

12-7-25 Message

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Christmas season, Jesus' birth, pre-incarnate Christ, God's nature, Trinity, Christophany, eternal life, gospel sharing, spiritual blessings, faith in Christ, salvation, Holy Spirit, eternal hope, God's love, holiday traditions.

SPEAKERS

Pastor Dow Boyer, Speaker 1

This is an interesting time of year when, when Thanksgiving hits so late, it's like we got three Sundays before Christmas Day and I do know that sometimes, inside different circles, it's like, you're you're mixed on, you know, whether you celebrate it, whether you don't celebrate it. And I understand those things as well. There's different perspectives in our family. It's something that, you know, I just, I grew up celebrating it. And my kids, we've, we enjoy it. We, in fact, Addie, I'm going to embarrass her. She probably won't talk to me again after today, but anyway, she'll for her the the year is broke up into two seasons when she was young. I'm going to say, when she was young, I'm going to I'm going to say she doesn't do this now, but it would be birthday season, and then there'd be Christmas season. So clear up till May 31 like, from the day after Christmas, we are in birthday mode. And so when you're in the stores or different places, it's like, hey, I want that for my birthday. I want that for my birthday. And then June 1 hits, and now we're in Christmas season. In fact, it was so extreme with her that a lot of times over the summer, she'd be watching the Grinch on repeat. And so that child of mine, I get it, she's a little bit younger than my older one, so she didn't have a job and things like that, but she did discover the first bank of Stan. And so Grandpa has as is the place where she can go to get what she wants until she can have a job. But so this is that time of year, though, when one things I do enjoy is that a lot of families, I don't know if any of you guys do this, but you'll send, like, your family update for the year, like in a Christmas card or something. Maybe, maybe that's an old school thing, I don't know, but when I would get those, I'd be it would be a good way, because I'm not always in everybody's life all throughout the year. And so there was always, like, a couple pages I remember the school crafts I would look forward to. And so there was some of you may like that. Maybe you don't, or maybe you like the cards I don't like when I'm opening a card and I have stuff all over my hands and all over my clothes. I don't know why they have to put glitter on these cards this time a year, but they do. And so anyway, you get these cards. There's primarily, if it's a spiritual card at all, it's one of these three verses that are going to be in the card, Isaiah, nine, six. For unto us, a child is born unto us, a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, or Isaiah, 714, is another one that you'll see in the cards. It says, Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel, or Micah, five two, which says, But thou Bethlehem, Bethlehem, ephrath, though thou be little among the 1000s of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting. And there's maybe a couple verses in John chapter one that you might see as well. And I do like a couple things here. One is that there is a

