

Working Out Your Salvation

The Wonder and Mystery of Sanctification

February 05, 2017

Part 5- Media Gratiae- the “Means” of Our Sanctification- Part 2

The Acts 2:37-44

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

38 Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"

41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;

To the Glory of God

Now as Bible-believing Christians, we believe in a Sovereign, miraculous, and supernatural God. And that means that we believe that God does things all by Himself. For example, God created everything out of nothing (ex-nihilo) in six- 24 hour divisions of time called "days" that began with the first "evening". And so, we are correct to say that God created all things, "sovereignly", which means that God did this all by Himself, and thus, is entitled to the Glory and Worship that comes with being the "one and only" Creator of the Universe.

But as we examine the Creation Record of **Genesis** closely, we see that God actually used other things *beside* Himself. Now, the fact that God is absolutely Sovereign over everything, all the time, means that God didn't *have* to do it that way. God *could* have just *thought* about Creation and it would have come into being. But, He didn't do that. In a very powerful and real expression of His Own sovereign Prerogative, God chose to use *other* things with which to create all things. And those "other things" can be rightly called "the *means* of Creation."

For example, as he was "moved along" by God the Holy Spirit about 1,450 years before Jesus was born, Moses wrote this in **Genesis 1:3**:

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

... here the one, true, living God used His Word in creating "**light**" four "days" *before* He created the sun. So, we see at least three things about this:

1. God's Word was with God in the very beginning.
2. God used His Word as a "means" of Creation.
3. There is a "light" that has nothing to do with what comes from the sun.

And then, almost 1500 years *later*, the Apostle John was moved along by the very *same* Holy Spirit that had visited Moses and he wrote this in **John 1:1-5; 9-10; 14**:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

... so the "Word" that was *always* with God and that was *in the beginning with God*, the "Word" that was God, and the "Word" that has life in Himself, which Life is the "Light of men", and the "Word" that became flesh and dwelt among the Apostles, John also says that this very same "Word" was the instrument or the "means" by which God made everything that was made.

And, of course, both the writer of **Hebrews** and the Apostle Paul went to great lengths to teach that Jesus was not only the instrument or the "means" by which all things were created, but He is also the "Heir" of all things that have been created. So, everything came from Jesus and will go to Jesus. So truly, Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

And then, later on, Moses also used things like water, dirt, and a human rib to create fish and animals, and even Man and Woman. So, in those cases, water, dirt, and a rib were also "means" of Creation.

The point here is that Creation was God's idea. It wasn't accidental or random as the Biology teachers and text books say. They are wrong, and they are teaching things that aren't true. They are using patently unscientific and anti-intellectual concepts to indoctrinate children into a lie and a myth designed by satan to deceive the fruit of the womb into disbelieving in the Bible and God. And parents who can think and who love Jesus should be outraged at that.

There is only one record of Creation. And it isn't a "scientific" or "biological" record, it is a "theological" record. But it is crystal clear. The inerrant and infallible word of the living God says repeatedly and clearly that Creation was deliberate, and it was carried out on purpose by a Good and Almighty God for His Glory.

So, God the Father *designed* Creation, and then God the Son and God the Spirit carried Creation out, exactly as God planned. And God did this *sovereignly*, but He didn't do it by Himself. God used "tools" or "instruments" or "means" to carry out His Will in Creation.

And the same thing is true in both the birth that is natural and the miraculous New Birth. God carries it out, and He does so very powerfully and wondrously, but He uses "means" to do so. For example,

one naturally born Man is united in Holy Matrimony with one naturally born Woman, and, in God's timing and Will, a natural baby is born.

And the Bible teaches that being Born Again or being Regenerated is a sovereign Work of God. Before He ever created the world, God "set His Love" on certain people and predestined them to Salvation and Adoption and Glory.

And once these people are naturally born, there is a time, a particular moment, specified only by God, where God the Spirit comes to them in their lost condition, *before* they ask for it and *before* they even want it, and God *sovereignly* gives them eyes to see and ears to hear and gives them a heart of flesh (or the gift of "saving faith"), and sovereignly *transforms* their nature from being "fallen" to being "divine". And, at that moment, these people know and understand that they are lost, they can hear and understand the Gospel, they are given the ability and desire to believe the Gospel, and they are empowered and enabled to repent and trust in God the Son, Jesus Christ, and in His finished Work. And at that moment, these wicked sinners are "justified" and "forgiven" and "made righteous".

