

The Gospel According to Samuel

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[0 : 0 0] We turn now to God's Word and we are in the book of 1 Samuel. And chapter 7, you'll find that on page 230, if you're using one of the Vista Bibles.

230. And 1 Samuel, chapter 7. And he is continuing his series in a few chapters in 1 Samuel here. And last week we were back in chapter 3 and we skipped forward a few chapters. And also a few decades. And in between times, the Philistines came and defeated Israel and took the Ark of the Covenant away.

And things went very badly for the Philistines during that period. And they quickly returned the Ark to Israel. And so we pick up the story here in chapter 7 a little bit later. And the men of Kiriath-Jeram came and took up the Ark of the Lord and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill.

And they consecrated his son Eleazar to have charge of the Ark of the Lord. From the day that the Ark was lodged at Kiriath-Jeram, a long time passed, some twenty years.

[1 : 1 1] And all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, and erect your heart to the Lord and serve him only.

And he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only.

Then Samuel said, Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you. So they gathered at Mizpah, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord.

And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah. Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.

And when the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the people of Israel said to Samuel, Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

[2 : 3 1] So Samuel took the nursing lamb, and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him.

As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel. But the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines, and threw them into confusion.

And they were defeated before Israel. And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah, and pursued the Philistines, and struck them as far as below Beth-kar.

Then Samuel took a stone, and set it up between Mizpah and Shem, and called its name Ebenezer. For he said, Till now the Lord has helped us.

So the Philistines were subdued, and did not again enter the territory of Israel. And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

[3 : 3 2] The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath. And Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines.

There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites. Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, and he went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah.

And he judged Israel on all these places. Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there, and he also judged Israel. And he built there an altar to the Lord.

Amen. This is the word of the Lord. May he bless it to us this evening. Well, please do have 1 Samuel chapter 7 open in front of you.

That would be really helpful. As Paul said, we're jumping a few chapters ahead in 1 Samuel this week. It's not all that long since Willie preached through chapters 4 to 6, so we decided to skim over them quickly and move on to chapter 7.

[4 : 40] But the problem is that in order to understand chapter 7 properly, we need to know a little bit about what's happened in those preceding chapters. So here's my whistle-stop tour to chapters 4 to 6 for those of you who missed out on Willie's sermons not all that long ago.

Chapter 4. Catastrophe strikes. Israel defeated by the Philistines. Just as God had promised. Hophni and Phinehas, those evil priests we looked at a couple of weeks ago, they have their comeuppance and they die just as God had promised.

And as Paul said already, the Ark of the Covenant is captured by the Philistines. God's presence with his people goes into a distant land. Israel's presumption, thinking they could make God fight for them by carrying the Ark of the Covenant into battle, treating him like some kind of lucky charm. Well, it proven fatal. It backfired and they found God fighting against them rather than for them. Then in chapters 5 and 6, we see that God is not to be messed with.

He is not someone you want to anger and he's not someone you want to have fighting against you. There behind enemy lines in the Philistine territory, he inflicts tumors on the Philistines, fills the lands with rodents, and cuts off the head and hands of the pagan god Dagon, showing his dominance.

[6 : 10] God may have handed the Israelites into the hands of the Philistines, but he certainly wasn't on the Philistines' side. And as a result, the Philistines cry out, what shall we do with the Ark of the Lord?

They're absolutely desperate to get rid of it. And thus they send it back to Israel. Now, you would think that the return of the Ark to Israel would be a joyous occasion for the people of Israel.

How wonderful to finally have God's presence back in the land again and for God to bless them again. Well, how wrong you would be. Look at the end of chapter 6 with me, verse 19.

As soon as the Ark enters Israel again, 70 Israelites are wiped out instantly for looking into the Ark of the Lord. The return of God's presence to Israel doesn't bring prosperity and flourishing like they hoped, but rather judgment.

God's sinful people can't be near him without being obliterated by his holiness. So what did Israel do? Verse 1. Well, they keep God at arm's length.

[7 : 28] They keep the Ark at a distance for their own safety. Only Eliezer, who was consecrated to look after the Ark, would go anywhere near it. Keep it out of sight, out of mind.

We know what happens when we get close to it. Israel had hoped that the return of the Ark, that their fortunes would change. They would have hoped that God would fight for them again, turn around their fortunes, but instead, they found that God was still their enemy.

