



MT. ROSE REFORMED
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Law of God

Reverend Scott Johnson | October 5, 2025 | Exodus 20:1, 2

Old Testament Reading

The Old Testament reading is Exodus chapter 20, verses 1 through 17, Exodus 20, 1 through 17. And this is the inerrant, the infallible word of God. Let's hear God's word.

And God spoke all these words saying, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male servant or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

"Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

New Testament Reading

For our New Testament reading, let's turn to Romans chapter 13, Romans 13, verses eight through 10. Romans 8, Romans 13, 8 through 10. "Owe no one anything except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and any other commandment are summed up in this word, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. You may turn back to Exodus chapter 20.

As a Christian, you are well aware and you have heard many times that you are called to pursue a life of righteousness, to strive for holiness, to please God, to be Christ-like. In fact, this morning we heard again, in our reading of the law, the words of our Lord Jesus, who told us that the first great commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, to love our neighbor as ourselves. And so we know these things, and yet that raises the question, or the question is, specifically, what does that look like? What does a righteous life look like? What is a holy life? How are we to please God? How do you and I love God with all our being? How do we love our neighbor as ourselves?

And the answer to those questions, the question of specifically, what does righteousness look like? The answer to that question is given to us in the law of God, in God's commandments. Now, God has given us his commandments or his law in many places in scripture, in both the Old and the New Testaments, but God has been pleased to give us a summary of his commandments, of all that he requires of us as those who are not only his image bearers, but as those whom he has redeemed to honor him. He has given us all that he requires of us, his law, in ten relatively short commandments, or as the Hebrew refers to them, the ten words.

And these are the Ten Commandments, which the Lord himself, unlike other parts of his law or parts of his speech to his people of Israel, these commandments were given by the voice of the Lord himself. They were written by the finger of God himself on tablets of stone. And in these Ten Commandments, which God has given us, we are given a picture or a description of what

righteousness looks like, what a holy life looks like. Here is what it means, as we look at these commandments, here's what it means to love God with all our heart and soul, strength and mind. Here's what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves.

And Lord willing, in the weeks to come, we will examine each of the Ten Commandments. We will take one at a time and we will begin to unpack at least a little bit of what each commandment means for us, what is required of us according to each commandment. We could spend several sermons on each commandment so we'll only scratch the surface, so to speak, but we will look in detail at what each of these commandments require of us.

But today our text is only the words that the Lord spoke right before he spoke the first commandment. And that is the words that he spoke in verse two. These are considered the preface or the introduction to the Lord's or to the Ten Commandments. And as we look at verse two and the words that the Lord spoke there at the same time, I want us to consider together just so that we can begin to understand better the nature of the law, its purpose, why God has given it to us. And so we're going to consider what has been called the three uses of the law, the three uses of the law today.

The Law Leads Us to Christ

And the first use of the law is this, that the law of God leads us to Christ. The law of God leads us to Christ. Now, one way that the law of God leads us to Christ, or at least points us to Christ, is that it is a reflection of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. So in order to see that, we need to understand that what the law does is that it expresses the character of God. We can say that that is true about any law that is given by anybody. The law that someone or a government gives tells us something about the lawmaker, tells us something about the character, the nature of the one who makes that law.

For example, in the United States we have laws that protect free speech. And what that tells us is that as a society, we value the importance of the freedom to speak, even if we're speaking against the government. That's something that is enshrined in our constitution and in our laws, because that is something that we value. And so we learn something about the society that makes that law when we look at the law. And when it comes to the Ten Commandments, the law of God, they are an expression of the character of the Lord who gives us the law. They are an expression of his perfect righteousness, his perfect holiness, his purity.

To give just one example, the seventh commandment forbids adultery. And this is a reflection of the truth that God is faithful. God is faithful. And he is faithful to his promises that he makes to his people. He cannot deny himself. He cannot go back on his word. He keeps his promises. And therefore he gives us this commandment that we too are to keep our promises, especially the promise that we make to our spouse. And so in that way, this commandment tells us something about the character of God who gave it to us.

It is for this reason that every sin that we commit is really, most basically, a sin against the Lord. Because when we break God's law, we are attacking the character of God that is expressed in that law. We are acting contrary to the person of the Lord who gave us that law. One great example of this that we see in the scriptures is King David. When he sinned terribly and committing adultery with Bathsheba and then having her husband Uriah killed, he broke the seventh commandment. And very obviously he sinned against Bathsheba. He sinned against Uriah. But even more fundamentally, David's sin was against God himself. And so he says in Psalm 51.4, "Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight." Well, David knew that he had sinned against people as well. But he says, when he goes to God, "It is ultimately against you, O Lord. You only have I sinned and done what is evil."

