

The Anatomy Of The Message - part 3

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[0 : 00] What a day to gather together, to rejoice with the saints. He was crucified, He was buried, and He is risen.

It is a privilege each and every time that we can gather in this place. We do not come together to get our warm, fuzzy feels. We do not gather out of a blind religious devotion to ourselves or some relic.

We gather because there is a God in heaven who has created each one of us and loves each one of us despite our faults. We are sinners.

We have done and continue to do wrong things that dishonor God. We act in ways that God never intended for us to act. We have lied.

We have stolen from other people. We have used our mouths to curse at people, to bring people down, to hate them.

[1 : 08] We have lusted after people in our minds. We have done horrible things. Over and over and over again, we have offended and dishonored the one in whose image we are made.

Yet, there is a God in heaven who though we have offended Him and disgraced Him and dishonored Him, loves us to the point of sending His only Son to take the punishment we deserve for our wrongdoing.

Romans 6.23 says, The wages of sin is death. We gather because He loves us.

We love Him back. And this is an opportunity that we have to express that to Him. For the past couple of weeks that we've been together, we've looked at the first sermon preached in church history.

It happened on the day known as Pentecost on the Jewish calendar, roughly 50 days after Passover. It was delivered by a likely uneducated fisherman from Galilee who at the time that Jesus was arrested and being physically abused, adamantly denied that He knew who Jesus was on three separate occasions.

[2 : 48] Think about that. You want to talk about a God of love, a God of redemption, a God of forgiveness. This man, Peter, was chosen by God to do a tremendous assignment.

In the night that, from a human perspective, he could have maybe done something about what was going down. He could have at least admitted that he knew God's only Son.

And he wanted nothing to do with it. A mere few hours after he had told Jesus, you don't understand who I am. I am committed to you to prison and to death.

That man. That man. The one who thought he was committed to Jesus and denied him. God is using in a powerful way in this text in Acts 2.

So let's go to Acts 2 verses 14 through 36. This is part three of the anatomy of the message.

[4 : 05] The final part. We finish it today. Acts 2 verse 14. But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them. Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give ear to my words.

For these people are not drunk as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel.

And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even on my male servants and female servants, in those days I will pour out my spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

[5 : 22] Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.

This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken.

Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced. My flesh also will dwell in hope, for you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One see corruption.

You have made known to me the paths of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day.

[6 : 40] Being therefore a prophet in knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades nor did his flesh see corruption.

This Jesus God raised up and of that we all are witnesses, being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. But all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Wow. Just two months prior, he was denying Jesus and now he is putting him forth as the one that had done many signs and wonders in the midst of these people who called for him to be crucified, whom God raised up from the dead and made Lord and Christ for all.

Last couple weeks, we've looked as we've been breaking down the anatomy of the message. The first several verses we looked at, we saw that there was prophecy fulfilled.

[8 : 37] What took place on the day of Pentecost was an amazing event. And one thing that made it truly special was that it was part of a fulfillment of prophecy. You had these 120 or so people that were gathering together, they were praying together, they were seeking God together.

And then accompanied by a sound like a mighty wind, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. He indwells them and enables them to start witnessing and start testifying of the mighty works of God in however many languages were present by the people who were in Jerusalem.

Keeping in mind, the day of Pentecost was a holy day. And in Jerusalem itself, there was about 180,000, 200,000 people living there. And now with Pentecost, there was probably more people who'd come in.

So I would say a safe estimate, maybe three quarters of a million to a million people in Jerusalem. And that might be a little conservative. It may have been more. And you've got people from all over the Roman Empire coming in to worship.

That's why they're there for Pentecost to worship. And now God enables these disciples, 120 or so people, to go out and start talking about the mighty works that God has done in the languages, in the mother tongue of the people who were there.

[10 : 10] And as we talked about a few weeks ago, it was like a dozen or so languages, at least, that are being represented.

And these people are hearing them clearly. And what was the natural explanation? Oh, they're drunk. Yeah. Yeah, because drunk people just start speaking languages that are completely coherent.

I can assure you, and some of you can attest to, when you're around a drunk person, coherency does not exist in that conversation. And Peter's saying, they're not drunk.

What you're witnessing, what he's telling the crowd, what you're witnessing is a partial fulfillment of prophecy. And then he goes on, he quotes Joel chapter 2, part of Joel 2.

And it's a partial fulfillment. And as the events of Pentecost initiate the last days through the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on man.

