



Ears Up-Part 6

Why We Amplify the Truth

Pastor Mike Fabarez

Communication is not easy. I should know that—I communicate for a living. That’s my job. And whether I’m speaking or writing, I realize that I can do all of that—clearly explain things thoroughly, go very persuasively in my communication to people, and I can do all of that, work hard at it and be careful about how I do it—then it really doesn’t mean that I’m being heard. You know that.

Remember, you don’t have to be a preacher to experience that frustration and the breakdown of communication; you just have to be a parent of a teenager. Some would say you just need to be married. I wouldn’t say that. But some people would be so brash as to say that. You know what it’s like to be able to speak and you know you’re speaking clearly and you’re communicating clearly, but it’s just not being heard. Because communication—humanly speaking—requires clear proclamation from the one who wants to communicate, and it’s also going to require a focused receptivity from the person you’re speaking to or writing to. So you’ve got to clearly proclaim, and you have to have a focused receptivity to accept that information. That’s the human communication process.

Now, we’ve been studying the teaching of Christ in Luke chapter eight. And actually—this is one way to look at it—we’ve been studying that human communication process in the parable of the soils: the four soils, the sower, and the seeds. Now, we finished that up last time we were together, and now we’re going to enter into this next paragraph that comes on the heels of that, and we’re still talking about that communication process. Very important for us to realize the context of these words. So we’ll see that Christ here today is going to deal with that focused, receptive, responsive kind of listening that’s so important. And he’ll do it by offering us a lot of motivations to be able to engage in it actively, every time we encounter the truth of the Word—whether in a sermon, or whether we’re reading our Bibles, or a good Christian book.

Now, it’s one thing if the communication process breaks down when you’re trying to tell your kids it’s time for dinner, or you’re trying to tell your wife what you did today, or whatever it might be. But it’s another thing when Christ is speaking, or his apostles are writing, and we’re on the receiving end of divine communication that is super important—critically important. It’s the difference between heaven and hell; it’s the difference between blessing in your life and problems and reaping from the flesh corruption. I mean, this is critical. This is super important that we understand how the communication is to take place, or in other words, how we’re supposed to receive it, and why we’re supposed to receive it. I mean, nothing could be more important for us as we encounter the communication from heaven.



So today, what I want to do is look at this text, and I want to try to learn something about being on the receiving end—receptively and actively—of the teaching of God. One of the problems—which is kind of ironic—is that this is going to be a very difficult text to communicate to you. It's going to be difficult to communicate to you because you're going to read this—verses 16, 17, and 18, in Luke chapter eight—and as I read it to you and your eyeballs follow along these words, you're going to say, “Oh, I know what this is about. I've heard these illustrations. They're very familiar.” I mean, if you've been around the block a few times in the Christian life and you've read your Bible, you've heard lots of sermons. You're gonna go, “Huh, I know this.”

But here's the problem: if you don't understand these three illustrations in the context in which they're given—on the heels of the teaching about communication of the Word of God going out to these four different kinds of soils—I assure you, you will think the wrong things, because our common understanding of these analogies will not help you today. Because here's why: Jesus frequently used these illustrations in other contexts. Just like if you were to think through the things that we often throw out there, right? You can't have your cake and eat it too. The early bird gets the worm. That's the way the cookie crumbles. You know, “never enough time in the day”—whatever phrase we use in these little pithy illustrations or analogies, we use them in different contexts. And sometimes we mean one thing by it, and in another context we mean another thing by it. And as the old adage goes: a text without a context is a pretext. You've heard that one, right? And so we've got to understand the context before we just go to the default interpretation in our minds of these three illustrations.

So let's look at them—verses 16, 17, and 18—remembering that we're coming on the heels of understanding the communication process when the Word of God goes out and how people receive it.

Verse 16: “No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed. But one puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.” Now, is that familiar? Smile at me if that's a familiar illustration—super familiar. If you're really a Sunday school graduate, you go, “Matthew chapter five, Sermon on the Mount—where's the rest of it? ‘Let your deeds shine before men; let them see your good works and glorify your Father.’ And yes, ‘You are the light of the world; a city set on a hill can't be hidden.’ I know this illustration.” Stop. Don't go there. Not yet.

Verse 17: “For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be made known and come to light.” “Oh, I know this one too, Pastor Mike. I know this one. Understand it—heard it.”



Verse 18—this is super important when you’re studying the Bible. This is the singular imperative verb in this paragraph. It’s the only one—we have an imperative, you know, a command. Here’s Christ’s command to whoever, in the context—the original audience—he says this: “Take care how you hear.” Is that what it says? No—I missed the word. “Take care, **then**, how you hear.” *Then* is looking back to the two illustrations that we just heard: you don’t light a lamp and put it under a jar; and anything that’s hidden is going to be manifest, and things that are secret are going to be made known and come to light. Because of those things: **Take care how you hear.** Take care then how you hear.

I mean, we need to understand who the “you” is, right? That second person pronoun—we need to define that, as that’ll help us interpret these two illustrations. And then the next word is “for,” so even that one hangs on this imperative. He’s going to say one more thing that’s familiar to you. He says, based on that—I’m commanding you to be careful how you hear—“for” (here’s another reason): “to the one who has, more will be given; and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.” That familiar? “Oh, I know that one too; I’ve heard this one too.”

So here are the three questions when it comes down to it: **Who is the lamp that’s shining? What are the secrets that are going to be revealed?** And—this may not be a natural question, but let me throw this question out for the third one—**When do the haves get more, and when do the have-nots suffer loss?**

When you can answer who the lamp is in this context, and if you can answer what secrets are being revealed, and if you can answer when the haves get more and the have-nots suffer loss, then I think you’ll understand this set of illustrations, and you’ll recognize they’re very contextual. They deal with the context in which we’re reading them. And that is: Christ coming with the Word of God to different kinds of people, and they receive it, or they kind of receive it, or they partially receive it, or they really receive it—four soils.

So he’s speaking to someone. We have to define the “you.” Verse 18: “Take care then how **you** hear.” First of all, let’s take some notes this morning. And the first point—we’ll put it just in terms of what Christ said: **Take care how you hear.** Let’s just jot that down. We know that’s Christ’s singular concern in terms of imperatives in this paragraph—the command: “I want you to be careful how you hear.”