And since the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, since Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is the incarnate Lord, since he is the radiance of God's glory, the law then, even these Ten Commandments reflect specifically the holiness and righteousness of Christ. The one who gives us these commandments is none other than Christ himself, the same Jesus that we read about in the pages of the New Testament. He is the same Lord who appeared to the people of Israel on Mount Sinai and who wrote these commandments with his very finger and gave them to the people of Israel. And so when we look at the Ten Commandments, when we consider the law of God, we need to see by faith that they are revealing to us the righteousness, the holiness, the character of Jesus himself.

So that's one way that the law leads us to Christ, but another way that the law leads us to Christ is this. The law of God shows us our sin, the depth of our sin, the wickedness, the evil of our sin, and it shows us, therefore, our need, our desperate need for a savior. This is why, as we saw last week, the Lord gave the law to the Israelites in the way that he did, and that is with these terrifying signs of his presence and of his power. The Lord came down on Mount Sinai with thunder and lightning and smoke and fire, with the piercing sound of trumpets. The very mountain itself trembled in the presence of the Lord. The Israelites trembled with fear in His

presence. And God made himself known to the Israelites in this dreadful way when he gave them his law because he wanted the Israelites to take his commandments very seriously. He wanted to impress upon them the truth that to transgress the commandments of God, to break God's law, is to transgress against a God who is holy and to incur his awful wrath.

But when we go on in the Old Testament, we see that God at Mount Sinai, he gave other laws to the people of Israel. He even gave them laws that gave them hope for forgiveness. The Lord gave the Israelites laws for a priesthood, for animal sacrifices. And these animal sacrifices, these blooded sacrifices enabled the Israelites to draw near to the Lord to worship Him, knowing that though they were sinners, though they were guilty, that there was some atonement for their sins, some expiation for their sins, so that they could come before the Lord, knowing that they are accepted by Him despite their sin and guilt. And God wanted His people to know through these animal sacrifices that they were to prepare for, to expect, to hope for one who would be a true and perfect sacrifice, who would offer not the blood of bulls and goats, but offer his own blood as man in order to make atonement for the sins of the people of God. And so in giving this law, it was God's will to lead his people to see their need for Jesus Christ, their need for the coming Messiah, the Savior, who would take away their sin forever.

And as we go through each of the Ten Commandments, what I pray and hope that the Lord will do is to impress upon our hearts as we read these commandments, the absolute perfection, the holiness, the righteousness that is demanded of us by God who gives us these commandments. He demands nothing less than perfection from us. And I pray that by the Spirit of God, by the grace of God, we will experience that conviction of heart that we have broken these commandments. Even if we have not broken them externally in the very acts that they describe, in our hearts we have broken these commandments. We have not fulfilled them perfectly. We have so badly missed the mark. But as we are convicted by the Lord of that, my prayer is that we will also be led to the Lord Jesus Christ, to the one in whom there is forgiveness and grace and mercy, because we have broken his commandments.

And this is where the gospel comes in. We hear the law of God. We recognize its righteousness, that it comes from God, that he rightfully requires this of us, and at the same time, we recognize when we consider ourselves that we have broken his commandments. And so we are condemned by the law. But at the very same time, God reveals to us his son, his son, Jesus Christ, that in Christ we have a savior who has taken that condemnation for us. That when Jesus suffered upon the cross, when he died upon the cross, he was bearing in himself the

wrath, the condemnation of a holy God against you and me for our sin. Your sin, my sin, Jesus bore it there at the cross. He became a curse for us. Galatians 3.13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree."

And so as we hear the law of God, as we are brought under that conviction by the Holy Spirit, we turn to the One, to the only One who can save us, who gives us life, who gives us forgiveness, who makes us right with God forever, and that is His Son, Jesus Christ. And so the wrong way to hear the law is to hear it and to think, "This is what I must do to be made right with God." That is the wrong way to receive the law of God. But we hear it and we recognize, "We've broken it. We cannot keep it. We have not kept it. We need forgiveness."

One preacher put it this way. The law is a mirror in which we see a reflection of ourselves in our sin and guilt. And then he says, "How do we use a mirror in everyday life?" If we look in the mirror and we see our face and it is dirty and needs to be cleaned, we don't take the mirror off the wall and try to clean our face with it, but we use soap and water to cleanse our face and to clean ourselves. And in the very same way, all the law can do is show us our need for cleansing. We cannot be cleansed by the law. We cannot be forgiven by the law. We cannot be made right with God by it, but we can flee to the one whom God has given us for that purification and forgiveness, His Son, Jesus Christ.