[11 : 12] The Holy Spirit's arrival introduced new revelation to God's people through visions and dreams, which would become the written New Testament. So it was something that happened for a short period of time.

It does not continue today. We have the completed canon. And the Holy Spirit's arrival also enabled the disciples to boldly proclaim the gospel in light of Old Testament prophecies, which pointed to Jesus.

And as you can see through Peter's handling of Old Testament text in preaching about Jesus. The sheer number of prophecies that are made and fulfilled concerning Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection it's staggering.

Hundreds and hundreds of prophecies fulfilled just through the birth and life of Christ alone. And it points to the fact that he is a particularly special individual in history.

And that lays the groundwork on which Jesus is then the person that is proclaimed. Jesus is the one who performed the mighty works. There are many verses that can be looked at through the gospel accounts that show the mighty works that Jesus did, which attested to him being the Messiah, being sent by God.

[12 : 35] He was crucified. This Jesus, who God attested to being someone special, was delivered up to be crucified by lawless men. But it wasn't done apart from God's plan.

God intended that to happen. So the crucifixion part itself is a fulfillment of prophecy. Then he was raised to life.

We looked at a passage in 1 Corinthians 15, or chapter 15, that over 500 people saw the risen Jesus with their own two eyes.

At least 24% of them were present when Peter preached. And this Jesus, who performed mighty works, was crucified by lawless men, and raised to life by God, is Lord and Christ.

The emphasis in the passage is that despite appearances, God's view of the matter was very different. The people as a whole believed Jesus was a criminal, who received what he deserved.

[13 : 46] But God made him both Lord and Christ, just as the angels announced from the very beginning in Luke 2.11, For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

There's no more important fact about Jesus to know than that he is Lord and Christ. As Christ, he is the one resurrected by God and who offers salvation to all who call on him.

And as Lord, he is the sovereign ruler over all matters, over all things. There's nothing that takes place. There's nothing that we encounter or endure or that happens on this earth apart from his full knowledge and allowing it to happen.

There are people who take issue of that. They say, well, if he's such a loving God, why would he allow these things to take place?

And I think today, I think that that deserves an answer for sure. But I'd like to answer it with a question.

[15 : 11] Does the fact that he sent his only son to the cross to bear the penalty for our sin not indicative enough of the fact that he's a loving God?

I mean, how many people would send their only child to die in the place of other people, wicked individuals?

God loves us. And he's sovereign. And he is Lord. And finally, we come to verses 36 through 41.

The plea for redemption. Let's pick up verse 36. I know we already read it. But all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[16 : 33] For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. and with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them saying, save yourself from this crooked generation.

So those who received his word were baptized and there were added that day about 3,000 souls. The sermon preached by Peter had its intended effect.

We're told that the people were cut to the heart. that means they were emotionally distressed. They were greatly troubled. Basically, when the people realized how stubborn and foolish they had been, they were convicted and remorseful.

people. And the fact that this group of people, many of which had witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus almost two months prior to this sermon being preached, were feeling convicted and remorseful as a testimony to the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit.

In John 16, Jesus told his disciples that a work the Holy Spirit was to do was to bring conviction to the people. And when he comes, Jesus says, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

[18:02] Concerning sin because they do not believe in me. Concerning righteousness because I go to the Father and you will see me no longer. And concerning judgment because the ruler of this world is judged.

That's a lot to unpack in just those three verses. That's a whole other sermon. And since we have no Awana or youth group or FBI and I know you're not hungry, I'm just kidding, I'll save it for another day.

But the Holy Spirit's work is to convict people of their sin, of the need for righteousness, of the fact that there is judgment yet to come.

the question of what shall we do brings to light the desperation that the people were feeling.

If the Jews had crucified their Messiah, what was left for them to do? The Messiah whom they've waited for hundreds of years, they knew was coming.

[19:11] And if they've crucified him, what next? we messed up. We had one shot and it's done. Well, it's not.

Peter tells them, repent and be baptized. Peter's been straightforward with the people up to this point. He told them bluntly that they were the ones who witnessed the mighty works that Jesus had done.

They were the ones who called for him to be put to death. Now he tells them pointedly, they must repent and be baptized. I want to break that down, that two-part command that's given there.

First, Peter tells the crowd who is listening that they must repent. The word in Greek has a literal meaning of change of mindset. That is reversing the direction of your life.

