

# God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, good morning, everyone. Thank you for that New Year's good morning. All right. I know you guys are feeling a little less energized. There's no coffee for you.
- So I was told to really pump it up this morning. So we're going to preach on hell. All right. We're going to raise up the temperature. How's that sound? All right. Please take out your Bibles to Romans chapter one. Romans chapter one. In case you're new or visiting, my name is BK. I have the pleasure of serving as one of the pastors here.
- Just before we get into this text, so we're going to be in Romans one, 18 to 32. And in case you are unfamiliar with that text, that is probably one of the most, how would I say it? Disliked text in scripture, especially for today's modern ears, because we're going to hear some things that we don't want to hear. So I'm going to take some time. I know some of you have mentioned that you couldn't wait till we get into this text because you wanted to learn and understand it. Dave, come on. But before I do, I wanted to tell you about a book that I'd like to plug for you. I would say this is probably one of the greatest books that I've ever read. We've got a couple of copies at the back. It's an interesting story. It's called The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert. Have you guys heard of Rosaria Butterfield by any stretch of the imagination? A few of you.
- Let me just tell you a little bit about Rosaria. Rosaria started her journey as a lesbian professor of English and literature at the University of Syracuse University, which is located in northern New York. That is a massive university. It is a massive research university. And she was tenured there by the tender age of in her mid-30s, which if you know anything about academia is quite a journey or quite an accomplishment. But what's really interesting about this book that I really loved, it's not only is it a testimony of someone, and it's not just because they were living a homosexual background. This is a woman who lived quite happy. When the Lord confronted her, she actually had a happy life. She was doing really fine, really loved what was transpiring in her life. And this event in the city happened. And it turned out this Christian event happened.
- A lot of people would write in. They did not want to support it. It was this Christian. And she wrote, I believe, if I remember correctly, she writes this article. And a lot of people write condemning her. But there was one pastor who met with her. And her journey is, I don't know if it's over months or years, of just meeting with this Christian family every single week for an extended period of time. So not only is it a story of hospitality, but how do we open our lives and our homes to people, but how we take the time to answer deep-rooted questions that people might have.
- [ 3 : 2 3 ] So not only is it a great book, but it's also one of the most theologically rich books I've ever read. When she goes through it, she's looking at scripture and what was going on. And I found it probably one of the most refreshing books I've ever read. So we've got about five copies. There's a few more on order. We're selling them for \$10. That is half the price that they're on Amazon. I'd recommend everyone get a copy who is able to read because it's going to challenge you on so many different things that I really believe as believers we need to grow in. Just exemplifying love to people who think and live quite differently than us. How to open up our homes and how to take the time to answer some of life's deepest questions from someone who has been thinking quite a bit about those things.

So before I go any further, let me just pray. Let's just dig into God and just see what he has for us today. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just ask that you would... Father, I pray that everyone here would grab this book and learn about some of these truths that so confront us. Sometimes we have so many questions, we don't even have the time to seek the answers. But I am so glad that Rosaria has taken the time to share with us this testimony and share with us the deepest questions of life that she had at that time and what was really going on in her head. And it helps us just even understanding this culture that we live in. Father, just as we just are introduced to this text of Romans 1, 18 to 32, it is an overwhelming text. It is a convicting text. It is a text which is essentially the diagnosis of the human heart, the human condition. It's a text that was written 2,000 years ago by the Apostle Paul.

We could swear he wrote this letter to us today in our culture, oh Father. So Father, as we just come, I pray that my voice would be clear and just the arguments that I have would be understandable and we truly come to not only hear this text but appreciate this text and love this text for what it reveals about us and about you and about your provision for us, oh God.

We ask these things in your most holy and precious name. Amen. If you could take a look at your bulletins. If you take a look at your bulletins, you will see there is a handout. Everyone have that extra handout that's in there? Now if you weren't here back in September, I started this practice of handing out an outline of the text that I'm going to be preaching on. And the outline is called a block diagram of the text. The words you're looking there are the exact same words that are in the Bible that we have. But you're going to see how I organize the text when I read it and study it. And it helps connect certain ideas. You'll see I start to line up certain thoughts so you see that the patterns emerge and those type of things. So anyhow, one of the things when we started this is I wanted to introduce you to this type of Bible study method.