Now that makes perfect sense because we've just come off of the illustration about how these soils—quote-unquote, the soils—hear the Word of God. And it's the last one that we want to be—the good soil. And we'll take hold of that truth, right? We'll hear it; we'll take hold of it; we'll bear fruit **with endurance**. That's what we want to be—that verse 15 kind of soil.

Now, the “you.” Let's look at verse 9. Go back up in this discussion before we got the interpretation of the parable of the soils. It says, “And when his disciples asked them what this parable meant, he said”—here's the second person pronoun that makes sense to you—“**To you** it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God.” Okay, now nothing has changed. I know our translators have put a heading over this in your Bibles, but nothing has changed in terms of context. And when you get to a context and you have a pronoun and we don't have an antecedent that's clear in the immediate paragraph, you've got to keep going back until you get it. **Who is the “you” here?** Who is he telling to be careful how they hear? The crowds—the people who get the message only in parables? No—his **disciples**, who we hope are the fourth soil, although some may be the third soil—Judas—maybe even some second soils among the disciples. And by disciples, I mean the band of disciples. But then, of course, there are the apostles, and I even named one who was probably a third soil because of the riches of the world—he cashed in his supposedly pseudo-allegiance to Christ.

So the disciples are in view. Now I want to identify with the disciples because, as we said last time, I want to be the fourth soil. I want to make sure I'm a real Christian—adhering to Kotecha (that was our word), bearing down on the truth, hanging on to it, bearing fruit with Huberman a—with endurance. That's what I want to be.

So when he says to the soil—and I could be, maybe if I'm self-deceived, a third soil or a second soil—well, I'm getting now the strong word from Christ: **Be careful how you hear**. You're going to get the word from me; be careful how you hear it. Because if you want to hear it right, you've got to tackle it, you've got to bear down on it, you've got to hang on to it. You've got to hold it fast—as the ESV says—and then you have to bear fruit with endurance.

Okay, so I know that in the context here, this is the disciples he's talking to, and I want to identify with the disciples. So he's speaking to me here, Christian, on Sunday morning, 2,000 years later. I'm hearing Christ say to me in the sermon, **be careful how you hear the Word of God**. Okay—got that.

Now, if that's the case, and I look at these analogies, and they're all tied to that one imperative verb—to take care how I hear—and I see the word “then” in the middle of it, so I know the first two analogies



are all about hearing and me being on the receiving end of that information from God. And I know that the “for” that follows that phrase—“for to the one who has, more will be given”—I know that relates to this verb, this whole point of what I’m supposed to do, then I know all three of those things have to do with **me receiving the truth**.

Now, it’s really foreign to the context, all of a sudden, for me to say, “I’m the lamp and I should be shining.” And the things that will be revealed—as I’m conditioned to interpret this phrase and this analogy—are “my secret sins at the point of judgment,” or “the non-Christian sins—when they stand before God, everything secret is going to be revealed in judgment.” And I’m not really thinking that the haves-getting-more is after this life is over. Do you see—those are the common interpretations. It’s probably the default interpretations in your mind: What’s the lamp shining? **Me**. What are the secrets to be revealed? **Sin**. When will the haves get more? **When they get their reward in heaven**. That’s the common interpretation of those three analogies. And what I’m suggesting is that makes **no sense in context**.

So—lamp. If you’ve got your Bibles open in Luke, you might want to go back to chapter one. And see—we’ve already had a lot of talk, as if we needed the larger context here; we really don’t, I don’t think—but look at verse 78. When **Zechariah**, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke of Christ, how did he speak of Christ? Verse 78: “The sunrise”—love that; circle that—“the sunrise shall visit us from on high, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Even already in the book, I’ve been introduced to **Christ being the light**.

Chapter two, verse 32—Simeon, Temple Mount—got the infant Jesus in his arms, and he says of the Christ—and he says, under the inspiration of the Spirit, in this statement (get the subject from verse 31): “Your salvation is a **light for revelation to the Gentiles**.” So this image of **light** is who? **Christ**. That’s clearly what we’ve had already in the book.

When we get this phrase, after talking about the dispensing of the Word of God—“Hey, no one lighting a lamp covers it with a jar; puts it under a bed; they put it on a stand so that all who enter may see the light.” If, by the way, you’re a real critical thinker, you’re thinking, “Well, wait a minute—He’s telling these things in parables to other people so that they won’t get it.” You’re not talking to the outsiders—He’s talking to the **disciples**. The people that are in with Him—and the ones that are in with Him—He said, “I’m going to tell you the explanation of the parables.” And **you have entered into the room**. Now I’m uncovering the light. The light is lit; the light is here. The sunrise is dawning. I want you to get this information. I want to dispense this.



Here's the answer: The lamp in this context is **not us**. This is **not** Matthew five. The lamp—**Christ**. And Christ has information to give. And Christ is like a sun beaming information to His disciples. That's what He is, by nature—a **teacher**.

Letter A—let's put this down this way: **We need to bank on Christ's desire to teach**. Christ wants to teach you. Christ wants you to have more knowledge of Him. Christ wants to bombard you with more light, to use the analogy, and shine in your life. I'm not talking about you shining to your coworkers—we're talking about Christ. In a relationship with Him, you've entered into the room; He wants to beam you with information. That's why our central meeting is characterized, as it has been for 2,000 years, by a guy standing up behind a lectern or a pulpit **teaching**. Because the point is: this Book is God's lamp and light to our path. Does that sound familiar? Psalm 119, verse 105. That's what the Bible is.

Matter of fact, keep your finger here and turn to **Second Peter** with me. I've got to show you this great text in Second Peter chapter one. If you want to know where Christ's light is beaming, it's beaming from that book called **The Bible**. And that is the place we go to get this information from God—not sitting on a rock overlooking a beautiful sunset over the ocean going, "I'm feeling God right now. I'm feeling inspired. God is here. God's telling me now to, I don't know, go do something great for Him." That's not what I'm talking about. You want to be enlightened by Christ, who is the ultimate teacher? You do it **in the Book**.