When we talk about repentance, you're walking and living your life in one way, one direction. It's all about me. It's all about what I want. It's all about my pleasures, my lust, what makes me happy, what brings me happiness and all that.

[20:14] Repentance is realizing that it's not about me or Naya, Gwendolyn, Colleen. It's turning and realizing that God is calling us a different way to a different purpose with a different view.

Realizing that 1 Corinthians 10:31, whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 5:9, that whether we're at home or away, we seek to please Him.

It's not about me, it's about Him. So repenting, you're changing your mind. Now how am I pleasing God? How am I walking in obedience? What is it He calls me to do? What is it He desires me to do? How do I show God's love? How do I receive God's love? How do I make God's love known to all people? That is what repentance is. It's going from walking towards death to walking towards and in light in life.

And He's telling them, repent, change your mind. It's a change of mind and actions where we cease our approval of wickedness and our justification of bad behavior.

[21:27] You want to talk about one thing that really irks me is how much this society and our culture in our world today, we are seeking to justify bad behavior by people.

Oh, well, they didn't know better. They weren't brought up to know better. Or they have this disability. Or they have this problem.

Or illness. illness. And we've started inventing things that are then justification for behavior that is wrong.

By and large, most of that is wrong. Most of that does not add up.

Yeah. there can be people who have a genuine disability and who have a genuine problem. But a lot of what is being diagnosed and pushed out there is not genuine.

[22:41] Or at least it's being relabeled from sin to something else. We need to stop justifying bad behavior.

Now, I'm not going to go in more on that. But repentance is reorienting our lives from focusing on ourselves to directing our focus toward the Lord.

In the case of this audience that Peter is speaking to, they needed to change their mind about Jesus being a run-of-the-mill criminal deserving of death and believe that he is indeed Lord and Christ.

In the case of anyone here today or listening online, it's the need for you to change your mind about Jesus being another religious figure that Christians gather to worship and believe that he is indeed Lord and Christ and it's the expression of God's love toward you.

Romans 5.8 says, but God shows his love for us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. And in John 3.17, for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

[23 : 53] Romans 10.13, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Repent.

repent and be baptized. I don't think I'm ready to go on that.

If you're here, I've got to ask you a question. It's real. the most important question that you're going to be asked today. I believe probably the most important question you're going to be asked, period. Are you saved? Here I am talking about repentance. Here I am talking about the first sermon preached in church history.

And that sermon, at the core of it, the core application of that sermon is repent and be baptized.

And I've gone on about repentance, about living our life for ourselves to living our life for God, knowing that we're walking towards death and hopelessness.

[25 : 10] What does seeking our happiness bring? What does seeking our own joy bring? What is it when we put ourselves at the center of our lives, what does that look like?

Look at the news. Look at the media. Look at social media. I'm not talking about all the memes and the cute puppy dog videos and all that stuff.

Look at people who actually engage with other people. And what do you see? You see hate, disrespect.

You see violence, murder, drugs. You see hopelessness, crooked politicians, governments that you can't trust, hopeless situations, left and right, and people don't know how to deal with it because it's all about me.

It's all about my happiness. It doesn't matter about anyone else. It's all about what I want. It doesn't matter about anyone else. Oh, and what I want also needs to be what you want.

[26 : 38] Or at least you can't speak against what I want. Because if you speak against what I want, you're a hateful person. You're a, enter, word, phobic.

phobic. And you put any word there, right? I mean, just go right down through the dictionary. Put phobic at the end of every word and it probably exists or will soon.

You can't disagree with people or else you're a hateful person. No. The hateful thing would be to let you continue to think that way.

without letting you know that there's a God who loves you and who died for you and who wants better for you than what this world is offering you, than what you think you're finding in this world.

As Jesus told Nicodemus must happen in John 3, you must be born again. Do you have new life through a genuine repentance and belief that Jesus is Lord and Christ? Have you called on Jesus to save you?

[27 : 56] If not, I appeal to you right now, do not ignore the plea from Holy Scripture to repent and call on Jesus for salvation.

We are told that the day of judgment will come for every man and every woman to stand before God and give an account of their life, what they have done, ultimately the sins that they have committed. And anyone's name not recorded in the book of life will spend their eternity in the lake of fire atoning for their own sin. termed for them. They haven't called on Jesus to save them.

The one who already paid the price and offers the free gift of salvation to those who call on him. But if you have repented and called on Jesus Christ to save you, praise the Lord.