But even though God did that, He *didn't* do it by Himself. God uses external "means" by which to save lost sinners. Yet the Bible teaches that God doesn't use angels to save people. And He doesn't use signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit either. No, the Bible teaches in **1 Corinthians 1:21**

For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to know* God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

So, the Great, Almighty, and Effectual God of the Universe has chosen to do something that can only be described as "foolish". He has empowered weak, frail, and imperfect people to *herald* and *proclaim* "authoritatively" and "rightly" and "fully" the Biblical Gospel to people who *can't* hear it and people who don't *want* it. And as that seemingly foolish "method" or "means" is faithfully carried out, God, in all three Persons, uses the "means" of the Word preached, to save them that have already been given the ability to believe, and lost sinners are justified and made fit for Heaven! So, even though Salvation can be described as a "sovereign Work of God alone", God uses "Means" to achieve it.

So, as we continue on our short “vacation” from the verse by verse “journey” through the Gospel of Luke to go through the Wonder and Miracle of Sanctification, as we begin this new year, we need to understand that even though it is true that saved people being made progressively more holy may be described as a “sovereign Work of God”, that God, nonetheless, uses various “ways” or “spiritual tools” or “means” by which this is made real in our lives. And as we began last week, four of the “Means of Sanctification” are listed right here in **The Acts 2:42** that says:

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

As we learned last week, God has *sovereignly* and *lovingly* given at least four “graces”, or four “means”, by which already saved people are made holy:

1. The Apostles' Teaching
2. Godly Fellowship
3. The Breaking of Bread (The Lord's Supper)
4. Prayer

Now keep in mind that this is not something that lost people were doing. This is only for the saved. This took place inside the Church among those who were already saved. And, please, take special notice of the “way” or the “manner” in which the early Church engaged in these four “Means of Sanctification”:

They were continually devoting themselves...

Now the word “**continually**” means: *very often; at regular or frequent intervals; habitually; all the time; without cessation or intermission; unceasingly; and always.* And, at a minimum, these four “Means of Sanctification” were not carried out *haphazardly* or *periodically* by the early Church. They didn’t just “happen” *if and when* people felt like it. These four things were *planned* and *scheduled* and *determined*.

Now as you ponder what I just said, it is important for us to remember that during the days when these four “Means of

Sanctification" were being carried out *continually*, Christianity was an *illegal* and *persecuted* religion. For the believers to be engaged in these four "means" *continually* meant they did so under great hardship and punishment, even imprisonment and death. And, yet, they were a major component of their lives.

I think the people of the modern Church would be hard pressed to explain to the saints of the early Church why we don't have much time to engage in these four "Means of Grace" (**The Acts 2:42**) with all our freedoms and blessings and so little persecution when Dr. Luke tells us that they were "continually devoted" to them under such hard circumstances.

I can't think of a better example of just how worldliness and a love for earthly treasure has overwhelmed what little love many have for the things that matter the most to God than what will happen this very night as more Churches than ever before will cancel their normal evening Service so that lukewarm and unsaved men can watch the Super Bowl. Some will even try to engage in the heresy of "synchronization" as they will host a "Super Bowl Party" in the Fellowship Hall to watch it together, while Jesus sits over in the corner alone. Of course, they will have prayer before they start and they will call it "Fellowship" in order to sanctify it. We can only imagine what compromise like this will eventually lead to in the American Church fifty years from now, if the Lord should tarry.

Now keep in mind that these four "Means of Sanctification" were ongoing and consistent characteristics of the Church when the Apostles were alive and leading it. In other words, they were the "calling card" of Christianity when there was no man-made or false teaching.

And the word "**devoted**" means: *ardent in attachment* or loyal. And when you put "continually" and "devoted" together, you see that the way in which they carried out these four "Means of Sanctification" was that they persevered in them *devotedly*. And this shows us a weightiness and a seriousness with which they engaged in these four things, precisely because the Apostles were keenly aware of their importance.

And during the time when God awakened the Church to repent of all the man-made ecclesiastical nonsense and return to her Biblical roots, the Protestant Reformers developed a Latin phrase that described this:

... which is "the Means of Grace". So, you have various "Means of Grace" in all of the many functions of Christianity, but we are very *narrowly* studying those "Means of Grace" that God gave to the Church that will help us in our ongoing progress toward Biblical Holiness in this series.

Now we began exploring this last week by looking at the first Means of Grace, the Apostles' Teaching, or the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. So, God uses a consistent and relentless exposure to the right and full preaching and teaching of the infallible Bible to help us to share in God's Holiness. And one of the best Passages in the entire Bible that shows us how we are made more holy through ongoingly engaging in the Scriptures is found in **Psalm 19:7-11:**

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.

