

Value the Word: God's Living Power That Saves, Strengthens, & Judges – Hebrews 4:12-13 Sermon

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Date: 09 October 2025

[0:00] A simple message really, encouraging us to appreciate the Word of God, to value the Word.! Hebrews 4 verse 12 through 13. Hebrews 4 from verse 12 it reads,! For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Do we value the Word of God? Firstly, we notice it's full of God's life. It is quick. Of course, we know the quick and the dead, it means the living and the dead. The word quick, it means alive, it means living. And the Word of God is full of God's life.

Hebrews 4 verse 12. For the Word of God is quick. There's life here in His Word. God's Word is living, it's alive, it's active. And we know it tells of our Lord, He's the Prince of Life. You could put it the Author of Life in Acts 3 verse 15.

He's the very source of life itself, the initiator, the originator of life. And God's Word is alike to our Lord. It's living, it's alive and active. And the angel says to Peter, to go stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life.

When they spoke, when they opened the Word of God, life comes out of the Word, doesn't it? The life of God. And our Lord Himself says in John 6, 63, in part it says, The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.

[1:43] And Peter said to the Lord in John 6, 68, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. So we think about the Word of God, God's Word. It is able to give life, eternal life.

His message is life, isn't it? Everlasting life. And there's no other book that can compare. No other book can do this. These are the words of eternal life, God's words to us.

When we think of life, He's given us the breath of life from the garden. He is life, isn't He? We have life because of Him. In Him we live and move and have our being.

And His Word, God's Word, these words are the words of eternal life. No other book can give us such life. And God's Word received, it can impart saving faith, eternal life.

Paul calls it in Philipians 2, 16, the Word of life, the Word of life. And of course we know that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. That we have faith through the hearing of His Word.

[2:44] He imparts faith as we believe, as we trust. And God's Word has that life-giving energy, salvation, as God plants it in our hearts. And as we hear His voice and obey its truth, as we place our trust in the living God, the living Christ, the risen Saviour, as we've heard, and His Word, it works on our behalf.

And God recreates His life on the inside of us, within us. We're born again. We have new life in Christ, don't we, as we save people. And life comes from the Word.

Now of course we know there's many books in the world today. Ecclesiastes 12, verse 12, it tells us of the making of many books. There is no end. There's no end to the making of books.

I know I love books. I've got a big library at home. And whenever I go to a bookshop, I almost can't help myself to get another one. And you think of books, of libraries, of bookshops.

And really, libraries, they're overflowing, aren't they? They say some libraries carry almost 100 million items. There's so many books, we never have a lifetime enough to read them.

[3:50] We need a few lifetimes, wouldn't we? A million lifetimes probably. And we think of books, there's textbooks, there's cookbooks, there's comic books, reference books, poetry books, travel books,

fiction, non-fiction, technical books.

The list is endless. But one book, one book, I put to you, stands above all, doesn't it? Amen. The Word of God, the Bible, it's full of life. It sustains life.

It tells of the living God and how we can know Him and His life, life eternal, how we can truly, truly live. And you think, as you could put it, the Bible is as necessary to our safe passage through this lifetime as oxygen is to sustain life.

We need His Word. It brings His life. And, of course, we know our Lord, when He was tempted to hold the devil Himself, He says, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

By it we live, don't we? It's His life. And no other book is alive like this book. It's living. Living. It's full of God's very life. And we can truly live as we heed its Word and let it live in us.

[5:01] And 2 Peter 1, it tells us how, Don't you just love that?

Think of it, of the Word of God. And these pages are so valuable and precious to us, aren't they? Not only is God's Word full of God's life, we see also it is full of God's power. This book is powerful. It is quick and powerful, it tells us. It is powerful.

The Word of God is quick and it is powerful. In other words, it's energizing, it's active, it's effective. The Word, you could transliterate it as energy. The Word of God is powerful.