That is the first step of the rest of your life. Because repentance is not a one-time event. Rather, it's a series of events that continue to take place until you're called to your heavenly home.

[29 : 00] I wish I could say that my decision to trust Jesus was enough of my life. That I was perfect ever since then.

I'm not. I still fail and fall short and deny Jesus when I choose myself over what God says to do.

When I'm choosing sin in my life or I'm putting something that I feel that I must have that is greater than Christ, I'm falling short still.

And I need to repent from that. If I'm lying or stealing or lusting, that's not perfection.

We need to repent from that. Still, each day, we need to confess our sins. God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[30 : 07] It's a lifelong process. And the next step in a life of obedience to Jesus is to be baptized. Unfortunately, for many years, there have been a misunderstanding about these commands given by Peter and found in other portions of the Bible, repent and be baptized.

Many groups use these verses to teach that baptism is essential to salvation, that without it, you can't be saved. But the reality is that they're two separate matters. The Apostle Paul made a distinction between salvation and baptism, indicating that the gospel is what saves.

The gospel being the good news about Jesus being Lord and Christ. The one who died for your sins and the one in whom you must believe to be saved. He says in 1 Corinthians 1, 17 and 18, For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Though repentance and baptism go together in Acts, baptism is an act of obedience. It is an indicator of what you have believed and that you have called on Jesus for salvation. When Peter told the Jews to be baptized, it was an act of public proclamation that an individual believed that Jesus is the Christ and boldly proclaimed that they were following him.

[31 : 48] Which, by the way, if you haven't figured it out, Jesus wasn't really a popular figure with the people who were in power.

That's why he was crucified. And so to identify with him is to basically put your life on the line. So baptism was a pretty big deal in those days.

It still is a big deal because we're making a public proclamation. We're telling people, I believe Jesus is Lord in Christ and I'm following him.

And if you've been saved, have you been baptized? If not, what's preventing you from making that proclamation of faith public knowledge? We have a baptismal, right?

So many churches have baptismals. You can do it in the church. We can do it at a pool. We can do it at a lake. If you dare, we can go to Old Orchard Beach in the middle of summer.

[32 : 57] You can proclaim Christ before hundreds of people. Don't put it off. If you have any questions or interest in being baptized, please get a hold of me after service today.

It doesn't have to be today, but you can call tomorrow like tomorrow or send an email or give it some thought. Those types of things. But talk to me. The next part in the section is to heed the call. So repent and be baptized. Heed the call. Verse 39. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord God calls to himself.

Please take note of who Peter says this promise of salvation is for. It's for you. He's talking to that crowd. It's for you. It's for your children. And it's for all who are far off.

That term, all who are far off, we can understand that as being probably referring to Gentiles. And certainly by the time Acts 10 comes along, it is Gentiles.

[34 : 05] You might be thinking, what the heck's a Gentile? Well, a Gentile is just simply someone who is not a Jew. You've got Jews and Gentiles, if you put it that way.

And so Peter's saying, this promise is for everybody. It's not limited to a select group of people. It's for all who hear the message.

The promise of the Christ came to and through the Jewish people, but it's not limited only to the Jewish people. It's offered to all. But the offering of salvation to all does not mean that all people are saved.

There is a requirement. Remember, you must repent. Universalism is one of those teachings that kind of snuck in the back door of some Christian theologies and thought that, oh, well, all people are saved.

No, all people are not saved. You must repent. Only those who repent and call on Jesus for salvation will benefit from the offer.

[35 : 12] Only those who, through faith, believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and call on him for salvation will be saved. Only those who recognize that they are a sinner who has offended their holy creator, but believes that their sin is forgiven through the punishment that Jesus endured

on the cross and that he rose again on the third day will be saved.

Do not allow this call to go in one ear and out the other. be saved today. The words of the Apostle Paul from 2 Corinthians 5, verse 20 through 6, verse 2 are the only appropriate words that I can think of regarding this.

So I'd like to read that to you. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 20, through chapter 6, verse 2. It's only like three verses. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.

We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake, he made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him, Jesus, we might become the righteousness of God.

Working together with him, then we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, in a favorable time, I listened to you, and in a day of salvation, I have helped you.

[36 : 43] Behold, now is the favorable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Heed the call of God to repentance.

Psalms 95, verse 7 and 8, for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.

Heed the call. Repent and be baptized. And join with fellow believers. The gospel call is a call for life change.