10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

11 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

So, here the Word of God, the Scriptures, equate *themselves* to be:

- ✓ **The law of the Lord**
- ✓ **The testimony of the Lord**
- ✓ **The precepts of the Lord**
- ✓ **The commandment of the Lord**
- ✓ **The fear of the Lord**
- ✓ **The judgments of the Lord**

And then, David said that the Word of God:

- **is perfect**
- **is sure**

- **are right**
- **is pure**
- **is clean**
- **are true**

... and then David said that this powerful Word does six things to people who engage in it:

1. restores the soul
2. makes wise the simple
3. rejoices the heart
4. enlightens the eyes
5. encourages an eternal understanding
6. produces comprehensive righteousness

.. and then, in verse 10, David describes the “preciousness” of the Scriptures:

They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Now I would suggest to you that one of the most important goals of ongoingly engaging in the Scriptures is so that we will grow past the carnal notion that reading and studying and learning and hearing and obeying the Scriptures is boring or mundane, or that we should engage in them merely out of duty or obligation, or even so that we become smart about what the Bible says.

No, the main goal of continually being “in” the Scriptures is so that we will become so radically transformed by what we hear, and understand and trust in and believe that Absolute Divine Truth becomes *more valuable* than fine gold and sweeter than the drippings of the honeycomb.

And, once again, that is something that the individual believer must “experience”. You cannot simply “believe” this to be true. So, another way of looking at this is that Sanctification is the ongoing process whereby the believer is progressively changed to the degree that objective, propositional Holy Writ is not simply theological or doctrinal Truth, or a tool by which we can win arguments, but extremely valuable and very, very sweet.

And then King David was moved along by God the Holy Spirit to tell us exactly how God uses the Scriptures to sanctify us:

Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

... nothing else in all the world has this ability, only Scripture. Part of being made holy is that Truth warns us, it corrects us, it identifies what is "Right" and "Wrong", it makes a distinction between that which is holy and that which is profane, it clearly delineates between that which pleases God and that which pleases Him not. And then David said that as we struggle against the lusts of our flesh, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, to humbly and joyfully submit to the Authority of Scripture in our daily lives, all to God's Glory, we enter into the "reward of the righteous", which is Joy unspeakable and fully of Glory!

Now it is good and right to read and study the Old Testament. In fact, it is sin not to. Because everything in the Old Testament is true. The Old Testament is fully inspired, and, therefore, is inerrant and infallible. But, it is also incomplete. Everything in the 39 Books of the Old Testament is *partial* Revelation of the one, true, and living God and His Work. And so, reading and studying the Old Testament alone, in isolation from at least a "working knowledge" of the New Testament, will eventually lead you into some deception.

Everything in the Old Testament points to something better in the New. Every Promise made under the Old Covenant about Salvation and Eternal Life, even Holiness, is made more clear and more precise and more applicable to us in Jesus Christ through the information contained only in the 27 Books of the New Testament. So, read and study the Old Testament, absolutely. But always read and study the Old with a view to the New. This is what Dr. Luke meant when he phrased it as "The Apostle's Teaching". He wasn't excluding the Old Testament. He was merely showing us that we must read the partial Revelation of God in the Old Testament with an understanding of the final, full, and completed Revelation of the New Testament in mind.

Now it isn't magical or even mystical. But, by being consistently and Faithfully underneath the right and full exposition of Scripture is supernatural. It changes you, it brings Truth to your mind, it facilitates repentance, and it compels obedience and godly behavior. And it aids in

our ongoing pursuit of Biblical Holiness. Many different people in many different forms over the years have said:

“The Word of God (the Bible/Scripture) will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from the Word of God.”

Now many people have asked me how to engage with the Bible. Should I read it or study it? Should I take a subject and then look up everywhere that word is used, or should I go verse by verse through an entire Book? Should I read and study in the morning or the evening? Should I read it every day? Should I go deep rather than cover a lot of pages, or should I go through as much as I can? Should I memorize Scripture? And I would answer all of those questions with, “Yes!”

Hearing and reading and studying and learning and obeying the Apostles' Teaching can take many different forms. This can be done both *corporately* and *individually*. And this can be carried out both privately and in public. Some examples are:

- ✓ Listening to the Scriptures preached rightly and fully in Church on the Lord's Day.
- ✓ Listening to the Scriptures taught rightly and fully in Church on the Lord's Day.
- ✓ Reading the Bible at home, on the job, or in Church, both alone or with others.
- ✓ Engaging in Church Bible studies.
- ✓ Engaging in “home” Bible studies.
- ✓ Engaging in private Bible studies.
- ✓ Reading Commentaries.

