persecute those who dispute and disagree. And false faith will even persevere to the judgment and stand before Christ and say, “I preached in your name and cast out devils and did many wonderful works.” That’s false faith.

You say, “It is frightening, preacher.”

It is frightening. I tell you it is frightening. I tell you it is a disturbing thing to stand here and think that we read the Bible and attend church and make a profession and say we believe and get baptized and join the church and pray and give our gifts and then wind up in hell. It is disturbing to say the least. And there are going to be some folks to experience that because our Lord said, “Not everyone that saith unto me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, have we not done this, that and the other? Have we not done this? We did what we were told to do. We did what we thought we ought to do. We did what we were expected to do. We did the best we could.’

“Depart from me. I never knew you.”

Here is the fourth part of this message. There are four things that false faith cannot produce. False faith can excite the emotions. It can reform the outward man. it can obtain high office. It can memorize theology. It can be baptized. It can give gifts. It can persecute those that don’t agree with it. It can speak well of Christ and persevere to the judg-

ment, but there are four things that false faith can never, never imitate, never counterfeit, never.

Number one, false faith can never, never produce a heart broken over sin. It can't do it. That's not Satan's way. His way is, "I am pressing on the upward way, new heights I am gaining every day." That's Satan's way. It can never produce a broken heart.

The sacrifices of God are a broken heart. A broken and a contrite spirit, oh God, thou wilt not despise.

God saveth such as be of a broken heart.

Turn to Psalm 51 and listen to David. I can't give it to you. And momma can't give it to you. No preacher can give it to you. You can't give it to yourself. Only the Spirit of God can visit with such convicting power that he breaks the heart like Isaiah of old who cried, "I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips." Or Job who cried, "I abhor myself."

Listen to David. Psalm 51. "have mercy on me, oh God. Have mercy upon me according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy mercies blot out my transgressions."

Let's quit talking about everybody else's transgressions and start talking about our own. That's a broken heart. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, iniquity. Don't be afraid of those words. That's what it is. Cleanse me from my sin. I acknowledge my transgressions. My sin is ever before me. I have sinned against you, oh God.

I guarantee you no false faith ever talked that way. It might read it. It might preach about it, but false faith didn't write that. That's the writings of a broken heart.

Purge me with hyssop. Wash me and I will be whiter than the snow.

Secondly, false faith can never produce a broken heart. And I don't mean broken over the death of a loved one. I don't mean broken over some financial disaster. I'm not talking about a heart broken because you got some kind of disease. I am talking about a heart broken over sin, my sin, my iniquity, my transgression, my feeble, wicked, foolish heart.

And, secondly, false faith can never, never bow to the absolute sovereignty of God and the lordship of Jesus Christ in all things. It won't do it. It can't do it. False faith is too proud. No, sir. False faith will never bow sincerely and humbly.

I will give you an example. Our Lord came down from the mountain and there ran and met him a leper, a man with leprosy. That's realizing he knew who he was, wretched, unclean. And the Scripture said he fell at his feet. He fell at his feet and worshipped and lifted up his eyes and probably his hand and said, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

That's where it is, Tom. If you will. I tell you, my friends, salvation like creation is of the Lord. Salvation, like providence is of the Lord. It is of the Lord from alpha to omega. Salvation is by the free will of God, not by the free will of man. Salvation is God's decision. Salvation is God's operation. Salvation is God's application. It pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb to reveal his son in me and false faith will never confess that. It will never confess it. It will never bow to the absolute...

"Lord," David said in Psalm 51, verse four, he said, "Against thee and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight that thou mightest be justified when you speak and clear when you judge." He said, "If you send me to hell, you are doing just right, just right."

All right, thirdly. False faith—and I made this statement in a message here recently, the hardest thing that any man ever had to do, it is impossible apart from the Spirit of God, false faith can never, never look to Christ and Christ alone for salvation. No, sir. It can't do it. False faith can never rest and trust and believe and commit and cast myself, sink or swim on him and him alone. Can't do it.