It's not merely an intellectual acknowledgement of Jesus as the Christ. Peter strongly appeals to the people to save yourselves from this crooked generation in Acts 2.39.

This statement is not contradicting his previous words of needing to repent in the name of Jesus.

Rather, this statement is a call for the people to come out from among the crooked generation who lives according to their sin and in direct opposition to Jesus.

[37 : 52] Those who want to be saved from the judgment of God need to distance themselves from their generation and identify with Jesus and his cause. We cannot call on Jesus for salvation and continue to live in our sin, continue to be defined by our sin, to continue to chase after the things of the world.

Repentance requires a change in our lives. Paul writes in Galatians chapter 1 verses 3 and 4, Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father.

We are called and Christ was given to deliver us from this world and the sins in it. Over and over again throughout the New Testament there are directives for Christians to put off their old sinful ways and to put on the righteousness that is found in Christ.

And in Acts 2.41 we see that about 3,000 people were baptized and were added to those who believed in and were followers of Jesus. That is a lot of people.

3,000 people. But as I mentioned earlier if you consider that there were about 200,000 living in Jerusalem at the time you're looking at about 1.5% of the total population there.

[39 : 25] So maybe not as many considering it was probably inflated to about a million even less of a percentage. How many people I've wondered this. How many people have heard this message?

We're there to hear this message from Peter. How many people have heard that message to repent and be baptized? Eric Boggs.

I know what you do. How many people are here? 72. 72. 72. So at least 72 people here have heard the message to repent and be baptized.

What are you going to do with that message? What are you going to do with that call? these 3,000 that responded what they did and as we'll see next week they met together regularly for the purpose of building one another up because we live in this world.

We may be called away from the things of this world but we still need to live in and engage with it. And so we need a support structure. We need to join with fellow believers.

[40 : 59] We need all the encouragement that we can get and the help the phone calls the text messages whatever to help get us through. We have talking about earlier about justifying sin and justifying behaviors.

There's one that's particularly sensitive to me for whatever reason. I don't fully know. I suspect I know but I don't know for sure. But it's people who are defined as alcoholics and have alcoholism. And I think the people who come out of that it's such a fight because they have a predisposition to it. They have an inclination to drinking.

And that's what sin sin as a whole no matter what it is whether it's alcohol, pornography, drugs, whatever. There's an inclination. The reason why people struggle with it and the reason why they're

called addictions and people are called addicts is because they have a struggle and they have an inclination toward that sin and that problem.

And so in coming to Christ you're calling on Him for salvation and He wants to deliver you from this present evil age but it's not easy. And that's why we need to gather together.

[42 : 36] A church is not about coming here as a holy individual and having your act together. Man, for whatever reason that has been the image that church has been given for a long time.

That the people who sit in the pews are holier than thou and they are judgmental and they're looking down on society. And we can't be that because we came out of that and we still struggle with those things, those issues, those problems, the things of this world.

And why do we meet and gather together? Why does whoever wrote Hebrews, I almost tipped my hand on who I thought wrote Hebrews, why is it in Hebrews 10 verse 25 we're told to not forsake the assembling of yourselves together.

So we can encourage each other. So we can come alongside of each other. So somebody who walks through this door, who for 30 plus years of their life, all but maybe three days they've ended in a drunken stupor can come through this door, can be saved and know they have a support system of people here who love and care about them and are not going to judge them.

That's why we get together. And I know I'm getting ahead of myself because I said we're going to talk about it next week. but it's the reality what the church is about, why we gather together, why we're encouraging each other and loving each other because we still have to live in and engage in this world.

[44 : 13] We still have to deal with the sin nature that we have dealt with our entire lives. Let's pray. God, gracious Father, thank you for the time to gather this morning, the time to encourage one another and to express our love and our commitment to you.

Thank you for Jesus who was crucified and is risen again to pay the penalty for our sins and to grant us hope. in a hopeless world, you desire to pour your love out on us and you have.

Pray, Lord, anyone here today listening at home that has not repented of their sin, who has not called on you for salvation would do so.

It's not about power. It's not about what we gain. The church doesn't become more powerful because of people calling on you and their weakness. But Lord, their souls saved, they're delivered from judgment, they're assured that their sin is paid for.

I pray that they will not ignore your calling. You're calling them to repentance, Lord. Help that not go in one ear and out the other. Help their heart not to be hardened.

[45 : 47] For your glory, we're here today and we live in this world. Help our weakness, Lord. I pray and beg you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen.