

# The LPG

## *The Amen*

March 14, 2021

Good Morning faithful and true! How's it goin'? If you're visiting, welcome home. I'm pastor Bruce; and on behalf of the flock of friends you haven't yet met, welcome to where we're wrapping up learning to pray the LPG way.



The Lord's Prayer is a guide, and a remedy for perfunctory monotony, not to be recited for its own religious sake, but **memorized together to be personalized alone**, line by line. **Jesus didn't pray it, He taught it**, saying to pray "*in this way*" not "*with these words*". And it came with three warnings: 1) **Pray sincerely**; 2) **Pray secretly**; and 3) **Pray succinctly**. Because, there are two sides to talking with God: **speaking in our heart**, and **listening in His Word**. Now, here's your question:



**Why do we get speeding tickets?** Because we speed. But why do we speed? 55 in a 35 is "WOW – we're *flyin'*!" But 55 in a 55 is "Come on; we're *crawlin'*!" What is it about pushing the limit that's *so* tempting? Pastor Nick was a cop back in the 60s; I don't have a photo, so he'll be played by Robert Duvall. Anyway, Officer Harris tells me that he used to say, back in the day, "Nine you're fine; ten you're mine."



All that to say: Why do we get speeding tickets? Because **we're too focused on the destination to enjoy the journey**; same reason we tend to hurry through our prayers. Gotta get to the end – the Amen. Now, "amen" does *not* mean "the end", but we kind of use it that way, don't we? Like a signal to let the Lord know we're done. "And everybody said: 'The End!'"

When my daughter Shaz was little, she was sitting with me one Sunday while Pops was preaching, and this guy kept saying, "Amen!" Shaz whispers with concern, "Doesn't he like it?" I said, "He's agreeing with Grandpa." And she wrinkles her nose and says, "Oh. I thought he wanted him to stop." The best part of that story is that it's true.



Here's one that's fictional but helpful: Two strangers cross paths on a cruise ship deck, early one morning. Each notices that the other has a Bible; but they speak different languages. So they wave their Bibles, shake hands, and continue on. Suddenly one turns back and says, "Hallelujah!" And the other turns and replies, "Amen!"

**It's a declaration of the truth, and a commitment to faithfully carry it out.** Which is why I often say at the end of service, "If you agree, *declare* with me: Amen!" *And* it's one of Jesus' names.

These things says **the Amen**, the faithful and true Witness ... "You are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot." – Revelation 3:14-15 NAS

Either be a “faithful and true Witness” or *not*, but *not* a lukewarm witness *detering* others from the faith while *deceiving* yourself about your own. Best to be an *amen* witness: faithful and true. Did you know you speak fluent Hebrew? Well at least one *word*. I’ll read a couple Scriptures, and replace the highlighted words with their original Hebrew pronunciation.

[The Lord GOD will] call His servants by *another* name; so that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of **truth/amen**; and he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of **truth/amen**; – Isaiah 65:15-16 NKJ

Therefore know that the LORD ... [is] the **faithful/amen** God – Deuteronomy 7:9 NKJ

And Jesus tells us that *He’s* “the Amen”, faithful and true. Amen? You say: “Truly!” Amen? Truly! We’ll do that a few times today to help us lock it in. Because:

The people feared the LORD and put their **trust/amen** in Him – Exodus 14:31 NIV



Amen? Truly! Over 50 times, rather than end, Jesus begins with “Amen”.

While they were eating, He said, “**Amen**, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” [KJV: *Verily*; NKJ: *Assuredly*; NAS: *Truly*] – Matthew 26:21 NAB

This was unique to Jesus – who is *also* called the Word, the First and the Last, and the Beginning and the End, (Rev 22:13) because He *was* the end of the Old and the beginning of the New. And He puts the literal last word first, making the end the beginning. Add to that God’s declaration:

There is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, – Isaiah 46:9-10 NKJ

And you have classic Jesus. So many things going on simultaneously on so many levels. When Joshua (Jesus’ Hebrew name) led the people into the Promised Land, they stood on facing hills, as Moses had instructed, so that the priests could pronounce a curse on a list of sins, like:

“Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.” [Like Judas] And all the people [facing each other on the hillsides] shall say, “Amen.” – Deuteronomy 27:25 ESV

So, when Jesus says “**Amen, I say to you**, one of you will betray Me,” He’s pointing to the curse of sin! Not to mention *He’s* the Amen, and *as* the “Amen, I say”. So, the One without beginning or end (Heb 7:3) *is* the Beginning and the End, beginning with “amen” when proclaiming the end from the beginning of ushering in an eternal journey by grace through faith in the great Amen.