Energio. It's got God's energy, life-transforming power. It's supernatural. And you think of that power of God, God's power, it has power to save the gospel, doesn't it?

[6:10] Think of Romans 1.16. Paul says, For I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believer, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

There's power, life-saving, soul-changing, salvation-giving power. The gospel, isn't it? No other message has this power. And God's Word, when received, will convert the soul.

He promises that. You know, the Word tells us that of His Word. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

God's Word, it brings life, life-changing power. He is mighty to save, isn't He? He's the Savior and His words are life and powerful words. The Word of God, it tells us of the Savior of the world, the Lord Jesus, and of His salvation, His grace.

That He can work that miracle of salvation in every soul, in everyone, that believer. He can bring that salvation to us. And so we think of this book.

[7:18] There's no other book like it. No other religious book can promise such a promise of spiritual power, of God's saving of His power.

And God brings us the power of His Holy Spirit, doesn't He? As we read these words, these words, these life-giving words, it helps us to draw nearer to Him.

It tells us more of our precious Lord, helps us to be more like our Savior. And think of our Lord, our God, He's all-powerful. And in His Word, we see that power.

We see that power, the glimpses of it in the Old Testament, and then the full revelation of it in Christ, in the fulfillment of it, His message to man, in His resurrection power, as He broke the chains of death, as He burst back into life, the power that raised Him from the dead.

It's God's power. And it's the power of His love that held Him to the cross, His love for us, so giving, so enduring. Think of then the sanctifying power of saved people.

[8:22] We can grow to be more like Him. We can get stronger in our faith. And by His mercy and grace, we can know that applied power. This is applied power. It's active power. This power, we can know this power, personally know, as we apply the Scriptures to ourselves and find that power impacts our lives, doesn't it?

That personal application as we take His promises, His truth, and it lives inside of us. And walks in our shoe leather, doesn't it? God's power. God has the power to do anything and everything.

And God's power, it brings the power of faith, doesn't it? His word brings us the power of faith, the power of a Christ-centered will, the power of a Christ-filled life, a Spirit-filled life, the power of a heart set on fire with love and zeal.

We want to share this message. It's too good to keep to ourselves, doesn't it? His word. And we think of the power of God, brings us powerful living, literally energizing. It has inherent power of itself.

The word of God is quick and powerful, full of power. In God's word, we find the answers to life's puzzles. And sure enough, we all have those times when we question, if we can go to the word, there's power there to help explain some of the mysteries, to unlock those puzzles of life.

[9:38] Think of it, if we lack God's word, we'd have a serious lack of power in our spiritual life. What a treasure we have. We think back in old times when the ancient church was just beginning, they only had morsels, they only had fractions, little pieces of it, didn't they?

And now we've got the whole book, the 66 books. We're so privileged and blessed. Think of believers in lands where there's persecution. Sometimes they only have scraps of the word, don't they?

And they share it, they treasure it. They pass it around and memorize it and then they pass it on. The power of the word of God. To lack it would be such a loss, wouldn't it?

And yet we take it for granted. Doesn't it sit on our shelf sometimes, gathering dust, that we don't really turn to it like we could? And that's why we need to plug in regularly to that power, the power of the word of God.

This book has power to help us live the life God wants us to, the power to help us to grow in our faith. And this book has that power. Take his word, feed upon it, let it be a food for you.

[10:46] We should desire it more than our daily food, like Job said. And this kind of diet will see you to grow in your spiritual life. Now, as a younger man, I was blessed to go to a little Bible school some 40 odd years ago now.

And one of the fellow students at this Bible school, they put a familiar passage of scripture to a song. And I'm going to share that with you.

If you can bear with me while I sing to you. And you can join in on this part. You might catch the tune after a little bit. It helps to memorize the word of God when we put it into a tune.

And it starts off from verse 14. If you want to go there to 2 Timothy 3 from verse 14. And this fellow student of mine, he put these words to song.

And it's good to reflect on the truth of these words. And feel free to, if you catch the tune, you can sing along. But at least you might be able to catch the tune when we get to this part.