time of year. Now it's very unlikely, extremely unlikely, that Jesus was born on December 25 I mean, let's be honest about that. But the point is the world does stop and recognize that Jesus came into the world. And for me, whatever that is, is a good thing. You can say, well, yeah, but it's attached to Christ Mass and different things like that. And then there's the idolatry of it all. It's a pagan roots. And I'm like, Well, what I can tell you is that if Jesus didn't physically come to earth and be born. Born, then what can we trust about scriptures? Now we can pick any day, but the reality is, he did come he was born in this world, right? And so for whatever reason, we kind of know where we're at today on it. So I just want to take a couple moments to say, for one, don't be afraid to use it as a conversation starter. People will talk about it this time of year. People will talk about it during the Easter season. You know, we call it the resurrection season, or Resurrection Sunday, but people will talk. And I think let's look for those opportunities, because we're supposed to be ambassadors to see all men saved and come into the knowledge of the truth. And sometimes I wonder if we're not so divisive and so so much of a distraction away from the culture just to be different, that we miss opportunities to talk to people and we can tell them about what those verses actually mean and who Jesus actually is. I'm like, look for those opportunities. I don't think we should run from them. We don't have to buy into everything else, but we can certainly make it about Jesus, and that's my hope these next few weeks, that we can do that. And I do understand, you know, a couple of things here and and the first being that there is a lot of acknowledgement all around the world and a lot of different religions that Jesus was actually on this earth. And there's also a lot of that acknowledgement that says but he wasn't God. In fact, Islam recognizes Jesus was the Messiah and that he was born of a virgin, did miracles, but they reject that He is God. Judaism, in certain sects, views Jesus as a teacher, but not the Messiah. Clearly, wasn't born of a virgin, because he didn't usher in the kingdom. That's what the Messiah was going to do. Buddhism, the Dalai Lama said Jesus was a great teacher. Sikhism sees Jesus as a saintly figure. The Baha believes he's a manifestation of God, and the Mormons believe Jesus is the literal first born spirit child of God. It's amazing. The world can kind of get behind the idea that Jesus was real. Jesus existed. In fact, we could even go so far to say there's a lot of unity in the fact that Jesus was a teacher, a great teacher, did great things. In fact, watch a Super Bowl ad. We'll even be able to say Jesus taught us how to love people. But is that enough to give all of us, and those who are watching in the entire world, hope of eternal life? And I think that is the big difference here. It's not merely the man, it's not merely the acknowledgement that Jesus was born. But the question starts becoming even for us believers, is, well, what was he before? When we say First Begotten Son, what was Jesus's role like before? Did Jesus just merely become God and man once he was here on this earth. What is the history of Christ? His relation to eternity? These things, I think, are important, because it will take us way past a cradle and into the hope of eternity, which I think is the point of all this. In Genesis, one, one, it says, In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. We're right into the middle, or we're right into the Bible, right, and we're right into creation. And it's being expounded upon how it came into existence. And it says it was God. But when you look in the Hebrew, it's the Hebrew word Elohim, which is the plural form of God. But even if you're confused about that, a few verses later, in verse 26 of chapter one, God's just going to make it really clear through his word, it says, God said, Let us there's a plural form make man in OUR there's a plural form image after our plural likeness, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And here's really what we know is that whether it be Judaism or Christianity, even Catholicism, they're all these major sects here are all monotheistic. And you're like, how can Judaism be monotheistic when we're seeing this plural form here of God? Because God is one and three distinct persons, and that confuses some people today. But there is only one God, in fact, Deuteronomy, six, four says, Here, oh Israel, the Lord, our God is one Lord. It's interesting because the word God in that verse is the same word that's used in Genesis, one, one, and it's Elohim. Second. Daniel 7:22 says, Wherefore thou art great, oh, Lord God, for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. It's an interesting verse, because it says, Wherefore thou art great, oh, Lord Adonai, God Jehovah, for there is none like thee. Neither is there

any god, Elohim beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears, when you're looking at the phraseology, even if you just say because the King James Version is a preserved Word of God, and that's fine. We don't need to go into the Hebrew and Greek. It's just sometimes go in there doing the work studies and things like that help you to understand a little bit more if you wanted a little bit clarification. But God even told us in chapter 20 or chapter one, verse 26 he used the plural pronouns, just so we would not be confused. Now we're looking at this and we're saying, Okay, we know that there is this plural use of God in the Bible? Who are the US? And does the Bible really talk about that? Especially much throughout Scripture? First, Peter, one, two. Now listen to kind of the breakdown. Here. It says, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace unto you and peace be multiplied. You see a very similar verse when you look at Second Corinthians, chapter 13, verse 14. It's this idea where all three are identifying as God in the same piece of scripture, John, chapter, 20 verses, 27-28 says, Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side. Be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God, unbelieving Thomas, when he's able to see the scars and place his hand into his side, calls Jesus God acts five, three and four. Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land. But verse four says, While it remained, was it not thine own after it was sold? Was it not thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto Excuse me, but unto God. So God and Holy Spirit both, in this verse, are both the same. First, Corinthians, 3:16, another place going to tell you that the body is the temple of God, and it's going to say that the Holy Spirit of God dwells in us. You see throughout Scripture all three being described as God, three distinct persons in one Triune God that was at the very beginning, but tis the season, right? Let's focus on Jesus, the second member of the Trinity, or the Triune God of the Godhead, if you will. Here's what the Bible says about Jesus and His pre incarnate state, John one, one says In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, not a God, like the Jehovah's Witnesses would say. But it says the Word was God. Later, in John, chapter one, verse 10 and 11, it says he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him, not talking about Jesus. Or in verse 14, the word Jesus was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory and the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And really in this dispensation of grace, Paul gives us a lot of information about Christ's role, especially in relation to him being the bodily form of the Godhead. And in creation, if we look in Colossians, two nine, it says, For in him which is Christ, dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead, bodily. And that's a key point. When we look at these pictures, these different things, of a little babe in a manger, really, what the Bible is saying is that this was God being manifested bodily. Let that sink. In the next couple of weeks, we'll talk about some exciting things in regards to that. So you might want to come back if you if you like, putting a. Whole thing together. Next week, we'll talk about the prophecy of Christ, and then the third week, we'll talk about the plan of Christ. But today it's the pre Incarnate Christ, also in Colossians, 1:15, 17, it says, who is the image Christ, of the invisible God, the Father, the first born of every creature. For by Him, Christ, were all things created, yep, part of that John one, one was Christ. And that are in heaven, that are in earth, visible, invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by Him, Christ. And for him, Christ, and He is before all things. And by Him, all things consist. That was a verse that Earl used last week as far as how Jesus consist, or holds all things together, even Colossians, 1:19 it says it pleased the Father that in him, Christ should all the fullness dwell, and then Jesus even makes some statements. Right in John 10:30 he says, I and My Father are one. John 14:9 says Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? Philip, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. And how sayest thou then show us the Father, which is interesting, because what the Bible tells us when it talks about God, the Father is No man has seen God, the Father and lived. Let that sink in. Jesus was the bodily manifestation of the Godhead. And he was telling them, since you've seen me, you've seen the Father, because we are the Triune God. We are the God who created everything in Genesis, one, one.