And so the deeper then that we understand the law of God, the more that we penetrate the depths of it, and the scripture invites us to do that, to see the law, these commandments, not just what they describe on the surface, but to go under the surface, to go deep, to see how it penetrates the heart and the thoughts of our hearts. But as we do so, the more we see the divine purity and the perfections of God in the law, the deeper the understanding of our own sin will become. But at the same time, by the grace of God, the deeper our understanding and appreciation of the grace of God will be, and the greater our love and devotion to Christ will be as a result. And so, in this way, God uses the law in order to draw us to Christ, and to reveal to us the magnificent depths of the grace of God in Christ, the love of God for us, the forgiveness that we have in Him.

J. Gresham Machen said this, "Men would have little difficulty with the gospel if they had only learned the lesson of the law." People don't understand the gospel because they don't understand the law. He said, "So it always is. A low view of the law always brings legalism in

religion. A high view of the law makes a man a seeker after grace." And that's what we want to be, seekers after grace as we study the commandments that God has given us. So that's the first use of the law, that God uses it to lead us to Christ for salvation.

The Law Restrains Evil

The second use of the law is this, the law of God restrains sin in society. There are times when it seems like the world is coming apart at the seams, when there are acts of such unspeakable evil and wickedness that are so shocking, so reprehensible, so disturbing that we wonder at times if the powers of sin and evil are about to engulf the world entirely. And perhaps there have been many of us in the last several weeks that have felt that way as we have seen the events in the news. But even in the darkest of times, even in times when evil seems to triumph, God is still sovereign over all things. We have a God who is infinitely good and infinitely powerful. He is sovereign over all things in this world. And by His grace and by His goodness, He restrains evil from breaking out. He restrains sin from running its full course. He keeps evil and sin from bringing total chaos and ruin to the human race, which it would if God had not kept it in check. And one way that the Lord does this is through His law. The law of God serves to keep people from being as evil and doing as much wickedness as they would otherwise do. In other words, God's law restrains or subdues the power of sin in the world.

And this is evident even in Exodus chapter 20. If you look at verse 20, Exodus chapter 20, verse 20, we read this, Moses said to the people, Verse 20, "Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.'" And so one of the reasons then that God gave the law to the Israelites was to keep them from sinning.

And one way that God uses his law to restrain the outbreak of evil in society is through the witness of our conscience. In Romans chapter two, the apostle Paul is speaking of the unbeliever. What he says is true of the believer as well, but he speaks of the unbeliever specifically. He says in Romans chapter two, verse 15, "They, that is unbelievers, they show that the work of the law is written on their hearts while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them." And so what the apostle is saying here, what the scriptures are saying here is that there is inscribed of the heart of every human being, a copy of the Ten Commandments, that God has put his law upon our hearts. And he does that through our conscience, through our conscience.

And this is why that even those who have never heard of the gospel, of those who have never read the Bible, those who have never heard or read of the Ten Commandments, they can do good things. At least if we're speaking on a relative human plane, even unbelievers can do good things. And this is why it's the case that even in societies that have little or no Christian influence, there still will be in those societies generally accepted morals that more or less are consistent with the Ten Commandments. And so, for example, as far as I know, as far as I can tell, no matter where you go in the world, it will be generally accepted that certain things are wrong. It is wrong to steal, it is wrong to lie, it is wrong to kill, and so on.

A more specific example, in the nation of Japan, I doubt that you could find one person in a hundred, if that, that would be able to tell you what the Eighth Commandment says. Hopefully we all know what the Eighth Commandment says. "Thou shalt not steal." And yet, despite that, if you leave your wallet on a subway in Tokyo, the chances are very good that somebody's going to turn that into the authorities, and the chances are very good that your cash will still be in it. I don't think that that would happen on the subways of New York City. It's different there. But it shows that even in societies that are not Christian, or they have not had a Christian influence, there's still a moral sense of what is right and wrong.

Another way that God in his providence uses his law to maintain some sense of order and stability in society is when human governments make and enforce laws that reflect the justice and the righteousness of God's law. Of course, no human government does this perfectly, but generally speaking, most governments have laws that more or less are conformed to the moral code that God gives us in the Ten Commandments. And so in Romans chapter 13 verse 4, when the apostle Paul is speaking about civil government or a civil ruler, he says, "He is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer."