[11:58] So I'm just going to start off with verse 16 and then go back to 14. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect truly furnished unto all good works.

Verse 14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

And back to this again. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good works.

Think of the power of the word of God. Amen. There's so much in there. Just in this verse alone, we think of the power of the word. It's powerful. It's profitable. Think of those four things there.

Look at the power of his word for doctrine. In other words, what is right? We find what is right. We find sound doctrine from the word. It's profitable for reproof. In other words, to see what is not right, to stand against that.

[14:01] For correction, how to get right. We need correction, don't we? And it's profitable for instruction in righteousness, how to stay right.

So doctrine what is right, reproof what is not right, correction how to get right, instruction in righteousness, how to stay right. The word of God is powerful, isn't it?

Amen. Don't you believe this book? This book has the power to help you, to live right, to do right.

Shows us the way to get right and to stay right. And God's word, we can think of the power of it. It's full of God's power. It's got the power to lift us closer to God, to make us more faithful, to walk with him more closely. And if you're feeling weak or drained, this is the book to go to when you have those moments.

I know sometimes, I know the old Gideons had different things, where to go to, to get help when you're feeling this way or that way. And there's Bible verses you can turn to that answer that, that

address that.

[14:59] It's got power to help us in practical ways, these powerful pages. When we're feeling downhearted, we can go to his word to lift us up, to find those inspiring examples of the men and women of God, those rousing examples of the men and women of the faith.

And so it should show us how to be a more powerful believer as we can just tap into his word. It'll help us have a more powerful spiritual life. So not only is God's word full of God's life and full of God's power, we could put also it's full of God's judgment.

Now we don't always like to hear about judgment, but we think of the judgment here. It tells us how the word of God is quick and powerful. It's sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Now people don't always like to talk about the judgment of God.

Oh, don't get judgy. Don't get judgy with me. But the word of God judges us, doesn't it? It helps us to see, hey, there's things we need to smarten up and sort things with God. And you think about examples through the word of God where the word of God cuts deep, literally cuts that two-edged sword.

[16:23] It's sharp on both sides of it, and it convicts the conscience. It exposes the heart. It's like the spiritual surgeon with his scalpel, digging deep, and there's a healing that happens as he cuts, as he exposes and removes.

As God exposes sin, he brings about healing and growth. In Acts 24, Paul spoke to the governor of Felix, and we see it talks about that there in Acts 24 from verse 24.

Felix, this local authority, he's taken Paul captive, and Paul's been arrested because of gospel work. He's simply preaching the gospel. And there he is, and Felix spends time with him, but Felix did not listen.

He listened with interest, but he did not really heed his message. And it tells us there, Acts 24 from verse 24, that after certain days, Felix, it says, he sent for Paul, and he heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

And as he, Paul, reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment, notice judgment to come, Felix trembled and answered, go thou way for this time when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

[17:43] I don't know when you talk to some folk and you're witnessing, I know we'd like to do door knocking, and sometimes we get those ones like, not interested, or I'm too busy, not at this time.

You know, maybe in a convenient time, one day. They've got that idea of one day, I'll get around to it. And it's got the sense here in verse 25, as he reasoned, as Paul reasoned, it's got the sense that he was discussing this for some time.

This was quite a reasonable conversation. This was a reasoning that took some space of time, maybe numbers of times.

And it tells there of the judgment that came, of the time that, as we see the response of Felix, this Roman governor, it says, Felix trembled.

Oh, he trembled at this message. And it's got the sense of the fear of God. And we think of the word of God, this truth that it is, we are accountable to God.

[18:49] We will stand before him, and we must measure everything by his word. In John 7, 24, our Lord talks about judging righteous judgment. And you think of the picture in Amos, it talks about the plumb line, as in when the builder builds a building, you want to make sure it's straight up and down.