... and I would recommend a healthy diet of all of the above. Now it is very important to make some distinctions here. For example, if all you do is listen to the Bible preached rightly and fully in Church on the Lord's Day, you are *limiting* the full impact that Scripture can have on your life. No matter how good the preacher is, he is a very limited and weak human being that will, at best, preach *some* of the Truth that God the Spirit put into this Book. It is good to hear and read from other men of God who are qualified both morally and theologically to open God's Word to you.

And while I greatly value *some* Commentaries from *some* men, we need to remember a very important part of this "Means of Grace". Reading or listening to what other people say *about* the Bible is *not* the same thing as reading and studying the Bible yourself. God can and does use Commentaries from other people, but the miracle and wonder of Sanctification is carried out when God's Word becomes a part of you, not when you become a clone of somebody else.

Now there is one other warning that we, who live in the 21st Century, need to be concerned about that previous generations didn't have to worry about. With the advent of technology, people can now "live stream" Church services while sitting in their living room or while eating breakfast or even while taking a bath. And the result of this easy technology is the notion that simply listening to the Bible preached through YouTube or the Internet has fulfilled our obligation and solemn duty of **Hebrews 10:24-25** that says:

**24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but
encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.**

Using things that God has graciously blessed us with, like technology, to rebel or disobey the clear commands of Scripture is *not* being spiritual, it is *not* following Jesus, it is *not* loving God, and it is *not* being Sanctified. It is nothing more than the latest incarnation of fallen human rebellion becoming more acceptable simply because it is dressed up to look "cool".

Live streaming of the preaching of God's Word is useful in pursuing Biblical Holiness only when used in *conjunction* with the other means of engaging in Scripture and in *conjunction* with the other three "Means of Grace" of **The Acts 2:42**, which simply *cannot* be carried out apart from assembling together. It should never be used as a substitute. I gladly commend the teaching of Tim Challies¹ to you. This man has written *extensively* about how the saved people of our generation can navigate through the maze of technology and still pursue Biblical Holiness on purpose.

¹ www.Challies.com

Thank God that we may use technology when sick or when isolated. But those circumstances are not, by definition, "self-inflicted", and are almost universally *temporary* in nature and should never become the "norm". God doesn't bless us with gifts so we may discover new and innovated ways to be disobedient and unfaithful, but so we may be even *more* obedient and *more* faithful.

Now it has been my experience over the 45 years of my pilgrimage that even though we consider ourselves to be the most technologically advanced people in history, most of us are still troubled by the most ancient of issues, like money and time. And I suppose that *the* single most common reason that people give as to why they can't seem to ever spend any time in God's Word is because of their pursuit of making money.

Making money to pay bills and to buy the many things we want literally *consumes* our generation, seemingly more than those who came before us. And one reason is that everything we buy costs so much. And so, to live in a nice house in a nice neighborhood, and to drive a nice car and wear nice clothes costs a lot of money. And it isn't going to get any cheaper anytime soon. And that should probably be the subject of another Sermon Series.

But there is another reason that we seem to have so little time to engage in the amazing Means of Grace called Scripture, and that is because we don't prioritize very well. We lack discipline. And discipline and prioritizing can really be boiled down to a single issue: Love. Most people do what they love and they don't do what they love *IF* they have the time, they usually *make* the time to engage in what they love. They push other things around or discard them altogether in order to do what they love the most.

And I believe that part of what it means to be Born Again is that God puts a love in us for Himself and a love for those things that pertain to Him. **1 Corinthians 2:14** tells us that lost people have neither the ability nor the desire to love God or the things of God. Salvation changes that. So, the love that we have *for* God is a marvelous gift *from* God to all who are truly regenerated. It is part of the package. Nobody that is truly saved doesn't love God. And the Bible goes on to teach in many, many places that this gift of love for God extends to those things that matter to God, like His Church, His people, His Word, Prayer, Fellowship, the Sacraments, even His enemies.

And that is why we assemble together on the Lord's Day. Nobody comes here *accidentally*. We come because we *want* to, because we *enjoy* it, and because we see the value of obeying God and assembling together. So, we actually made plans to be here today. And, by default, that means that we pushed other things aside and even discarded some things so that we would be found joyfully obedient. And so, barring any sickness or imprisonment or some other unforeseen circumstance, we *pursue* this assembling. So, we are continually devoted to assembling together so that we may engage ourselves in these four Means of Grace.

Now there is no doubt that our love is *impacted* by our feelings and emotions. But true godly love is never *dominated* by human emotions or feelings or temporary circumstances. And so, even when we are suffering or are being persecuted, and even when we might not feel like it, we are continually devoted to assembling together.