Now, Paul was not speaking of an ideal Christian government. He was speaking about the Roman government at the time. But he was saying that God has ordained this government, as evil as it may be in some respects, to maintain some semblance of order in society by enforcing laws which have some reflection, at least, of the law of God. And so when a government punishes thieves and murderers and other wrongdoers, God uses that threat and that dread of punishment to restrain evil in a society. And so again, the law cannot save a single human being. No one has ever been redeemed or saved by the law of God. Nevertheless, this is a second use of the law, that God puts it on our hearts. Governments make laws that reflect it in

some way in order to restrain sin, to restrain evil in society so that evil does not break out and we have total chaos. That's the second use of the law.

The Law Shows Us How to Live Lives Pleasing to God

The third use of the law, and this is the use that John Calvin referred to as the third and principal use of the law, and that is this. The law shows us as Christians how we are to live lives pleasing to God. And this is where we want to consider verse two here. And so before the Lord gave his commandments to the Israelites, he said to them in verse two, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Now what's significant about that is this, that God gave his law to a redeemed people, to a saved people. First, God gave them grace. That's what we've been looking at as we've been going through Exodus, the power, the grace of God in delivering his people out of Egypt. He defeated Pharaoh, he defeated the Egyptians, he rescued his people from their bondage there, their slavery, and now, having brought them out of that slavery, he gives them a law to keep as his people.

Now, what would be the opposite of that? What if God worked differently than that? What if he, in response to the cries of the people as they cried out for mercy to the Lord because of their bondage in Egypt, what if the Lord said to his people through Moses, "Okay, you people of God, you Israelites, here's my law, here are my Ten Commandments. You keep these commandments, and once you keep them perfectly, then I will bring you out of Egypt. I will save you from your bondage to sin or your bondage to Pharaoh there." Well, we know that if that was the case, first of all, the Israelites would still be in bondage to Egypt. We know that they would never have kept God's law perfectly. But not only that, their salvation would have depended on their keeping the law of God. Their salvation would be based upon their obedience to the law.

But that's not the case. It's certainly not the case with us as well. First, God gives us grace. God is merciful to us. He comes to us in our sin, our misery, our bondage to sin, to the powers of evil. He comes to us and He saves us through His Son, Jesus Christ, through the obedience of Christ, through the death and resurrection of Christ, through the power of the Spirit of Christ. He delivers us out of the kingdom of darkness, and He brings us into His kingdom, the kingdom of light and life and peace and forgiveness in His Son, Jesus Christ. So He saves us from our sin, and then He gives us a law to keep. He gives us a law to keep.

Another way to put this is this, that for those who are in covenant with God, they are bound to obey his law. Verse two says, "I am the Lord your God." This is covenant language. The covenant is that arrangement by which God makes us his God, or he makes us his people and he becomes our God. And so the people of Israel are the people of God, and because they are in covenant with God, they must keep the terms of His covenant, which are obedience to His commandments.

And we too, as believers in Jesus Christ, are in covenant with God. The covenant that God has made with us is a covenant of grace. We are saved by grace. We are not delivered from our sin and guilt by the obedience that we bring to God, but by the obedience of Jesus Christ. And yet we are in covenant with God because we belong to him by faith in Jesus Christ, because we are his people. Therefore, we are bound to obey him, to keep his commandments, to keep his word.

In fact, you could say that this is why God saved us in the first place, that we would be his servants. You remember in Exodus when Moses went to Pharaoh to demand that Pharaoh release the Israelites, that he let his people go, that they were to do so in order that they would serve the Lord. "Let my people go that they may serve me." And in the very same way, you have been redeemed through Jesus Christ, you have been saved in order that you would be servants of God, to obey Him, to keep His commandments. Ephesians 2.10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

But at this point, someone might say, "But wait a minute, doesn't the Bible say that we are not under law but under grace?" And understood properly, of course that is true, that is wonderfully true, that is gloriously true. We are not under law in the sense that we are not under the law as a system or a means by which we come to God and are saved by God, no. We are not under law as a means of salvation. Romans 3.28, "For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law." In that sense, we are not under the law.

However, the Lord who died for us, the Lord who gave his life for us, that we might be justified apart from works of the law, he is the same Lord who said this. "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them." Now, whatever precisely Jesus means when he says, "I have come to fulfill the law," what it does not mean absolutely is that he has come to abolish the law, that he has come to get rid of the law

for us so that we are no longer under the law of God. He says explicitly, "I have not come to abolish them."

Still, someone may say, "Well, that's all very good, but as Christians, shouldn't we just let love or the Holy Spirit be our guide in knowing exactly how we are to render obedience to God's will? Why should we give so much attention to the letter of the law? Why are we going to spend weeks looking at the Ten Commandments and exploring all that they mean for us and all that they require of us? Won't that just make us moralistic, legalistic Pharisees?" That way of thinking reminds me of a cartoon I once saw. Moses is standing on the top of Mount Sinai, and he's looking up to God, and he has the tablets of God in his hands, and he says to God, "We were kind of hoping to just let conscience be our guide."