And I want you to use this to look at the flow of the arguments as we go through. But I really believe it will help you in understanding God's Word. I don't want God's Word to be a mystery.

[ 7 : 23 ] I was blessed last week. A non-Christian friend of mine came over to Joe's church to hear me preach. And they made the comment that they just didn't know the story, that there was a story in the Bible.

And how this one story, I just preached from 1 Timothy, and how that related to the whole overarching. And she was just fascinated by this idea that the Bible wasn't just a bunch of holy sayings. But there was a story within the story of God's redemptive purposes. So I want you to be able to see that with you as I go. So my prayer is this will augment your time. So Ryan's got a slide that's going to be up last semester, I guess, from September, December, we've been in the introduction.

So now we're moving over to the section of what's called the doctrinal concerns. I'd probably rename that the doctrinal teachings. And we're now starting under man's problem, which is found in A. So that's where we are in the text or the flow of Romans. So as you know, the main thesis or what we've been learning up to here, Paul's theme is found in Romans 1, 16, 17. I'll just read that for you. And you please have your Bibles. You can read along with me. But this is Paul's reason. This is Paul's passion is to preach the gospel, right? This is his glory. He says, for I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

For it is the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith as it is written. The righteous shall live by faith. As I said, this isn't just the theme or the main thesis of this book. It's actually the theme thesis of our entire Bible. In fact, it's the greatest news that man can ever know that Jesus Christ, that God provides us the righteousness of his son. So he's given us this great sweet news. And now he's transitioning to a part of the passage of why we need this sweet news.

I was thinking about this. And I was thinking about the analogy of imagining a doctor shows up at your door and it's your doctor, your doctor. And it's kind of odd that he or she would happen to show up at your door. And it just demonstrates that they really care for you. And the doctor says, listen, I have this pill and I need you to take this pill. It is incredible. It is the product of the greatest scientific minds of our generation. But they have found the total and complete cure for cancer. That if you take this pill, never in your life will you have any of your cells corrupted by any cancerous cells. There'll be no chemo. There's no radiation. At the end, after you swallow this pill, you will have a clean bill of health. All you have to do is swallow it. That's it. Now the question you might be asking yourself is, do I really have this cancer? And the doctor simply says, I wouldn't be here at your door unless I had a very good reason to be here with this medicine. But yes, you might not feel it now. You may have years to go, but you do have cancer and it will eventually be terminal.

[ 11 : 39 ] Let me ask you all a question. Would you take the pill? Just on the basis of that alone?

Rick, yes. Come on, most of us are going to reach for that pill, right? We all know someone, if not ourselves, who've had some bout of cancer. Some of us have lost loved ones to cancer. We know it is a wicked, horrible disease. And it's not easy. Like just the story of my mother started one way back in 2010 and it pops up in her lungs years later, right? It just, it's a wicked, wicked disease.

Now before you reach out and take that pill, the doctor does say, there is kind of a side effect. And that side effect is, it changes who you are. It changes who you are. And you're asking, what do you mean? Of course it will change me. It will make me better. But the doctor says, well, it's going to change more than that. You see, you are who you are partly because of the cancer. Because your mom and dad had this cancer and they passed this cancer on to you. And this disease has been growing and manifesting. And it affects what you like, what you don't like. It affects your personality. It affects your disposition. Your desires. Even the foods that you taste. Your attitudes. Your outlook on the world.

You think you're seeing the world perfectly correctly. But because of this cancer that has been affecting your, your, your, your cells, even your eyes, what you think you see is true is not going to be any more. So the doctor says this pill, it'll change your disposition. It'll, it'll change your desires, your, your personality, your interest, your tastes.