Verse 19, chapter one, Second Peter: "And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed"—the prophetic word. He's describing these promises of the coming Christ. They've been fulfilled by the life of Christ. That's the Word punctuated by prophecy. The prophetic word has authority. It is God's imprimatur on a bunch of Old Testament books that we know is His Word on paper—the prophetic word. We've had it more fully confirmed, to which—because we've seen the fulfillment—**you do well to pay attention** as to a **lamp** shining in a dark place, **until the day dawns**. Now, the sunrise, if you will, came with the first coming. The real dawn of day—that's the second coming. And Christ will be living among us physically. That's what we're looking forward to. Until then, we've got a lamp—a light. He left His disciples, His apostles there in **Acts 1**, and they were bummed about it, and He's going away. And He says, "No, you go be my disciples." But you've got a Book. As a matter of fact, at the end of this book in Second Peter, he says even the writings of the Apostle Paul are on par with the prophetic word of the Old Testament. So the apostles writing in the New Testament—God's authoritative Word—**you do well**—which he categorizes the apostles' writings at the end of the book with the prophetic word of the Old Testament, which is in view here—**you do well to pay attention to it**. It's a lamp shining in a dark place, **until the day dawns**, and then look at this reference to Christ: **"and the morning star rises in your hearts."**



I know this is a bit poetic for us, but to see that picture of when you open God's Word, and God desperately wants to teach you—Christ and the Triune God wants to instruct you—when you open it, you've got to **pay attention** to that. That's when the **morning star—Christ—rises in your hearts**. And we can't wait for the dawn of day. That's your relationship with the Book. You need some encouragement on that? Go home and memorize **Psalm 119**. It's a great chapter about how important this Book is to us. And that's just the first 39 books of it, right? When we look at that—less than that, when David was writing those words, I believe, wrote Psalm 119.

Christ wants to teach. Now you're in Second Peter—let me give you one picture that I think is always so vivid when I read it, in terms of how badly God wants to teach me. Go to **Proverbs one**.

Proverbs, chapter one—to show you the kind of passion in the heart of the Triune God to want to instruct you. It doesn't just, you know, end with the message of repentance and faith and "I'm in." Now He's telling His disciples, who all hope to be the fourth soil, **Be careful how you hear**. Be careful. I'm like a lamp and I want to teach you and flood your life with information about Me that will change you—as we'll see in a minute.

Proverbs chapter one—drop down to verse 20: **Wisdom cries aloud in the street**. Right from the pages of Scripture it's calling out for you. How badly does God want to teach? He's **screaming** at you. Christ wants to teach His disciples. In the market she raises her voice. I know—it's really clamoring, a den of noise. There's a lot going on out there in the workplace, but it's screaming to you in the marketplace. "At the head of the noisy street" (verse 21) "she cries out; at the entrance of the city gate she speaks." She just always wants to get in your head.

Where does it come from? Chapter two, verse six—we'll come back to verse 20 in chapter one, but look at chapter two, verse six: **"The LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of His saints."** Where does it come from? **From God's mouth**. Even that word "mouth"—He's speaking through—here's the word in Hebrew, the Nabhi. That means **mouthpiece**. His mouthpiece is the prophets. They put their information down on paper. And so when you open the book of Isaiah, or you open the book of Micah, or you open the book of **1 Kings**, we have God's mouthpiece inscribing the wisdom of God, often tied up in narrative history and all the rest. But **here is God speaking to His people**.



Well, that Word on a page—I know we need to open it more often. Here’s how you need to envision that Book that sits on your nightstand. Verse 20, chapter one: **“Wisdom cries aloud in the street...”** From the pages of Scripture, it’s calling out for you.

How badly does God want to teach? He’s screaming at you. Christ wants to teach His disciples. In the market she raises her voice. I know it’s really clamoring—a den of noise. There’s a lot going on out there in the workplace, but it’s screaming to you in the marketplace. “At the head of the noisy street” (verse 21) “she cries out; at the entrance of the city gate she speaks.” She just always wants to get in your head. Where does it come from? Chapter two, verse six—**from the mouth of the LORD**. The mouthpieces are His Nabhi—His prophets. In the New Testament, it says **inspired apostles**. They have written their truth, and that wisdom is crying out to you.

Christ is a lamp. He says to His disciples, **Be careful how you hear**. I want to teach you—**illuminate** your heart. I would never put My information under a jar; wouldn’t put it under the bed. I want to put it on a lampstand so that all who enter—and if you’re “in,” you’ve entered—I want you to see it. I want you to hear it.

Now it gets negative here—and I’m sorry, it’s Sunday. We all want to be happy. We want Pollyanna happy texts, but this one gets a little negative. I didn’t write it—you know that, right? Verse 22: it says the problem with wisdom is often people aren’t listening to it. They want to be simple; they like their simpleton hearts. “How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?” You don’t want the knowledge—you don’t want the information? “How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?” Again, context—chapter two, verse six: Where does this knowledge and wisdom come from? From God—from His mouth through His mouthpiece. “If you turn at my reproof”—like Jesus said—if you hear My words and put them into practice, if you would have your life conformed to that Book, if you would have those principles on the page make their way into your life (it’s called **application**)—if that would happen—well, that’d be great: **“I’d pour out my Spirit on you. I’d give you so much more.”**

Verse 24: But here’s the problem—“Because I have called you and you refused to listen”—there’s the contrast—“have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded it.” I’ve tried to call the people to do something, and they haven’t done it. “Because you have ignored all my counsel”—maybe that Book has sat closed on your nightstand all week—“and would have none of my reproof—then when bad things happen...” (I’m going—it sounds cruel—verse 20) “I’m going to laugh.” Oh my—the Book is going to sit there and tell you, “You know what? I’ve been trying to tell you.” “When terror strikes you, and the storm of your calamity—like a whirlwind—and distress and anguish come upon you, then you’re going to call to me—‘Oh, help me now. Bible, help me; God, give me some wisdom.’—I’m not



going to answer. They'll seek me diligently, but they'll not find me. Why? Because they hated knowledge; they did not choose the fear of the LORD; they would have none of my counsel; they despised all my reproofs. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way."