It’s like the “I do’s” at a wedding. They come at the end to mark the beginning of a marriage. **It’s a vow of commitment, faithfulness, and trust** that is simultaneously the end and the beginning. In the same way, our **Amen is an affirmation of truth and a vow of trust**, to live out what we pray about.

I wish the translators would’ve kept all the words as “amen” or “verily” or “truly” instead of mixing them up, which has caused much ignorance about their identical meaning. Amen? Truly!

If in the future you need a refresher on the LPG, beginning to end, remember: The Amen



Because, here we go! **If we think of God as a distant force, a religion, or a drill sergeant**, we can't truly, "amenly" pray: "Our *Father*". Because **He wants to hear just one or two heartfelt words that declare He's your Dad**. Because He *is*, and He *loves* you with the love of an "amenly" *perfect* Parent.

Is He *not* your *Father*, your *Creator*, who *made* you and formed you? – Deut 32:6 NIV

God has sent the Spirit of *His* Son into *our* hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" – Gal 4:6 ESV

Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a *child* shall not enter it. – Mark 10:15 ESV



Amen? Truly! Now on the other hand, **if we disregard His absolute and utter authority**, and think of Him as a buddy or an ol' softy, we can't truly, "amenly" add: "In *heaven*". You know, above all. In full control. And He's near; right in here. So **this isn't about distance from us, but majesty above us**.

Acknowledge *and* take to *heart* this day that the Lord is God in heaven *above and* on the earth [down here] below. There is no other. – Deuteronomy 4:39 NIV

[So] Let us lift our hearts and hands to God in heaven. – Lamentations 3:41 NKJ



Amen? Truly! Now **if we're careless with how we represent our His perfect righteousness and holiness**, we can't amenly pray: "*Hallowed* be Your name". Because **He is literally the very only definition of godliness**. Plus, hallowed things are cherished and treasured. Especially the *one* name.

Do *all* in the name of the Lord Jesus, – Colossians 3:17 NKJ

For in Him dwells *all* the fullness of the Godhead bodily; – Colossians 2:9 NKJ

For it pleased the *Father* that *in* Him *all* the fullness should dwell, and *by* Him to reconcile *all* things ... whether things *on earth* or things *in heaven*, having made peace through the blood of His cross. – Colossians 1:19-20 NKJ

Therefore *God* ... [has] given *Him* the name which is above *every* name, that *at* the name of *Jesus every* knee should bow ... and that *every* tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ* is *Lord*, to the *glory* of God the *Father*. – Philippians 2:8-11 NKJ



Amen? Truly! Now **if we're unconcerned about the salvation of those around us**, or apathetic about praying for, and watching for, that *open door*, we can't sincerely say: "*Your kingdom come*". Because **it must come first, and then advance, heart by heart, as His ambassadors reach out on His behalf**.

See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, – Zechariah 9:9 NIV

For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you. – Luke 17:21 NKJ

I will exalt you, my God the *King*; I will praise *Your name* for ever – Psalm 145:1-2 NIV



Amen? Truly! Now **if we think of eternity as a journey that hasn't yet begun**, or we deceive ourselves into thinking we're bending His will to ours, rather than bowing ours to His, we can't amenly pray: "*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*". Which is: **immediately, enthusiastically, and completely!**

I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but ... the will of the Father ... that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; – John 6:37-40 NKJ

This is the will of God, *your holiness* – 1 Thessalonians 4:3 NAB

For by one sacrifice He has made *perfect forever* those who are *being made holy*. – Hebrews 10:14 NIV



Amen? Truly! Now **if we're too busy to pray daily**; or too blessed to see our need to declare our dependence on our Provider **for what we lack, like the daily compassion for generously sharing our dough**, we can't honestly say: "*Give us this day our daily bread*". For man does not live by bread alone.

[So] Give me *only* my *daily* bread. Otherwise, I may have too *much* and disown You ... Or I may become poor and ... dishonor the *name* of my God. – Proverbs 30:8-9 NIV

[Who said] "I am the Bread of Life." – John 6:35 NKJ

Blessed be the *Lord*, who *daily* bears us up; – Psalm 68:19 ESV

Seek *first His* kingdom and *His* righteousness, – Matthew 6:19-33 NIV

For where your *treasure* is, there also will your heart be. – Matthew 6:21 NAB



Amen? Truly! Now **if we're reluctant to face whatever violates our faith**, and separates our closeness with Christ, we can't amenly pray: "Forgive us our debts". **Unconfessed sin may not make us un-saved, but it makes us un-close and unclean and unhappy.** And it certainly makes our merciful Dad sad.