Even your taste might change that you might even dress differently. You will talk differently. It might even affect the music that you listen to. It may even affect the friends that you once have. It'll change the relationship with your spouse. It'll change the relationships with your parents, your, your children. It may even change what you do for a living in the house that you live in.

[ 14 : 15 ] And it may even change how you look at money. Do you still want to take this pill?

You see, the text that I just read in Romans 1, 16, 17 is the promise of that pill. It's the promise that if you take this pill, if you take the righteousness of Jesus Christ, you'll be spiritually cleansed for eternity. That if you accept God's righteousness by faith, you will be saved. Better yet, you will be rescued from terminal spiritual death.

The next part of the text that we are going to be looking at answers the simple question, can I really be that sick? Do I really need the pill?

And that's what you might be asking. The doctor's sitting there and I have this pill for you. Do I really have cancer? Am I really that sick? Because what is going through your mind when you hear about these side effects is, do I really want to change? Do I need to change?

The reality is, even people with obvious signs of cancer will ask this question. Listen, doctor, I feel great. In fact, I'm so smart, I can beat this cancer on my own.

[ 16 : 00 ] Like, you don't even know how healthy I am. Come on into the house. See that machine that's on my counter. That's the juicer 5000. All right? That's the juicer 5000. I literally drink over 400 oranges a day. All right? You want to talk to me about vitamins, doctors? I'm the top of my very own multi-level marketing pyramid. That's how many I have. Like, I'm taking vitamins all day long.

You want to talk essential oils? There is not a smell I do not have. There is not an oil I do not rub. Right? Even when I check the oil in my car, I make sure, you know, just, I want to make sure I cover every oil. You want to talk about working out? I do weights in the morning and cardio in the evening. Man, I even fast regularly and you don't want to be around here when I do my monthly cleanses. Can this cancer really be fatal to me? At that point, you look at the doctor.

Do you want the doctor to tell you the truth? If the doctor shows up and says he's got a pill, he tells you, he tells you, you have cancer. Are you going to ask, are you really right?

Do you, do I really have it? Do I really need it? Can I do it on my own?

See, the reality is, the text that we are looking at is the diagnosis, the detailed diagnosis of who we are. And the fact of the matter is, mankind hates this diagnosis. Mankind desperately wants to believe they are cancer free. When that doctor shows up the pill, you are going to go through your house. You're going to try to demonstrate that you are healthy and you can beat it.

[ 18 : 26 ] But here in this text, we have the Apostle Paul speaking for God about our spiritual condition. I will warn you, there is perhaps no more hated text in all of Scripture, and perhaps no more text that is offensive to today's modern reader than this text. Let's read it together, beginning in Romans 1, verse 18.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived even since the creation of the world and the things that have been made. So they, being mankind, are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. For they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Mankind, claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal men and birds and animals and creeping things.

Note the therefore in verse 24. Therefore, because of all these things, God gave them up in their lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another. Men committing shameless acts with men in receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God,

God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, evil, covetousness, and malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. It is hard to believe that these words that were written over 2,000 years ago, is it not?

In many ways, it describes perfectly where our culture is today. There is no God and any sort of joy that I may want to desire sexually or physically is what I can do. Let's be honest, there's hard words here. The wrath of God.

[ 23 : 02 ] I don't think there's a person in the world that wants to face the wrath of God.

It says that we are without excuse. It means no reasons that we would have to justify ourselves. Questions that come up is what is ungodliness? What is unrighteousness? What is the truth that we exchange a lie for? We read this text and there's a clear judgment and condemnation about homosexuality.

Why? Why does Paul talk about that? But before people get too caught up in that, there's also envy, deceit, gossip, slander, faithless, heartless, ruthless, insolence, haughty, boastful.

We are called foolish, faithless, heartless, and we're called ruthless. It's brutal.

You want to fight this diagnosis. You want to fight it. With every fiber of your being, you are going to search and seek out a reason to prove to yourself that this cancer is not in you. That is man.