You wonder sometimes why you're suffering—sometimes we're suffering because we are simply **reaping what we've sown**. And we've sown to the flesh. We have not sown to the Spirit and listened to His words and incorporated the truth of His Word in our lives. And you wonder why God doesn't pluck you from the problem you're in—because you've made your bed, so to speak, and now you're lying in it. "For the simple are killed by their turning away"—you can go back to when they ignored the truth—"and the complacency of fools"—"I don't have time to study my Bible"—"it destroys them."

But let's get positive again—whoever listens to Me will dwell secure and will be at ease without dread of disaster (verse 33). Where does it come from? Chapter two, verse six—**from the mouth of the LORD**. "The LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding." He stores up wisdom for the upright; He's a shield to those who walk in integrity; He's guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of His saints.

Do you know how ready God is to instruct you in His Word? Not that it's easy—and we could go on to look at the rest of this. I mean, chapter two, verses one through five—it's like **digging for treasure**. But His Word—the Book that His Spirit has penned through the pen of the apostles and prophets—it **wants** to instruct you.

There are certain things that you're into that if someone asked you, you'd go off for half an hour. I mean, there are certain things you don't want to ask—the things that they're into that I don't want to hear about. European soccer—I'm not interested. But they're into it. You ask them one single question, right? "I don't understand this offside rule—how does that—" Oh, I shouldn't have asked, right? What do you have—things like that?

You know, if you go this afternoon and pray to God, "God, give me wisdom," and you crack open that Book—"God, I want to know Your mind on this matter at work. I want to know how to deal with my kids." Now sometimes you'll feel like you're reading and you get nothing. And some of that goes back to chapter one of Proverbs—well, you didn't listen when you should have listened, and now God's going to let you have to ride this one out. But if you go and you say, "Okay, I'm facing some things here that are challenges—opportunities. God, give me wisdom," and you open that Book and dig into



it—**God just can't wait to teach.** He's like a light or a lamp that can't wait to shine. "Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light to my path." That is what God is—a **teacher**. The tool and mechanism of His teaching, as we saw in Second Peter chapter one, verse 19, is **His Word**. He loves to dispense wisdom—we just got to go to Him.

You know, I think some people sometimes come to church—they want to hear a sermon where they hear something novel and new and interesting that's, you know, they've never thought of before. And here you're hearing in the first segment of the sermon: **Read your Bible.** "Oh man, I want half my offering back after that—'read the Bible.' I know that." Listen, the old information here—the old prescription from your grandfather's church—it's still good: **Read your Bible**, and do it with a receptive heart; do it with an attentive heart.

Alright—verse 17, back in our text. We know now the lamp in the context here is **not us** shining to our coworkers; it's **Christ** and He wants to teach. He wants to give light to everyone who's entered into the room.

Verse 17: **Nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be made known and come to light.** Now again—what did I tell you was the default interpretation in your mind? And this is not pulled out of thin air—Jesus used this analogy, this statement about hidden things being revealed, **a lot**. He used it to talk about the **coming judgment**. Paul used it to talk about the coming judgment. John used it in the book of **Revelation** to talk about the coming judgment—things will be brought to light. The writer of **Hebrews** says the Bible is convicting to you because you know you are dealing with a God, and one day everything's going to be revealed and come to light. That is a picture that is biblically accurate—but that's **not** what it means here.

Go back up to verse number 9. Remember, the "you" has to be defined. And it's defined by the **disciples**. "When His disciples asked Him what the parable meant" (verse 9), He said to them (verse 10), "**To you** it has been given to **know**"—underline the word *know*—"the **secrets** of the kingdom of God." Okay—now there it is in verse 17—**secrets**. "But to others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see and hearing they may not understand." It's hidden to them.

Verse 17: **Nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest.** Who's He talking to? **His disciples. Be careful how you hear.** "Nothing is secret that will not be made known and come to light." Is He talking about future judgment? **No.** He's talking about what He's talking about **in context**—and that is, "I want to tell you the **secrets of the kingdom**. I don't want anything hidden from **you**. The



outsiders—hidden; you—I want it revealed. I want you to know.” And there will be this successive, progressive information coming your way as you **grow** in the Christian life.

Speaking of Second Peter—he starts his book this way and ends his book this way. He says you need to **grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord Jesus Christ. That’s how he ends the book. He starts it with this great line—Second Peter chapter one, verse two: “May the grace and peace be **multiplied** to you—how?—in the **knowledge** of God, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This idea of making progress—having more and more multiplied to you; growing in the grace and the knowledge—this is **progression**. It’s like that old **Bach** cantata—the English version of it at least—that God wants to reveal more and more. I love that line that says, you know, **soaring to truth yet unknown**. Do you think that way in your Christian life? You get up in the morning and you start anew and say, “I want to learn more than I don’t know—something that’s secret to me. I want to reveal something that is hidden in Your Word. I want it—I want it to come to light.” We have to have that. I don’t care if you’ve been a Christian for 55, 60 years—you should go and say, “God, I know what You want to do is take things that are closed and open them. You want to take secrets; You want to reveal.”

Now this would be a good time, if we had time, to read the first five verses of **Proverbs chapter two**, which says you’ve got to **hunt** for it; you’ve got to **search** for it. It’s like **hidden treasure**. But you’ve got to have the mentality that this month, this year, and even this week, “I want to learn more of the things that were concealed to me last week, last month, and last year. Teach me more. Let me grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Put it this way—**letter B: Make progress in knowing Christ**. And the only way you make progress in knowing Him is to **grow in your knowledge** of Him—progress in knowing Christ.

And again, you know, the carrot is more enjoyable than the stick—but the Bible uses both. And I just wonder, when you think about your spiritual growth—He pulls out the stick in Hebrews five. I won’t turn there. But are you really making progress the way you’re supposed to? I mean, really—are you more knowledgeable, and do you know Christ better this year than you did last year? Are you moving in that direction? He **wants** to reveal—**nothing hidden** that won’t be manifest, **nothing secret** that will not be made known and come to light. He wants to bring these things to light in your life.