False faith says, "Well, I believe in Jesus, but I made a profession. I trusted Christ and I was baptized." It is not but. It is not and. It is Christ. I mean he is my Redeemer just exactly like he was the Redeemer of the thief on the cross.

What did the thief on the cross do? What contribution did he make? Here was an unclean outcast hanging on a rugged cross. He never washed. He never worked. He never walked a foot for Christ and he never witnessed and he never won a soul. But my Lord said, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Salvation of that thief was as totally and completely and absolutely the accomplishment and work of Jesus Christ the Lord and it is true of every one who is saved.

Now that's right and a false faith can't trust that.

I am saved if I never open my mouth again as long as I live if I know Christ. If I never give a dime, if I never walk a step, if I never breathe a prayer, if I never read a sentence Christ is my righteousness. Now I do those things, John, because I love him and because I am saved because it is a natural response of a spiritual life. A man who does not pray is not saved because the prayer is the spiritual breath of a living being. A child that does not breathe is not alive and the same thing is true of a child of God that doesn't pray. He is dead. And that's right. But Salvation is of the Lord. And I am resting totally and completely...

"Well, brother Mahan, you made your profession and you joined the church."

Those are just responses to life. Christ is my Redeemer. He stands before God. He is the author and finisher of my faith and all the in between. And false faith can not rest in Christ. It cannot just believe in Christ. It has got to say, "But I did this. But I did this."

No but about it. I am a candidate for hell if it was not for Christ, worthily ought to go to hell. Almighty God with a telescope and microscope of sovereign piercing eyes cannot find in me one reason for salvation, not one reason to take me to glory. But one glimpse at Christ and he will take me with him. That's it. But false faith can't do it, can't do it.

Last of all and I quit. False faith can never continue, continue to believe God regardless of the circumstances, I mean regardless of the circumstances. I mean regardless. I mean regardless of the circumstances. Can't do it. You'll quit. There will be a reason and it will be a good one. And it will be a justifying reason. And you'll see clearly why you were right in doing it. For Satan is a crafty rascal, a crafty rascal. He is a subtle, deceitful rascal.

Somebody said he knows more about human nature than anybody but God. He has been in the deceiving business for 6000 years and he has whipped some folks a lot stronger than you and I, whipped them, absolutely whipped them. And he doesn't just make you sick. He'll even bless you. He doesn't care how he does it. It doesn't matter. He'll promote you. He'll make you famous. He'll do this that...he'll just do anything to accomplish his purpose. But saving faith will continue in Christ no matter what the test.

Go through the life of Abraham. Leave your father's house. Seventy five years old, he believed God. Give Lot the best land. Take it. Go to the mountains. He believed God. These fellows brought out all that gold and silver. "Here, give it..."

"No," he said, "I've lifted my hand to God."

Satan tried. God let these trials to take place to try his faith.

Going to have a son. "I'm 100 years old."

"Now take your son Ishmael, 14 years old. Put a bottle of water on his back and send him out in the wilderness."

That's hard to do. But he believed God.

"Now take your last son, your only son whom you love and take him up on a mountain and sacrifice him to God."

"All right. All right. I believe God."

And false faith can't handle those things. And our little our trials, our little old quitting reasons are so inferior to any of those huge monumental tests that this man of faith went through. But that's it.

False faith, while it can do many things, can never produce a broken heart over sin, never. It can never bow to the absolute immutable, unquestionable sovereignty of Christ whether he saves you or damns you, can't do it. False faith can never, never rest in

Christ alone for our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And it can never persevere. It will quit. It will quit. It will find a reason to quit. It will find a good one. It will find a justifiable reason to lay down the banner, lay it down. But not living faith. It will go on.

God, give me saving faith. Don't let me play games. Give me saving faith or get me out of here. Get me out.

Our Father, we are thankful for your Word. Now bless this message. We feel desperately and deeply and sincerely this is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord who loved us and gave himself for us. Own it, Father, for your glory and our good we pray, Amen.