[ 24 : 42 ] They don't want this. They don't want this. But if for a moment that you could be rational, clear-headed, dare I say humble, and take stock of your life right here, right now, you will note that you have a disease. You know in the core of your being, things are not as they should be. There's a few reasons, and I'm going to give you a few reasons. Some of you, well, we'll pass it off as, I may have cancer, but my cancer is not as bad as that cancer. Like, man, that cancer is fatal. I can live with mine. You know, I just know I can just go into a few radiations, and

I'm going to be okay. You know, my marriage may not be perfect, but I'm going to tell you, it's a whole world better than my brothers, right? My kids, they're not fooling around with fentanyl, or those other serious drugs that I know of. Perhaps you've made other types of excuses to justify this cancer. But deep inside of you, you know there is something sick that is growing inside of you.

For others, some of you will say, I have no trouble understanding that I am broken or I am sick. But you still say, I can fix it. I can mend it. I can eat enough oranges that I can beat this.

I can move my life forward in a way that I want to. And the truth is, you've actually been saying this for years, if not decades. You think you're moving forward, but you're really at the same place that you started. The same disappointments in life, the same brokenness in life, and the same disease from life. And as much as you think you've changed over these 30 years, you are not. And in fact, when time was your friend, you now see time as your enemy. The fact is, you recognize that life isn't getting more easier. In fact, it's getting more complicated. Maybe you accept all that the doctor tells you. Maybe you see it, but you do not see it so much in yourself, but you see it in everyone else, right? You see it in the news. You see this imagery of war, people being hurt.

Perhaps you see it in East Vancouver when you drive through and you witness the horrors of homelessness, and you find it overwhelming. You really don't want to because you know you can't cope with it. You find yourself anxious. You're overwhelmed. You do not understand what is going on in this world, and it disturbs you. So you know there's something sick and broken there.

[ 28 : 30 ] If you were with us this summer, Matt King, a counselor, or this fall, he made this statement when he preached, and he says it's almost the first time in this world's history that those who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and those who do not know God can all agree that this world isn't really messed up. And then perhaps you're the person who's here that you do admit that there is evil, there is vileness, and there is sickness in this world. And the reason you can say so with such confidence is because it has touched you. You have either been hurt or you were a part of that evil.

And over you there is a sense of shame. You wonder because you were a part of that system of evil and darkness. Can I really come back? Can God truly forgive me? You've seen your disease affect your spouse.

You've seen your disease affect your kids, and you feel helpless. And you start to think that maybe my spouse and my children would be better off without me. Maybe I do deserve the hurt and shame that I experienced because I have done wrong. Nobody can understand the wrong or the shame that I feel.

And I don't believe I can ever be forgiven. You just admit to yourself you deserve the cancer, and you'll just deal with that as it comes.

If I could give you some God encouraging witness, is that the first step to healing is actually hearing the diagnosis.

[ 30 : 38 ] To get better, you need to hear what needs to be fixed, what needs to be cured. This is the wonderful thing about the diagnosis that God gives us.

God knows us. Do you get that? When a doctor comes to you and he gives that diagnosis, he knows your body. He's ran the tests. Every single one of them. He knows how every cell is working.

He knows how your lungs are feeling. He's got everything. And he's got it all before you.

They care for us that they were willing to do this. Amen? I knew this one doctor had found out a child was brought to the doctor. And it was over and over and over.

And this doctor couldn't let it go what was wrong with this child. And I can't remember what the ailment was, but it turned out to be a rather rare disease. And this doctor kind of became famous, even though they weren't an expert.

[ 31 : 51 ] But this doctor searched everywhere and didn't give up for months to figure out what was going on with this little boy in her group.

And I thought that was such a wonderful display of love for this child that she wasn't going to rest until she found out what that answer was.

God, the doctor who is doing this diagnosis, begins with this knowledge of us that is absolutely complete.

We cannot hide from him. You can hide from your wife. You can hide from your husband. You can hide from your parents. You might even be sick and try to just disguise it as something else.

But what's so beautiful about understanding this diagnosis that God has given to us, who he's already told us he's got the pill, is an incredible display of love towards us.