Maybe one passage that will be helpful—**Second Corinthians chapter three**. There’s this great discussion about the veil. And it’s used in at least two ways prior to the bottom of this passage—Second Corinthians chapter three, verse 18. I guess we should get some context—verse 12. Well, verse



11: in some senses, they're going to struggle with living—what was being brought to an end; the Old Covenant came with **glory**. Now there's a lot of sparks and thunderbolts coming with the Old Covenant, right? Thinking back to Mount **Sinai**, giving you the law. "Much more will what is **permanent** have glory"—the New Covenant realities, the New Covenant arrangement. "Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, **not like Moses**, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end."

Now, there's a microcosm of the macrocosm. And the microcosm is: he would encounter God on the mountain, and his face would shine with this glory—this luminance—and he put a veil on it because he didn't like the fact that he realized that that was **diminishing**. So that's the way he speaks of now the Old Covenant as it fades out. He says, "But we're not like that. We're very bold. Now their minds were hardened. And to this day," he says, "for to this day, when they read"—non-Christians—"the Old Covenant, that same veil remains unlifted." Now we're using veils in two different ways. Moses used it so that you wouldn't see that the glory was fading. Now he's saying it's like a covering over their eyes. They **can't read**—they read the Bible, but they don't get it. That veil is not lifted, because it's only through **Christ** that it's taken away and they refuse Christ. "Yes, to this day" (verse 15), "whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the **Lord**—Christ—the veil is **removed**. Now the Lord is Spirit"—He wrote the Book; He indwells our hearts—"and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **freedom**. I can see now."

"And we all"—now here's the passage I want to show you—"with unveiled face, **beholding the glory of the Lord**, are being **transformed** into the same image." This is steeped in poetic language. Now I don't physically see Him, but I see Him in the pages of Scripture—the Book that the Spirit wrote. I'm being transformed; we're being transformed into the same image—the One that we're looking at. The more you study Christ, the more you see Him deal with the Pharisees, the more you see Him deal with the disciples—I'm looking more like Him. I'm being transformed into the same image that I'm studying every day, **from one degree of glory**—oh, I look like, you know, junior grade, second class; I'm moving up to third. But I'm progressing in this—from one degree of glory—reflecting God's greatness in my own life. And all this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit—speaking here of the third person of the Godhead. "We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, **from one degree of glory to another**. And this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

The Spirit wants to **unlock the stages**—hate to analogize this to a video game—but you know, to get from one level and one phase and one chapter to the next, to the next, to the next—where are you, if you're not working in the pages of the Scripture? If you're not **beholding the glory of Christ**, you're not going to make any progress here. Make progress in knowing Christ. The answer, obviously—as we saw in Second Peter chapter one—is the **prophetic word**, and it's got to be a **regular** part of your life.



You've got to realize God wants to progressively take what is hidden right now and make it revealed **next week, next month, next year.**

Central verb—verse 18, back in our text (Luke eight): **Take care then how you hear.** Why? Because if you hear—and hear well, and hear diligently, and hear receptively, and hear actively—man, the lamp is going to **fill you with light**. And the **secrets** are going to be revealed. And what is now covered is going to be made known—you're going to get it. “For to the one who has, more will be given.” What are we talking about here? The old phrase I like to use—you know, when I start **living up to the light** that I have, guess what? I get **more light**. “What one has—he's going to get more. And from the one who has not—and you're not listening carefully, and you're not receiving the Word the way you should—even what you, quote-unquote, **think** you had—even ‘what he **thinks** that he has’—[is] going to be taken away.”

Now the question I asked at the beginning of the sermon is: **When does this happen?** Now you take this phrase and you go, “I know when this happens—this happens at the end of time; it's always used that way. The ones that have—they get evaluated at the judgment, and then they get the reward. And the one that has five mina—and he gets ten mina—that's how this works. The one has two talents—it's four talents. That's how this works.” That's **not** what we're talking about here. We're talking about **light shining**. We're talking about **secrets being revealed**. We're talking about **things that are hidden now being made known**. We're talking about **you**—when you listen well, you **get more**; you build on that knowledge; you build on that enlightenment. But if you're not hearing well, you only **think** you know these things. You only think you've incorporated these things. You've maybe heard it—like Christ said—but you **haven't put it into practice**. Even what you have, you're going to **suffer loss**. This is a **now** passage. This is a **now** verse. This deals with the **here and now**.

Number three—or letter C, I guess I should say—that's how I worded it: You need to be **motivated by wisdom's reward**. Wisdom's reward is always **more wisdom**. That's how Proverbs started: “Instruct the wise man, and he'll be still wiser.” Wait a minute—he's already wise. Yeah, but you give him more, and he'll get more—he'll incorporate more. You teach and instruct someone who has a receptivity to knowledge—he gets more knowledge; he gets more insight.

Now, one passage on this I know you're familiar with—**James chapter one**. (James chapter one—once you jot some of that down—turn to James chapter one.) I just quoted, by the way, Proverbs 1:5 and Proverbs 9:9—“the wise hear; they'll increase in learning; give instruction to a wise man—he'll be still wiser; teach a righteous man—he'll increase in his learning.”



James chapter one is a picture of this. James chapter one. Let's start—verse 19: “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be **quick to hear**, slow to speak.” Even that is reminiscent of Luke eight, is it not? “**Take care then how you hear**”—hear receptively, attentively, responsively. We need to be talking less than we need to be hearing more. “And slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” Not generally speaking—occasionally it does, as Christ demonstrated in the temple.

Verse 21: “Therefore put away all filthiness and **rampant** wickedness, and **receive with meekness the implanted word**—you've entered in; now let the light shine. Get more illumination. Get more of that. **Be careful how you hear**—which is able to save your souls.” And of course it has.

Verse 22: “But **be doers of the word**, and not hearers only, **deceiving yourselves**.” Now think back to our passage—or it's printed there in your worksheet: “The one who has not—even what he **thinks** he has—will be taken away.” Here's the problem with **hearing** the Word but not **putting it into practice**: we have the deceptive thought that “I've got it now.” But of course, we **haven't** got it, because we haven't put it into practice. We've just learned some things and put them in the arsenal of our knowledge, but it hasn't been put into practice. And if you haven't put it into practice, you haven't grown in the grace of the Lord; you've only added to some knowledge that's going to—at some crossroads, even in this life—be revealed.