Now, thankfully, the Lord has given us a conscience. He gives us a conscience to remind us of what he requires of us, but the problem is we cannot do that. We cannot rely upon our conscience to guide us in how we are to render to God the obedience that He requires of us. For one thing, we so easily silence our conscience, we sidestep our conscience in the way in which we deceive ourselves.

A great example of this comes from one of the places where we have missionaries in Uganda. We have missionaries in a very rural area of Uganda called Karamoja. Traditionally, I don't know how much they do this anymore, but traditionally, the Karamojan, the Karamoja people, their worldview is that God has given them all the cattle in the world. And so when they go out to raid cattle from another tribe, they're not actually stealing cattle, they're just reclaiming for themselves what rightfully belongs to them. And so in their minds, they've convinced themselves that what they're doing is right even though it is truly evil, but they can silence their conscience that way.

We can do the same thing. For example, we may tell ourselves, "I know I should tell the truth to this person, but I cannot do that, because if I tell the truth to this person about this particular matter, it will probably ruin our relationship, or it will put me in a very awkward position. I will look very bad." And so I justify using deceit by saying, "I have to lie, I have to be deceitful in order to protect our relationship or to protect myself from some difficulty." And when we do that, we sidestep our conscience or we silence our conscience. And so we need explicit words from God as to what is right and what is wrong. We cannot rely upon our conscience.

Another reason we cannot do so is because our conscience is not fully informed apart from the revelation of scripture. For example, if God had not revealed in his word that he has given us one day in seven, one day of the week in seven days that are to be devoted to him for rest and to worship the Lord, our conscience would not reveal that to us. We would not know about that. We would not know the Fourth Commandment, that we are to keep the Lord's day holy. Or if God had not explicitly commanded us in the Second Commandment that we are not to make images of God, the first thing that we would do in worshipping God is make images of Him, because that is what we do by nature.

And so even as redeemed people, even as those to whom God has given new hearts in the Holy Spirit, we cannot rely upon our conscience alone to direct us in how specifically we are to please and to honor God. We cannot rely on the idea of love alone to guide us. We cannot rely on the Holy Spirit apart from the word to direct us, but we need the word of God, the commandments of God to show us how we are to render to him that obedience that he requires. And that's why God has given us his Ten Commandments.

And so here's the dynamic of how the law of God works in our lives as Christians. First, the law leads us to Christ. We recognize our sin. We see how we have broken his law. And so we flee to the Son of God, to the one who saves us. But then, as those who have been redeemed, as those who have been saved and justified and given the promise and the assurance of eternal life with God forever, out of gratitude, out of joy, because of this great salvation, we desire to serve and to worship this wonderful God who has redeemed us. And so out of that gratitude, we go back to the law to learn how we are to do that, how we are to please God, to honor Him, to express our thanksgiving to Him for His grace and His mercy to us in Christ.

And so that is the third use of the law. It directs us, it leads us in the way that we are to live lives pleasing to Him as His people, as His redeemed people whom He has saved by grace. As a final word on this subject of the positive use of the law in our lives as Christians, I want to leave us with this thought, that the scripture assures us that there is blessing in keeping the law. We ought not to look at the law and see only oppression, drudgery, a misery, that's certainly not how the psalmist saw it. Psalm 119, speaking of God's commandments, "Moreover, by them is your servant warned. In keeping them, there is great reward." There is blessedness in walking in the way that God reveals to us in his commandments.

Now, of course, this is all of grace. It's all of grace. Any obedience on your part or my part in rendering that we might render to God in keeping his commandments. This is ultimately the fruit of the spirit of God in us, producing that obedience. And yet God promises to bless obedience to his revealed will. As one author put it, the obedience does not just bring blessing, but obedience is a blessing. It is a blessing. It is good, it is delightful. It brings blessing and happiness when we walk in the commandments that God has given us in his word. God has set out in his word for us the path in which we are to walk. And that path is visible only in the light of these Ten Commandments of his law for us. As we saw from our reading in Romans chapter 13, this is the path of love. This is the way of love, how we love God, how we love our neighbor. We do so by keeping his commandments, by his grace. This is how we love our neighbor, by walking in his law. And there is blessing in doing so. And as we continue from here, as we look at the Ten Commandments, I want us to remember God's design for His law. We are not saved by it, and yet as God's redeemed people, He gives it to us for our good. And there is blessedness in walking according to the law of God when we do so by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and enabled by His Holy Spirit. And may we grow in that as we look at these commandments.

Let's ask the Lord for His blessing. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word.