[ 32 : 59 ] And it's important for us to understand ourselves as God sees us. So if you are here this morning and you find yourself as one of those categories that I've described, I have good news.

This medicine, this pill that the doctor offers, is wonderful and it works perfectly. My encouragement is as we work through this text over the next several weeks, is that you'll make every effort to be here.

Because I want you to see the wonder and power that are in almost every individual word that God puts in this text. It's powerful.

Even that word suppress. We have this knowledge of God. That word suppress is almost like having this spring. And you're pushing down on this spring.

And if you guys have ever pushed down on this spring, it's fighting you back, right? And you can keep it down for only so long. And it's going to push back out at you. And you're going to have to admit that there is a God.

[ 34 : 11 ] You can push down that suppression or that understanding, but it's eventually going to push back. And you're going to feel foolish because you're sitting there, standing on it, and you just bounce up off it.

And what's amazing in the cure that Jesus Christ offers, who is the cure? We find hope, we find peace, and ultimately we find life. You may be asking the question, how do I know that I resist?

Because the reality is, I've seen this story a thousand and a thousand and a thousand times over. And it's honestly the same old story. Let me share one instance with you.

It was back in 2008. I was in Chicago. And now it was a lecture being given by the renowned pastor, author, theologian, John Piper. The lecture was being held at Wheaton College.

And if you're not familiar with Wheaton College, Wheaton College is kind of considered the Ivy League of Christian education. That's supposed to be the smartest school for Christians.

[ 35 : 29 ] It's thoroughly Christian, and I don't know what else to say, thoroughly smart, I guess. And John Piper spoke on the sovereignty of God that night to the student class, and there's usually a question period that's followed where people get to ask John a question.

And I still remember that day quite vividly when this young college co-ed vividly gets up to the mic, and she is mad.

She is angry. And she yells. And if you're not familiar with John Piper, he's probably one of the top 30 Christian thinkers in Christianity the world over.

Like, he's a brilliant man. He's written brilliant books. He's not stupid by any stretch of the imagination. And ironically enough, he went to Wheaton. And with tears in her eyes, she yells at John, and she asks him the question, how could a loving God send people to hell like her childhood friend just because she doesn't believe in him?

That's so unfair. The text that John chose to show her was this text, verse 19.

[ 37 : 06 ] For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. Doesn't say that it's only smart people, rich people, people with good identities or good education are able to see God.

Specifically says it's God himself who reveals himself to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power, divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made.

So, they are without excuse. This woman just cried more and more because he said that you believe a lie.

You're believing a lie that God has not revealed himself to your friend and she's ultimately rejected him. See, Paul explains to us that there is a wrath that is coming.

It is a wrath that is coming against all ungodliness and all unrighteousness and all of us are without excuse. So, just to let you know for this study I want to answer some of the following questions for you.

[ 38 : 34 ] I want us to examine what is the wrath of God and why it needs to be fear. What caused God's wrath? What is truly known about God to men?

How do we ignore God? Why do we ignore God? What are the ways we purposely ignore God?

What are the consequences of ignoring God? God? Why this emphasis on homosexuality? What is the significance of these terms God gave them over which he uses in verse 24, 25, and 26?

What does it mean to have a D-based mind? And not only that, I want to answer some of these questions in the context of our culture.

How did we get here? Why is man so lost? Just the other day, I was reading this court case, and the court case is someone is being sued about someone, and it's not this light, but he's trying to get to the point, it has to do with someone's preferred pronouns, discrimination, and the one lawyer says, can you imagine us being in a courtroom five years ago and having this problem?

[ 40 : 07 ] Like, really arguing that a man is a man and a woman is a woman, but here we are, arguing what that is, like, the question is, we're all faced with this, it's all over, how did that happen?

That's one of the questions I want to answer for you. There's been a slide in our culture that's been going on for decades, and we're going to look at that and why it happened. Especially, we have a government that says we're all science-based, right?