It's just right. And it compares the word of God to being like a plumb line. There's just no deviation. It has to be straight up and down. No measurement other than the truth of the word of God.

It's true. And we see of the message of God, of the truths of God. It's, this book is full of that. It talks about God's righteousness, of God's right way of living, of the judgment of God to come.

And the Lord calls us, his people, to be a people, distinct and separate and holy. It's a course for judgment, isn't it? Of trembling. That discernment that he calls for, the righteousness that he calls us to.

And we see of that word, it guides us to discernment, to have sound doctrine for one, for discrimination. Hey, what's right? What's wrong? Which way should I go?

[20:02] And that determination we need to make. It's the word of God. It's that plumb line. It tells us what's right and what's not right. And the Lord will bring judgment against sin. His word shows us that the judgment to come.

It tells how there's going to be the, the, the discerning, of the separating of joints and marrow, the thoughts and intents of the heart.

It's a deep judgment, isn't it? Think of God's judgment. Where was it fully poured out? In Christ. That his judgment was poured out at Calvary's hill. The whole full fury, full fury of the father's wrath against sin was born by Christ in our part, in his agony at the cross.

And think of sin was judged there. Our penalty paid in full. God's justice seen there at Calvary against man's sin, poured out on the spotless, perfect, sinless son of God.

And what a joy really for us to know that, that the judgment has been venged and we need not bear it if we'll trust the Savior to bear it for us.

[21:16] His undeserved loving kindness, his mercy extends towards us. So, there's, there's a twofold thing, isn't there? There's wrath and then there's mercy.

There's judgment and there's grace. And we can know God's judgment has been venged at the cross on Christ, on our behalf.

And we can think how the word of God, when we take its message seriously, it causes a trembling. Felix trembled. Of course, he trembled, but he didn't take action.

He trembled, but he said, oh, I'll put it off before I get right. But rather to be as the man in Isaiah 66 too, where the Lord says, to this man, will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.

We'll just take that seriously, that seriousness of sin and know that Christ has paid for it and trust him. Think of the treasure that is in this book that we hold in our hands.

[22:23] We can take it so flippantly to not acknowledge its life-giving power, its power-packed message of its sharpness and the penetrating effect.

Or didn't we to tremble, to think of the wonder of it, to hear and obey his word? God's judgment is called righteous and true. Romans 2 verses 5 and Romans 2 verse 2.

The fact is, brothers, sister, friends, yesterday, it tells us that we shall all stand and give an account. For believers, we shall all stand before the judgment scene of Christ.

And some think love is contrasted with judgment, but really the Bible joins them together. God's love answers his judgment at the cross, doesn't it? And Philippians 1, Paul tells, And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

So they're kind of linked together, love and judgment. Our judge brings loving correction. In 1 Peter 4, 17, it tells us, For the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

[23:27] The word judgment there is discipline. It's the context of God's refining. In the context there, God's refining process. We ought to take things seriously. Judgment begins at the house of God.

John Wesley once wrote, I'm a creature of a day passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit coming from God and returning to God, just hovering over the great gulf.

A few months from hence, I am no more seen. I drop into an unchangeable eternity. I want to know one thing, the way to heaven. God himself has condescended to teach me the way.

He has written it down in a book. Oh, give me that book at any price. Give me that book of God.

God's book tells of God's judgment, tells of God's love, tells of his mercy and grace.

Friends, eternity is looming and we're not to take such a truth carelessly because we're standing at the edge of forever. Are you ready for heaven?

[24:29] Thankfully, God's love avails for all who will believe. And where the fire has burnt when there's a bushfire, where the fire has burnt,

there's no need for fear because we're safe where we stand, where the fire has already been.

You think of that, the picture of Christ at the cross, that God's judgment was spent and poured out in full there. Our penalty was fully paid there. And if we can stand at the cross as it were and our trust is in Christ to be the payment, the saviour for us then, we have no need of fear because the judgment has already happened in Christ, hasn't it, where the fire has already been and where the fire has already passed, there is no danger.