For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, – Psalm 86:5 NKJ

Return to the Lord, and He will have mercy – Isaiah 55:7 NKJ

Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the Lord – Malachi 3:7 NIV



Amen? Truly! Now **if we'd rather hold a grudge than behold the godlike power of forgiveness**, as though we had a choice, we can't seriously say: "*As we forgive our debtors*". *Offering* forgiveness is how we express gratitude for *receiving* forgiveness. **So pray it or not, the way we judge, we will be judged.**

Even as Christ forgave *you*, so you also must *do*. – Colossians 3:13 NKJ

That you may be *children* of your *Father in heaven*. – Matthew 5:45 NIV

They may see your good deeds and *glorify* your *Father in heaven*. – Matthew 5:16 NIV



Amen? Truly! Now **if we'd rather give in, and wade in, to a little sin, rather than fight the good fight**, and steer clear or stand strong, we can't amenly pray: "*Lead us not into temptation*". This here's a prayer to be *strengthened* not *spared*. And **not from temptation touching me, but me touching it**. For:

The heart is *deceitful* above all things, – Jeremiah 17:9-10 ESV

Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his *own* desires ... Do not be *deceived* ...

Every good gift ... comes down from the Father of lights, – James 1:14-17 NIV

Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; – Psalm 43:3 NKJ

I am the Light of the world – John 8:12 NIV

He who does the truth comes to the Light, – John 3:21 NKJ

Their *understanding* darkened ... because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; – Ephesians 4:18 NKJ

Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, – John 8:12 NIV



Amen? Truly! Now **if we're unwilling to own up to our part of the problem**, or we know deep down we're resisting our Savior rather than the enemy, we can't earnestly say: "Deliver us from the evil". Because **like if we're drowning, it's not what's around us, but the part that gets in us, that'll finally kill us**.

I am with you to save you and deliver you, – Jeremiah 15:20 NAS

He fulfills the *desires* of those who *fear* Him; He hears their *cry* – Psalm 145:19-20 NIV

Yes, if you *cry out* for *discernment*, and *lift up* your voice for *understanding* ... *understanding* will keep you, to *deliver* you from the way of evil, – Proverbs 2:3-12 NKJ



Amen? Truly! Now **if we see prayer as an option to choose when one finds the time**; merely lukewarm, no aim to transform, then we *absolutely* cannot *amenly* close by proclaiming: "Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory". Because **this is a declaration of war for deliverance from all darkness**.

For He received honor and *glory* from God the *Father* when the voice came to Him from the *Majestic Glory*, saying, "This is My Son, whom I love;" – 2 Peter 1:17 NIV

[The *Father*] has *delivered* us from the *power* of *darkness* and *conveyed* us into the *kingdom* of the Son of His love, – Colossians 1:13 NKJ

The Son of Man has *power* on *earth* to forgive sins – Matthew 9:6 NKJ

[Your saints] shall speak of the *glory* of *Your kingdom*, and talk of *Your power*, to make known ... the *glorious majesty* of *His kingdom*. – Psalm 145:11-12 NKJ



So **if you know deep-down you don't mean the "Amen," because you have yet to jump in with both feet**, don't bother saying: "Forever". Because *that* can *only, truly, amenly* be said by those who *are* the kingdom, and *in* it for the long haul, and enjoying the ride – and well aware, that:

Yours, O Lord, *is* ... the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for *all* that is in heaven and in earth is *Yours*; Yours *is* the kingdom, O Lord, – 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 NKJ

And of *His* kingdom there will be *no end*. – Luke 1:31-33 ESV

[He] has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made *us* to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father—to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! – Revelation 1:5-6 NIV

From everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "*Amen!*" – Psalm 106:48 NKJ

And all the assembly *said* "Amen" and [like *we'll* be doing] praised the Lord. *And* the people [*hopefully, like we'll* be doing] *did* as they had *promised*. – Nehemiah 5:13 ESV

Be careful with that last little word. That's one of Jesus' *names*. And when we say "Amen", we say "I do" to Him, **as a vow to trust and to act on the truth of the private things we've prayed.**

**It's all part of the joy of the journey through eternity – not a race to "the end".**

Amen? Truly!

Let's memorize together what I trust you'll personalize alone.

Our father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,<sup>1</sup> but deliver us from the evil.<sup>2</sup> For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ

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<sup>1</sup> This line is from the KJV rather than the NKJ which reads: "Do not lead us into temptation"

<sup>2</sup> This line is from the YLT rather than the NKJ which reads: "Deliver us from the evil one"