We're all about science, except when we don't want to be about science. Then I hope, and you will see, the answer to this question is, how much does this world need the message of this text?

in case you do not know, we have a ruling political party which believes that five-year-old children can make a decision about whether they are a boy or a girl and that information does not have to be provided to the parents.

Do you understand how insane that is? that is utterly madness. Madness!

[ 41 : 28 ] And we sit here and we think it's okay. My friends, we've been the frog sitting in the boiling water, and we act like, well, you know, the kid has rights too, right?

We believe in justice. We now live in a country where made is now being extended to people who have mental health issues.

Do you know how wicked and vile that is? Like, some mental issues can be cured. Just the other day, spending time with my friend, her brother had a complete, utter breakdown, suicidal, completely mad.

The family was broken, disarrayed, didn't know what to do. Now he's a wonderful family of three kids, wife, and doing great. But if he came in on the wrong day, we need to take your life.

Canada's position on that is actually so vile that European countries, which kind of ignore God, are actually calling us out on how messed up we are.

[ 42 : 52 ] The fact is, my friends, children and people are literally being sacrificed to the gods of this age. We look back into the Old Testament and we see children that are being sacrificed and we think, well, that isn't us, that isn't today.

It is. But under, it's not under the banner of cruelty, it's done under the banner of what's best for civilization. Even non-Christians are getting in to understand how mad this is.

One author has written a book and he is an expert on biology and he believes that there has a parasite that has come into our culture. And that parasite, and if you know anything about parasites, parasites exist to kill the host.

And these ideas have come in to kill the culture. And that's what happens when you kill God. So, for the next couple of weeks, I really want to give you guys not only an understanding of this text, but I want to give you an understanding of even what's being transpired in the culture so that you can respond in a Christ-honoring way and even understand because a lot of times you sit there, hey, if we come to the table we can talk equally about this, there's a whole other language going on that is totally nonsensical.

They talk about being victims when they're actually the pariah. There's a whole bunch of stuff here. So, my prayer is that you would pray for this time together as a church as we look at this more closely and my prayer is that we will be able to come to a greater understanding of what Paul teaches and why it's so important for us to know and understand this diagnosis if we're going to have an impact on this world as Christ calls us to.

[ 45 : 09 ] Amen? Let's pray. Dear gracious and heavenly Lord, Father, I'm not meaning to make this political, not meaning to make this a hobby horse, not meaning to make this anything more than it is, but it's a reality of the truth that is out there.

There are people who are literally being sacrificed at the altar of progressiveness, who are being killed because our civilization wants to view ourselves as kind and loving and compassionate.

Even if you're too poor, you can now apply to be put to death. death. The question is, how did we ever get here?

Well, this is what Paul answers for us in this text. Father, I pray that we would pray for our government.

We would pray that they would see and understand that we have all been created in the image of God, and because of that, we are all precious in your sight. And there is not a single life in this that exists on the world that is not precious to you.

[ 46 : 41 ] We are all created in your image, O Father. We are all meant to bring glory to you. There is no life that is too far from being able to bring glory to the Most High God.

God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. God. And Father, I just pray for the people that are here that are seeking answers, that know that there's a brokenness, there's a disease within them, and they're feeling hopelessness they are feeling that there are no answers they've been trying it their way for years if not decades and they fear that things might be coming to an end for them.

Could be the breakdown of relationships with children, breakdowns with marriages. It could be breakdown just with connecting with people in the workplace. Could even be our minds, oh Father, not being able to cope with this world that we live in. We just don't want to hear about this sadness and badness that is out there.

So we purposely put on these rose-colored glasses and try to live our lives outside of the death and destitution that surrounds us.

Lord, I pray for power. I pray for strength for our people. I pray for knowledge. I pray that you'll give them a desire to understand this text, to preach this text, to live this text.

[ 48 : 21 ] But more than anything else, I pray that they find you and they find in you the perfect cure to what ails this world. I pray that they find spiritual life, a purpose-filled life, desiring to glorify you.

We ask these things in your greatest glory. Amen.