Now you have to understand, in Jesus's day to say those statements, that was like death. We know this in Leviticus 24:16 it says he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him, as well as the stranger, as he that was born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall he be put to death? Did you wonder why Jesus would make statements and do things, and all of a sudden, the Pharisees plotted to kill him. This is why, because they felt like he was blaspheming against God, claiming to be God, that was a stoneable offense. This just helps us to understand not only what Jesus said, and what it meant, but why it generated the response it did from the Pharisees. There's this question that pops up in John 8:54, this is an example kind of with this with the Pharisees. It's talking in verse 53 about Abraham being dead, right? Verse 54 then says Jesus answered, If I honor myself, My honor is nothing. It is my father that honoreth Me, of whom you say that he is your God. Yet you have not known him, but I know him. And if I should say I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you, but I know him, and keep his saying, your father, Abraham, rejoice to see my day. And he saw it and was glad. And this probably would have, this would have been my response to probably, if I'm if I'm there and present, or like those present with Jesus saying this statement, and my background was Judaism, this probably would be my response as well. The Jews said unto him, Thou art not 50 years old. Thou art not yet 50 years old. Either Am I, by the way, barely and hast thou seen Abraham, and Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM, wow. The next verse says they picked up the stones. They wanted to stone him because he was saying, I'm God. That's blasphemy. We must kill him. And they try to trick him up on that, even through the trials, we know the significance of the I Am. You can read Exodus 31 says, this is, I am the Lord. I am the Lord, or Exodus 31:4 This is the burning bush. He says, I am that I am to Moses in the burning bush, right? I am, that I am. There was specific reason why he chose those two words. But notice, when he was talking in here, he said, Abraham saw it and was glad he. Know? So you're like, wait a second, how did Abraham see Jesus? There's this thing in the Bible. It's called theophanies, or christophanies, and it basically means God, basically God revealing himself through the Old Testament, invisible form, right? A christophany is Christ revealing himself as God? There are these examples in Scripture prior to the little baby in the manger, where Christ manifest himself on this earth. And we talked about this briefly on a few Wednesdays ago, on our Philippians class. But for the sake of those people, I'm going a different direction, so you guys don't have to yawn and go to sleep. But first, Timothy 6:15, 16, says this, which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only pontificate, the King of kings, Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach, unto whom no man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting, of course, Exodus, 33:20 says no man can see God and live. And you're trying to wrestle all this. You're like, alright? So if Christ was there at creation, if there were examples of God in the Old Testament, yet no man has seen God and lived, and Christ was everlasting, and not just a baby who was born on a certain day, and poof, now he's God and He's man. Then how do we reconcile some of these things that happened in the Bible in Joshua? Sorry, first of all, in the plains of Mamre, this would be in Genesis, chapter 18, it says. And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre and sat in a tent, sat in the tent door in the heat of the day, and he lift up his eyes and looked and lo, three men stood by him, and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door and bowed himself toward the ground, verses three and four, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thine sight, let if I found some favor in a sight pass not away. I pray thee, for from thy servant, let a little water. I pray you be fetched and wash your feet and rest yourselves under wash yourselves under the tree. Okay, verse eight. Verse eight, just five. Verses later, four, it says he took butter and milk and the calf, which he addressed, and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. The Lord physically with two angels in front of Abraham ate, but No man has seen God and lived. This is why the only thing that would make sense here is that this was Christ, or christophany, as Christ is a representation of the Lord physically in the Old Testament, because he is from everlasting to everlasting. He has always been. But if you're not buying that, how about this in Joshua, chapter five, verse 13 and 15. And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over