Some of you know a lot of Bible. You take a lot of notes during sermons. Then you hit the crisis in your marriage or your parenting or your job, and you realize, “Oh man, my life's falling apart.” Why? Because you've learned a lot of things in sermons; you've read a lot of things in your Bible; you've learned a lot of things from Christian books. But when it comes to this crisis in your life, you realize **you haven't been applying any of that** for the past ten years of your Christian life, or whatever it might be. That is a **deceptive** kind of hearing that never puts it into practice.

“Anyone [who] is a hearer of the word and not a doer” (verse 23) “is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror, for he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.” You look in the mirror—and you looked in the mirror this morning—so you could see the problem and fix it. We only look in the mirror and go, “Oh,” and walk away when it's time to get ready for the day—which usually, I don't even look toward the mirror if I'm not having to get ready for the day, because you don't want to see what you have to see. And if you do that, you're recognizing the conviction of the Word but not responding to it—sermon's done, I'm not going to do anything about it.



“But the one who looks” (verse 25) “into the **perfect law, the law of liberty**—the thing that frees you from sin, the thing that changes the course of the direction of your life—and **perseveres**”—there’s our word, who Amane—“being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts—**he will be blessed in his doing.**” This is reminiscent—and it should be in the margin if it’s not already in your reference Bible—**Psalm one.** You do the Word; you meditate on the Word; you put it into practice—you’re like a tree planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in season; leaf doesn’t wither—you know the passage. **Be motivated by wisdom’s reward.**

Let me put it this way: if you hear a bunch of sermons, read a bunch of verses, read through the Bible a couple of times in the next couple of years, and you don’t really put it into practice—you hit some crisis; you hit some problems; or just the chronic aches of life come along, as it did in soil number three—and none of that has really been built into the arsenal of your character and your spiritual growth—when you hit that crisis, you’re going to realize you’ve **wasted two and a half to two years of your life**—two years of your spiritual life, your Christian life. But you do the hard work of applying the Word as God intended—you become a doer of the Word who **perseveres**, not forgetting but acting—**God says the blessing in your life is going to be poured out.**

There’s one sermon—you can feel it, right? **Bank on Christ’s desire to teach. Make progress in knowing Christ. Be motivated by wisdom’s reward.** That’s what I want—**uncovered lamp:** Christ wants to teach. **Revealed secrets:** He wants me to make progress and learn more this year than I knew last year. And the **haves** are going to get more, and those that deceive themselves and don’t incorporate as active listeners and really put it into practice—even what they **think** they have—they’re going to lose: next conflict, next crisis, next time they get fatigued in life.

So we’re going to be motivated by wisdom’s reward, and we’re going to be **active listeners.** We’re going to **care how we hear.**

What’s with the second half of the sermon notes with the “CP” before the verse numbers—what’s that all about? Thanks for asking—here’s the answer. I thought it would be perhaps **not** helpful if we didn’t quickly—real quickly—look at the **common** interpretation of all three of these analogies, and realize that though this is **not** what the text is teaching, they certainly **apply** when we flip around this application from one who’s hearing well to one who—as in other texts—I’m commissioned to **speak** well. I’m commissioned to take the message of Christ and to bring it to other people. Well then, all the analogies—all the common interpretations, as we see elsewhere—are there; they’re everywhere.



So I want to say, just in this way—**number two on your outline**: Not only do I need to **take care how I hear**, but then—when I take this message and pass it on, when I do evangelism and discipleship in the lives of others—I need to **speak so as to be heard. Speak to be heard.** I want to speak to be heard.

Now, I think the common default interpretations of all three of these analogies—and I go, “Oh, here’s where these fit in.” This is not what Luke eight is talking about. But comparing Luke eight and the use of these analogies to how they’re used elsewhere, I realize, “Oh, it fits too when I think about passing on the things that I’ve incorporated into my spiritual life.” I take these truths and pass them on.

Letter A—very simple: when I ask the question, “Who is the lamp?” and our default interpretation is “I’m the lamp,” you say, “Because Matthew five, verses 14 through 16, says I’m the lamp. It says I am the light of the world, and I should not put my light under a bushel. ‘This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it’—that’s me. ‘This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.’ ‘Hide it under a bushel?’ ‘No!’ ‘I’m gonna let it—’ Wait. I’m shining.” This is the illustration. If it is the illustration, **what is that illustration teaching?** It’s teaching that I should be **vocal**. And then it speaks about something called **good deeds**.

Just real quickly—**letter A**—let’s put it this way: You want to speak to be heard—you’d better **present Christ with integrity**. My **deeds** ought to **match** my **words**. That’s the analogy of shining—letting my deeds be seen by men—and obviously speaking about this. And I know that because on the heels of another very familiar text we get this example—that I’m a light on a hill, a city set on a hill that can’t be hidden, a lamp that shouldn’t be covered. And what was that? That when you **speak up** for Me, people are going to revile you, hate you, say all kinds of evil about you. But in that day you’ll be blessed. You should rejoice—they did it to the **prophets**. What did the prophets do—live good lives before people? No—they **spoke the truth** and lived good lives before people. So it is for us. We speak up about the truth in other people’s lives in evangelism and discipleship, but we’d better do it with **integrity**. And that’s where the application of the analogy is elsewhere used, and it’s right. **Present Christ with integrity**. I’m an **uncovered lamp** like Christ—I’m **not** Christ—but like Christ. I’m reflecting His glory in the things that I say and the things that I do. A lot of white space there—that’s all I need to say about that.

Letter B—verse 17: Secrets Revealed. Our text says (verse 17): “Nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest; nothing secret that will not be made known and come to light.” Context—I hope I proved it—is that **Christ is the light** and He’s **revealing secrets**. That’s what the passage is all about. But turn in your Bibles real quickly to **Luke chapter 12**. Just a few chapters later—9, 10, 11, 12—four chapters later—He’s going to say this very same thing again.