So I urge you today, stand at the cross as it were to know Christ has paid my sin. My judgment has been paid. My destiny is determined as I've trusted Him.

and think, conscious of that judgment to come. We all will face that time of judgment, every man. It says that judgment is to come and it tells us the way to escape it.

I pray today that you will know Christ, that you do know Him. I'm not taking it for granted that everyone does necessarily, but one thing's for sure, Hebrews 9.27, and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

[25:53] Without Christ you will not escape. You will fall into His eternal never-ending punishment. It tells us it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Hebrews 10.31.

That's where we deserve our just desserts is to fall into the hands of the living God, but yet in His mercy He's extending that offer of grace.

He's extending that offer of pardon. Trust Him today. Have you allowed that sharp two-edged sword to enter your heart as it were, to pierce through all the barriers that we build up in our sin-hardened heart, to divide apart the soul and the spirit, to cut even into the very core of our being, the joints and marrow.

Have we let the Word of God examine our hearts, the thoughts of our hearts, the intents of our heart, to impart that grace to our heart? Peter gave the word when he preached.

He tells how he preaches of Christ crucified. And verse 37, Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

[27:10] And Peter said, Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. There was a message that pricked their heart.

It was the saving message. You've crucified, you've murdered the Prince of Life. You've crucified the Lord and Christ. And they were cut to the heart.

That two-edged sword penetrated and it pricked their heart. And of course, you see, they responded in faith. Stephen likewise made the call in Acts 7 and he appealed to them and he called them stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears.

He challenged them for always resisting the Holy Ghost, how they had betrayed and murdered the just one. And then, this is Acts 7, 54, when they heard, when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

Now, I hope you're not going to gnash on me with your teeth today but that's what they did to this fellow here, to Stephen. They gnashed on him with their teeth. They were cut to the heart.

[28:17] That two-edged sword we see in Acts 2 they were pricked in their heart. Here we see they were cut to the heart and while he beheld heaven, they attacked and stoned him.

Praise God that he has committed the work of judgment to the just one. That's John 8, 7. And think of John 12 it says of this word our Lord tells, he that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day.

So this is a book that gives us life. It's powerful but there's a sharpness to it. There's going to be a judgment and our Lord says my word is going to judge him on that last day.

We want to get right with God. We want to understand the way of salvation his word as we'll put our trust in him by faith by grace. We desperately need the truth don't we?

This world our neighbours need the truth. Walgum needs the truth and we know the word of truth is in our hands today. It's the word of God. We can trust it from cover to cover.

[29:28] It's authoritative. We know the devil is a liar but God has given us his word the word of truth. We have the truth. We must have his word. Peter also preached in Acts 5 that the Lord Jesus whom they had killed

and hung on a tree was alive from the dead and was exalted to be a prince and a saviour to give repentance and forgiveness of sins and it says their response and when they heard that when they heard that word the word of God they were cut again.

I like to Acts 7 they were cut there in Acts 5 33 they were cut to the heart and took counsel to slay them. So you see the opposite there some were pricked in their heart at Pentecost they trusted they believed others were cut to the heart as with Stephen they gnashed on him with their teeth as with Peter they wanted to take counsel to kill him.

When God's word is proclaimed it provokes something doesn't it? that sword that sharp sharp sword it will cut it will prick it will minister conviction when it's proclaimed you see hearts penetrated and changed some received and repented they trusted others rejected refused it and when God's word is heard it provokes a reaction you could say as some have put it kind of in a colloquial way people get sad glad or mad when the word of God is preached don't they?