against him with the sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord, and now I come. You're like, well, this is just an angel, right? This is, this is Michael or or Gabriel, or Gabriel's messages, or Michael, right? But keep reading here. It says Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship. You can read the early chapters of Hebrews and understand that angels are not to be worshiped, nor would they receive worship. But this man, this captain holding a sword, received worship and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto thy servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off thy foot. Sound like the burning bush, for the place wherein thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. You could not say that that was an angel, or an angel would be violating its creation to receive worship designated only to God, as well as the same verbiage from the burning bush, remove thy foot, for this is holy ground. Who would it have been no man can see God and live. I believe whole Harley would have been Christ. I think when the Bible references the angel of the Lord and physical presence, in the Old Testament, it's always Christ. There's even some visions where it's the angel of the Lord, not an angel, but the angel of the Lord. Now you can. Say, since it's a vision, could that be God in spirit, possibly, but the physical forms, just seeing what Scripture says, the only one who is in bodily form of the Godhead was Christ. Or how about Jacob? Genesis, chapter 32 verses 24 through 25 Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day, and when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. Now a few verses later, listen to what Jacob says about this man he wrestled Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved. He even goes so far as to say, my life is preserved. He says, I saw God face to face and did not die. But the Bible says No man has seen God, the Father and lived. It was a christophany. It was Christ. Then there's Hagar. Christ had a way, even in His earthly ministry, as well as this christophany of finding women in a fountain, seems like the Samaritan woman, kind of the same thing, right, as a well. But anyway, in Genesis, chapter 16, after Hagar had basically been treated harshly. She runs away. It says the angel of the Lord said unto her, chapter 16, verse nine, return to thy mistress and submit thyself unto her hands. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and thou shalt bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man. His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him. He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the Lord. She called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, thou God seest me? For she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Several examples here, if No man has seen God and lived. If God is a Triune God, if one part of the Triune God is the bodily form of God that's been revealed, then the only explanation in these examples here is that it had to been Christ in physical form being revealed before he was born on this earth, which would line up with everything that we've seen in the New Testament that talks about how he created all things. All things were created by Him and for Him. He is not merely a little baby to be left in a manger. And we started this process by looking at some of those verses about a prophecy of a son in future tense. And the question then would be, yeah, but at what point did he become the son? Right? This wasn't until he was born. Even the prophecies were talking about a future date. You're just talking about God coming down in this form. He's a man, he's he's wrestling Jacob, or he's carrying a sword as a captain over here. But in Proverbs 34 one of the more interesting verses. Listen to what is said, Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended, who hath gathered the wind in his fist? Sounds a lot like these, these job verses, right? Talking here about God Who hath bound the waters in a garment, who hath established all the ends of the earth. What is his name? But listen to what it says right after this, and what is his son's name. Wow. This wasn't a prophecy about a little baby being born in the present tense of this proverb being written. It's the acknowledgement of God's Son in real time. I think it's amazing we think about this, we start tying this together. For me, it's like the question is, that's interesting, Dow, but why is this important to me today? Well, Jesus wasn't just a man who was born and gave us an example to live by a way to love others. He wasn't the one who