Verse 2—I need context—but verse 2 is the point; it’s the illustration. Look at it: **“Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be made known.”** There it is. There it is. There it is.

What does it mean here? Verse 1: “In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, He began to say to His disciples, ‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is **hypocrisy**.’” It’s like a little leaven in a lump of dough—and off it goes; it affects the whole thing. What is that leaven? Well, here’s the illustration here—define it: **their hypocrisy**.

What is hypocrisy? Talked about this a million times—**hupo kremino**. Hypocrisy. That’s where we get this transliterated word into English. *Hupo* means “under”; *krino* means “to decide” or “to judge.” What I decide or judge about a person’s life—I’d have to get **under** the surface to be able to judge it accurately, because they’re **hypocrites**. They put one face on, but underneath there’s something else. That’s why the picture of a **mask** is so good. If you want to know what the word hypocrisy means—they put on a mask. They seem to be one way, but they’re not. And then people looked at the Pharisees and say, “Well, you seem like really godly guys.” But underneath the masks—as Jesus said—you’re **whitewashed tombs**; you look good on the outside, very clean on the outside, but on the inside—full of dead men’s bones. You’re a hypocrite. He says that’s the leaven of the Pharisees. People don’t see it readily or quickly, but it’s there.

Verse 2: **Nothing that is covered up—hypocrisy—will not be revealed**. The Pharisees are bad guys. They’re doing a lot of bad things behind the scenes; they’re hypocrites. Oh, it’ll be revealed—**nothing’s hidden that will not be made known**. There’s going to come a day of **accountability**. Now this starts to match—I think I looked at twelve different passages this week that use this analogy to talk about the **final judgment** from all over the Scripture. Jesus used it this way. Here—their hypocrisy is going to come to light. Nothing that’s secret isn’t going to be made known. That’s the coming judgment.

And because of that—when I think about letter B, now speaking up about Christ to my neighbors, friends, and coworkers—I need to make sure that I do the thing that is one day going to be a reality, and that is the **uncovering of the problem of sin**. Let’s put it this way—**letter B: Expose the problem of sin**. Sin is the problem. God will judge it. That is a concern that we should all have. And when I speak to people about Christ, the whole of my message is **not** this: “Jesus loves you. Jesus loves you. Jesus loves you. Have a nice day. Jesus loves you.” Does Jesus love them? Look at this now. Well, He



loves them through **common grace**, because He's showering them with all kinds of good things they don't deserve. And if they are to be saved, then **God so loved** them that He **gave His only Son**. Now here's the deal—because of their **sin problem**, He had to **perish** so that they wouldn't. That's an amazing kind of love. But to talk about Christ's love without talking about **exposing the problem of sin—useless**. I don't know what to be **saved from** if I don't see sin as the problem that needs God's judgment. Therefore, I'm going to speak to people about Christ—at some point, I have to **expose the problem of sin**.

One passage on this—and we're running out of time—but **Ephesians chapter five**—real, real quick—ties all these analogies together. And when I think about speaking up, I want people to **hear** what I'm saying—to hear what I'm saying, I've got to get them to **see the problem of sin**. I need to **expose** it. My life needs to be one of **integrity**. I need to be living (verse 9) the **fruit of light**—Ephesians 5:9—found in all that is **good, right, and true**. What does it mean to live in the light? What does it mean to reflect the light? Well, I want you to do things that are good, right, and true—need to be known for what is good, right, and true. And then I'm trying to **discern** what is pleasing to the Lord (verse 10). And I'm always looking at, “God, what would be the best thing here to please You, to honor You, to bring You glory?”

Verse 11: That means, obviously, I'm going to **avoid** a lot of invites to a lot of things I shouldn't be a part of. “Take no part in the **unfruitful works of darkness**.” Now, that's fine—I want a period there. But I don't have a period—I have a comma, do I not? Because I'm okay not going to the parties; I'm okay not being a part of that thing; I'm okay not being part of that illegal scheme or that—what? I'll say, “No—no, I can't.” But it says what? “**Expose them**.” Ooh—I don't want to talk about their sin. Isn't it better if I just avoid the sin myself? **No—you have to expose them**. Now, it's “shameful” (verse 12) even to speak of the things they do in secret. “But when anything is **exposed by the light**, it becomes visible” (verse 13). And here's the context: “For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, ‘**Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you**’” (verse 14). I cannot tell people to **rise from the dead**, so to speak, and let **Christ shine on you**, unless I've **exposed the problem of their sin**. I'm supposed to expose the things they do in secret and say, “There's the problem. You need Christ. Arise from the dead, O sleeper; let Christ shine on you.” Could do a whole series of sermons on those few verses right there—verses 9 through 14. But it should lead us from that comfortable place of saying, “Well, at work, you know, they know I don't do all the things they do.” It's more than that. When you **speak** about Christ—when you give the message of Christianity and the gospel to them—even when you **disciple** people who already claim to be a Christian—you have to bring them to **see sin** for what it is and **expose** it as a problem.

Verse 18 in our text, Luke chapter eight: “**Take care then how you hear**, for to the one who has more will be given, and from the one who has not even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.” That's what it says in Luke chapter eight. Jesus uses that same line **very differently elsewhere**. You



can jot it down—or, if you're quick with your Bible, you can turn there—**Luke 19**. Luke chapter 19, verse 26—"I tell you"—I'm just quoting it for you now—"to everyone who has, **more will be given**, and the one who has not, **even what he has will be taken away**. I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given; but to the one who has not, even what he has [will] be taken away."

What's the context, Mike? Here's the context: it's the **mina** parable. The one who has the minas and **invests** them well gets more minas—that's a measure of economic finance—right? Finance. The one, though, that takes the one mina—do you remember?—and **buries** it in the ground in his handkerchief and then gives it back to the master (who's defined later as one who **doesn't want the master reigning over him**—that's the word that's used)—he's called a **wicked servant**. He is not caring about being faithful to the master; he doesn't want the master reigning over him; and he is going to do whatever he wants to do. And he doesn't want to do the work of investing the mina from the master. He then is called the **enemy**. Verse 27—the next verse—"As for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and **slaughter** them before me." Ooh.