We need to remember that during the days when the Bible was being received and written down, being a Christian almost certainly meant some form of intense physical persecution like beatings, imprisonment, or having their earthly good confiscated. And it was not rare at all to be sitting next to a beloved saint on one Lord's Day, enjoying his fellowship and gaining from his walk with God, only to hear that he had been martyred by either the Romans or the Jews before the next Lord's Day.

And it was in that kind of dangerous and intense setting that the Passages about not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together and of being continually devoted to the four Means of Grace was written.

Now there are two other aspects of our assembling that needs to be discussed. Look again at **Hebrews 10:24**:

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

So, we're not supposed to simply come here and sing a few songs and sit down and hear somebody preach. We are supposed to also "stimulate one another". Now the word "stimulate" comes from the Greek word that means: *an incitement or an irritation*. And this word goes beyond mere "suggesting" and has to do with "promoting" or "provoking" someone to the point of irritation. So, this is about us gathering together to hold each other accountable. But to what are we to hold each other accountable? Two things:

- A. Love
- B. Good Works

... and we have to understand that this ongoing stimulation by every saint toward every other saint is another one of the Means of Grace that God uses to bring about our Sanctification.

So, in *addition* to Sanctification coming forth from engaging in the four Means of Grace in **The Acts 2:42**, we see another one here in **Hebrews 10:24**, the ongoing and relentless “stimulation” to love and good works that every saint does for every other saint.

Part of the reason we are to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together is to be engaged in the Scriptures as they are being faithfully preached and taught. And God uses that to help us become more holy. But, the second reason is so that we will all hold each other accountable to see to it that we all are engaged in demonstrations of godly love and good works. And that, too, is a Means of Grace. Now look at **Hebrews 10:25** again:

not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Notice here that the writer of **Hebrews** says that some people who called themselves Christians were at that time already *forsaking* the assembling together. And this means, by default, that they were also forsaking on engaging in the four Means of Grace of **The Acts 2:42** and the Means of Grace in **Hebrews 10:24**. And so, God the Holy Spirit moved on this man to write and warn us, “*Don't forsake the assembling together!*” But notice what else he said:

... but encouraging *one another* ...

So not only are all believers supposed to gather together and engage in the Means of Grace of the preaching and teaching of the word of God so they can be Sanctified, but they are also to stimulate each other to love and good works, and now they are also supposed to encourage one another. And that, too, is a Means of Grace. Now look at the end of verse 25:

... and all the more as you see the day drawing near

We live in a day when Church attendance is at an all-time low. And this phenomenon is manifested all over the world. There are so many things available to people today to draw their attention away from God, even on the Lord's Day. To many people the Lord's Day is just another day to work or have fun and go shopping or carry out the pleasures of this world.

Yet sacred Scripture not only *commands* us to faithfully assemble together on the Lord's day so that all four of the Means of Grace of **The Acts 2:42** can be carried out, but we are told to assemble together so that we may engage in the two Means of Grace of stimulation and encouragement of **Hebrews 10:24**. And then this writer tells us that we are to assemble “**all the more**” as we see the Coming of the Lord drawing near.

Not only are we to buck against the tendency of the lost pagan world and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, not only are we to engage in the four Means of Grace of **The Acts 2:42**, not only are we to engage in the two Means of Grace of **Hebrews 10:24**, but we are to do these things *more often* as the Coming of the Lord gets closer.

And this tells me that we are to have *more* times of assembling together, not less; we are to preach and teach and study God's Word *more often*, not less. We are to engage in the Sacraments *more often*, not less. We are to have godly times of fellowship *more often*, not less. We are to pray *more often*, not less. And we are to gather together to stimulate one another and encourage one another *more often*, not less.

You can't have it both ways. Either we are living at the time of the Coming of the Lord or we aren't. And I suggest to you that if you were to ask the average Christian if he thinks that Jesus is coming soon, he would say, “Yes!” And yet, God's people are gathering together *less* in the modern Church, not more. There is *less* studying and reading and teaching and preaching of God's Word in the modern Church, not more. There is *less* times of godly fellowship, not more. There is less engagement in the Sacraments, not more. There is *less* prayer, not more. And as a result of engaging in these Means of Grace *less*, and not more, there is *less* Holiness in the modern Church than at any time in the 2,000 year history of Christ's Church. And that is

wholly unacceptable. So, there is a great contradiction between what we say we believe and what we are actually doing. May God help us to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. And, Lord willing, we will continue to examine these Means of Grace next week.

Amen. Let's pray

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