gave us a better way to treat the poor. You know, I think we've missed the point. If we can just say he was a good man. He was 100% human and 100% God. At the same time, he was the God man. He was tempted in all poor. We were yet sinned, not we have those examples there. But what hope would we have if he wasn't God? It's amazing. When you read first Corinthians 15, it says that if he doesn't rise from the grave, that we are dead and still in our sins. But who could rise from the grave other than God, right? And I think that's the point to all this. It's not just about whether was there three wise men or how many magis was it? Was it really a Christmas night, or was it this or that? It's the fact that God became flesh and dwelt among us, and later it would be because Israel would have her fall would have led to our salvation here as the body of Christ, and that eventually they would get to a place of saying that if we will just place our faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that our sins would be covered and we will have eternal life with God that started from an earthly process of him in a manger, but Christ has always been because He's God, and that's who we serve, and we don't. We can't lose sight of that and just see a little baby or a bunch of gifts around the tree one time a year. We can use this to have discussions with people about who Jesus really was, and eventually what that means for you and I today. Because here's the result, we're going to unwrap things under trees. Lot of us are going to be excited. Some of the kids in here have been waiting for months to get that special gift, whatever it is, right? But we have been given the greatest gift of all time already, even when people put so much emphasis on that day and then they'll be able to say, I'm really depressed because that was the worst Christmas ever, or the best Christmas ever, whatever it is, you've already received the greatest gift, if you're a child of God here today. And when it comes to receiving things we know today in this dispensation of grace, we're told that we're going to receive all spiritual blessings in heavenly places one day, and we're going to be seated on the right hand of Christ, right we're going to be that he's seated on the right hand of God, and we're going to be seated in heavenly places. We've already been told that we're going to be with him in the heavenlies. We've been told that all of our sins have been forgiven. We've been told that we have a right relationship with Him, that nothing in our past is so big that it has separated us from God. We've been told that he loves us with a love so unconditional that we can't out send his love. You've received the greatest gift the very moment that you've placed your faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, acknowledging your sin and that only God himself can forgive sin and take that sin away from you, and he did that by sending Jesus to die on the cross for your sins. God hath committed his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The Bible describes in Ephesians, 2:8 as a gift for by grace, are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works. Lest any man should boast this season, as people talk about gifts and they talk about a baby born in a manger, why not use this as an opportunity to be the ambassador that you've been left here to be and appoint people towards the true gift of eternal life found in Jesus Christ alone and his shed blood on the cross. My suggestion would be not to offend anybody here, but don't run from the opportunity to share the gospel this season. Don't try to take such a stand that you've alienated people. They need to hear the cross. Need to hear about the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. You have the opportunity to give the greatest gift, and it's not going to cost you anything, because it cost God everything, and it will change people's life and give them a different perspective, and give them eternal hope, which, right now you do not have unless you've placed your faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And then lastly, I'll just say that gift, not only, not only does it give us this eternal hope, but God immediately comes and seals us with His Holy Spirit right now, the moment that we believe God is with us right now, and that's a down payment for us to be with Him in Heaven for all eternity. We can trust that's true. We can trust that Jesus is. Different than just a human that came and lived a healthy and maybe kept lived a healthy and miraculous life in some forms, right? We can trust this so much more, because God's word says it that he has always been God. So I wanted to take a week and be able to say Christ wasn't just a little baby to be left in a manger. He is the pre Incarnate Christ. He is God, and we should be able to stand on that today. He is God. I'm going to have everybody stand. We're going to pray. After which we'll sing a song, and then we will let you guys be dismissed. Let's pray, Dear

heavenly Father. I just pray right now, Lord, if there's anybody here, anybody listening, who's been struggling to make sense of the holiday season, maybe they're investigating today. Maybe they've been looking for a while. Maybe they've been trying to figure out what they need to do to earn your favor. Lord, I pray that today made sense for them, and at the end of the day, Lord, that if there's anybody here who says, I really don't know where I'm going to spend eternity, that today it was clear, Lord, we are sinners, and our sin has separated us from you, and there's a payment for that sin and that separation from you in a real place called hell. The wages of sin is death. But God, you commended your love toward us, you made a demonstration of your love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. You gave your very best for the very worst of us. You made it to where, if we just place our faith, faith alone, in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that our sins will be wiped away and we will be with you in heaven for all eternity. And at that moment, Lord, you seal us with your Holy Spirit of promise, and we are guaranteed eternal life with you, Lord, I pray, if there's anybody in here today who didn't believe that before right now, Lord that even while I'm praying, they would place their faith in that alone, maybe that what they heard today was the final piece that they needed. Maybe somebody else planted, and I did a little bit, what, a little bit of watering. But Lord, you gave the increase today. Please do not let anybody watching or in this place leave without knowing that they can be saved and be with you in heaven for all eternity. Thank you, Lord for making it so clear in Scripture that Jesus wasn't just born here on this earth and then began to exist, but that he has always existed. Lord. He is God. Lord, we just pray right now. Lord, that this season would be one filled with opportunities to share the gospel clearly to other people, that we would make known the death, burial and resurrection to all that we come in contact with. Lord, I pray that in this moment, Lord, when, when people are willing to talk, that we would be willing to give an answer and Lord, we pray. As a result, we would see the body of Christ be enlarged. Lord, we would see people get saved, and we'd see people grow in the knowledge of the truth. Lord, we pray you just be with us now. Help our people to be safe. Lord, help us to have a great day. Lord, as we sing to you right now, Lord, we love You and praise You. Amen. Amen.