Now that is the illustration used in the context of the **coming judgment**. When does that happen? Right—well, this analogy—this statement—is about the coming judgment. And often we see that—we get our reward in the next life; they get their punishment in the next life, primarily. The problem is, all those days he took the mina and buried it, he was **free** to do with his time and his effort **other things** than invest the master's mina. And because of that, he was probably having a much more—I don't know—chilled, happy, free life to do what he wanted to do. He could be his own master. He didn't want the master cramping his style, or making the agenda for his life. He didn't want the master to **rule** over him. He's a wicked servant—he's going to be punished. But that whole time when someone else is going to work on the master's agenda and this guy isn't—well, it looks to him like he's got a much **better life**. The problem is, all of that's going to be **revealed in judgment**, and punishment will come.

I put it this way—**literacy** (letter C): We need to **warn of sin's deception**. Right now, people are living lives seemingly much more **free** than yours. You are saying **no** to temptation that they're saying **yes** to—and they don't see the problem of it. And the Bible says we need to warn that though people may seem to have a much **happier** life than the Christians in this room—a much more **free, pleasure-filled** life than the people that are saying **no** to sin that's waging war against their soul—you need to **warn them of sin's deception**.

One passage on this—I'll end with this—**Hebrews chapter three**. I want to be faithful—though this passage, Luke eight, is not talking about this—to be someone who takes the message that I hear and passes it on to others. That's going to make me the lamp, and I've got to **shine**. That makes me the one who warns people of **hidden things being brought to light** at the Day of Judgment. And it makes me



one who warns people that if you have sin that you hold on to and don't give these things up for Christ—if your life is not caring about the **mastery** or the **reigning** of Christ over you—there's a serious problem. It's going to come at the end of our lives—**sin will be punished**.

Verse 12—Hebrews three: “**Take care, brothers**”—now you can put that in quotes because of the next phrase—“lest there be in any of you an **evil, unbelieving heart**.” So there are some among us who claim to be right with God—which, in our country, is about 75%. Everybody thinks they're right with God and going to heaven when they die. They think they're brothers with us. “Lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart”—does that sound like a Christian? No, of course not. They don't have a new heart. They don't have a trusting heart. They don't have faith. And because of that, though they are among us, they're like the **second or third soil**—it leads them to **fall away** from the living God. They may be in this church right now, but they won't be five years from now—or in **any** church.

So what do I need to do? I need to care enough about **sin's deception** in other people's lives that I'm willing to **exhort** them: “Exhort one another **every day**, as long as it is called ‘today,’ that none of you may be **hardened by the deceitfulness of sin**” (verse 13). Why should that matter? Verse 14: “For we have come to **share in Christ**”—you know you're right with God with not an evil but a **regenerate** heart; not an unbelieving heart but a **heart of faith**—“if indeed we **hold our original confidence firm to the end**.” And we dealt with this last week—this passage. There is the concern—the **end**. One day the end will come, and according to verse 13, my concern should be about the way sin and its **deceitfulness**, that seems so freeing and so fulfilling—at least on the surface—can **harden** my heart to the truth. I've got to **warn of sin's deception**, both to the non-Christian and to the people I pass my spiritual growth on to in terms of discipleship. I've got to warn of that.

I briefly quoted the English words of one of **Bach's** most famous cantatas—we usually hear the melody at weddings—“**Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring**.” Those are from the English lyrics Robert Bridges wrote many years after Bach wrote the tune and the German words were written. They're great lyrics—they've just impacted me recently, afresh. I want to read you the first two verses that I think are so helpful in light of today's context—poetically, they're masterful—**Jesu** (which, of course, is Jesus):

**Jesu, Joy of man's desiring,
Holy Wisdom, Love most bright;
Drawn by Thee, our souls aspiring,
Soar to uncreated Light.
Word of God, our flesh that fashioned,
With the fire of life impassioned;**



As you live your life and as your life comes to an end, I hope it is drawn by your love for Christ—the wisdom, the light—that reflects itself in the fire within yourself that God has created, **striving still to truth unknown.**

Let's pray. God, help us to desire You more. You are the lamp that shines brightly in our lives. And we know we're supposed to be a lamp to our coworkers and neighbors and friends. And we want to be that. We also know that You're one who has promised to give us the **secrets of the kingdom**. Things that are covered will be revealed; things that are hidden are going to be made known and come to light. We want to be a part of that. We want to have an appetite for that. We want to be like that. Those lyrics say—**we want to be striving yet to truth unknown.** Please make that the reality of our lives.

We know one day, sin will be revealed—secrets of our hearts will be revealed; secrets of our neighbor's hearts revealed—and we're concerned about that. And then, God, we know, "the one who has—**more will be given.**" How great it is to **live up to the light** that we have, to watch You then **shower us with more.** "Instruct a wise man, he'll be still wiser." God, we want to see our lives continue to reflect with a greater degree of accuracy the character and personality of Jesus Christ. And when we do—we have a long way to go—we recognize that all of us individually can lament our setbacks, but we want to strive forward, **taking Your Word seriously**, being one, like Christ said, who doesn't just **hear these words**, but **puts them into practice.**

And God, we know one day, for those that don't listen—don't want to listen—there'll be setbacks, not just within this room in our spiritual lives when we hit some bump, but for non-Christians the bottom is going to fall out completely one day. Let us care enough about our neighbors and friends to **speak up about the problem—the deceitfulness of sin**—so that we don't have many in our midst, or in our office, or in our neighborhood, that we love and care for and speak to, who one day will hear, "**Depart from me; I never knew you.**"

God, enlighten us as we get in Your Word this week. We know Satan's going to work hard to prevent that—to put things in the way. Let us go to Your Word, knowing You're a God that when we ask, "God, give us insight; give us wisdom," just like You did to **Solomon**, nothing will please You more than that. And You'll dispense it. It'll be like that text there in Proverbs one—You'll **pour out Your spirit** (small "s")—that spirit of wisdom, of course, comes from the hand of the Spirit (capital "S")—the **Holy Spirit**. So, God, give us more of that—a greater portion of it—for **Your glory**, and for **our good** as well.



In Jesus' name, **Amen.**