They get sad they can get conviction they get glad when they receive the saviour in faith or they get mad they get cut to the heart and they react against it the sword the sword of the spirit it's called the word of God Ephesians 6 the sword pierces the sword discerns there's a separating of soul and spirit the joints and marrow the sword convicts some are cut to the heart trust others are cut to the heart and rage but no one remains neutral the word of God no one is neutral before the word of God and God God operates he's really the loving surgeon that wants to take away that cancer that is deep in our heart of sin he wants to take it away and we've got to let him operate as it were with that scalpel with this sharp two-edged sword and he's cutting edge it removes that stony heart of the flesh and he gives us a new heart he's the great heart surgeon isn't he truly he gives us a new heart and a new spirit and he removes the cancer of sin

God's life God's power enters in brothers and sisters our world stands in this dire condition ripe for coming judgment and every one of us will give an account have you seen before God your true and awful condition if you've yet to trust him the Bible talks about it being like a mirror you know sometimes we don't like looking well I speak for myself we don't always like looking in the mirror because you see oh there's some things that don't look how I want them to look like that with the word of God isn't it in James it says it's a mirror it's a mirror can we see ourselves in the mirror of God's word and see oh it kind of points out some of my faults and some of the things that are not how I'd like them to be and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God do you see that one day as it says our very being it's going to be fully exposed there's going to be no hiding of this or that everything's going to be wide open laid open exposed all will be revealed in his penetrating sight all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do there's going to be no hiding from God some of us can be good at hiding but no there's going to be no hiding there and you will meet

[33:37] God you'll have an encounter with God you'll come face to face with him and you'll have to answer to him are you ready for that day thank God if Christ is your advocate you'll be safe if Christ is the one who says I will stand in for him I've paid his penalty then that will be a glad day but for the Christless it will be an awful day the day of his wrath and it will be poured out with unrestrained fury and vengeance thanks be to God brother sister today you can take heart that this is the book of God it is full of God's life it's the salvation clearly clarified explained his message of life you've got God's power such that you can trust him and know the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believe it the gospel the power of it and yet there is a judgment but thanks be to God the judgment has been paid in Christ and you can know that of that judgment to come your sin has been dealt with 2,000 years back dealt with paid in full fully paid in that instant of time at the point of his salvation you've claimed it and by

God's word we can hear his voice may we have a new receptivity a new appreciation it says when they preach the word they receive the word don't we want to be receptive to the word of God to have a new appreciation for it for the word of God it's full of God's life full of God's power full of God's judgment it gives life to the dead it empowers the weak it convicts the guilty and it's God's love letter to us isn't it I know there was a time Julie and I were courting and I was some few

hundred kilometres away interstate while we were courting and I used to receive love letters from my wife my wife to be and it was a very precious thing to go to the letterbox oh she's written to me again and she used to put on the back of the envelope S-W-A-L-K who knows what that means sealed with a loving kiss yeah and she put perfume on it

I won't labour it too much because she's going red but you think of the love letters this is God's love letter don't we want to treasure it as such his letter of love the love letter of God to us he's written it for you may we heed it have you let it pierce your heart when it does its work sometimes oh ouch that hurts sometimes doesn't it when I read this book I look in the mirror I don't really like what I see it's revealing my state my condition my need of him but it should prompt us to want his will to respond in faith and by this word we're saved by his word we're sanctified by his word we'll be judged but if Christ has paid for your sin a judgment has already been paid will you meet the word the Lord Jesus he's the word isn't he he's the full embodiment as himself the logos will you meet the word as your savior today or as your judge tomorrow

I pray that you might trust him and know his saving grace today let us pray Lord we thank you for your word help us Lord to treasure it to have a fresh appreciation of it to receive it Lord to act upon it not just to be hearers but do us of it but we'll think of the life that you've given the saving eternal life that is in Christ Lord for the power of your gospel to energize us to be effectual to be active that your word won't be something we'll just listen to but we'll live it out it'll be real for us in our lives and Lord help us we pray to be mindful of the judgment to come that we'll want to walk right with you Lord we'll want to tell others how they can be safe from the judgment to come by putting their faith and trust in you Lord we thank you for your precious love and your precious word minister we pray in every family every heart every home be glorified in this church we pray in Jesus name Amen Amen Amen.