Nothing had improved. God still opposed them. 20 years had passed, verse 2, and presumably things had got no better.

The Philistines seemingly didn't go away, and eventually the people of Israel began to appreciate just how desperate a situation they found themselves in was. As long as God was fighting against them, they had no hope, so they lamented after the Lord, verse 2.

Now, the big question this passage asks us is this. Is it possible for God to fight for us rather than against us?

[8 : 39] Can this situation be turned around? And if so, what must be done to achieve that? And that's why I've titled this sermon this evening The Gospel According to Samuel, because that really is at the heart of the gospel message, isn't it?

For by nature, we are God's enemies. Our sin has offended him and angered him, and we've drawn up battle lines against him.

And we all know that isn't a battle that we can win. But the good news, the gospel, is that there is a way to have God fight for you rather than against you again.

To line up alongside him and have him for you rather than face him and be torn down. And Samuel tells us how in this chapter. He gives us three very easy steps to follow if we want God to be for us. We need to repent, rely, and remember. Three easy R's. So let's look at the first one, repent, looking at verses 3 to 6.

[9 : 46] Notice that it isn't just enough for the Israelites to lament the situation that they find themselves in. Verse 2 finishes with them, crying out to the Lord, lamenting, being mournful.

But verse 3, Samuel says, they must go further than that. They must return to God with all their hearts. They must worship and serve him alone.

Only true, full-hearted repentance will work. Only then will the Lord deliver them out of the hand of the Philistines. The message is that if you want God to be for you, then it's not just enough to feel sorry for yourself.

You must repent wholeheartedly. That's often where people fall short, isn't it? People are often upset at how their life has turned out.

They may have derailed their lives by not living under God's good law. And as a result, feel rather sorry for themselves. I wish I didn't find myself in a situation of my own doing.

[10:53] lamenting. But lamenting must progress to repenting if God is to start putting your life back on track or putting the life of a church back on track.

There's a guy I know from a while back who, I think, is still stuck in this lamenting stage. He's never really got past it. He's made a real mess of his life over a few years.

He knows his decisions involving sexual promiscuity have been hugely damaging to his life. His life has fallen apart at the seams.

And so has he. And rightly, he feels very sorry for the situation he finds himself in. But he hasn't gone further than that. He hasn't changed. He needs to recognize that self-pity does not equate to repentance.

It's part of it. It must be mournful, but it has to go further. So what does repentance look like? What does Samuel say that we must do?

[11:59] Well, for the Israelites, repentance meant acting on that grief that they felt. They had to rid their lives of all that God hated and rivaled him for their affections. These foreign gods that they worshipped, the Ashtoreth, verse 3.

God is the only one who is worthy of our worship, so he will not tolerate his people worshipping anything or anyone else. It's an offence to him. It angers him.

And while the Israelites, well, they were busy worshipping something God really, really hated, the Asherah, a false fertility goddess who promised to make the land or people's wives fertile if they would only worship her by laying down having sex with their cult prostitutes.

Worshippers were promised prosperity and sexual deviancy was the pathway to it and unsurprisingly, the people of Israel loved it. They lapped it up.

But God hated it. And repentance looked like turning their back on these wicked practices and turning to God again and living under his good rule alone. Likewise, the guy I know from a few years back who feels sorry for himself, he must be moved from mourning into action to rid his life of all that God hates and rivals him.

[13:23] That's what repentance looks like, turning around. Now, we don't worship ancient Canaanite fertility goddesses today, but I don't think it's too difficult to draw connections to the situation we find ourselves in.

The quest for prosperity whilst being sexually deviant is the philosophy that pours out of Hollywood every single day into the lives of everyday people. People are convinced that the way to human flourishing comes from having utter autonomy, doing what we like, having sex with whoever we want, and having plenty.

And that philosophy isn't just out there in the world. No, it's crept into the life of the church as well, just like it had back in Samuel's day. And just like then, God hates it as much now as he did back then.

And the sad truth is that this philosophy is taking hold of Christian lives all the time, especially amongst our students and amongst students further afield.

They buy into this Hollywood philosophy and try and integrate it with the teaching of the Bible. They want all the perks of being a Christian, eternal life, whilst having all the world can offer to.

[14:42] And in the end, it destroys them because you can't have them both. You can't keep the facade up for long before something has to give and crisis hits. Something has to give.

Either they repent and turn from the false ideology they've believed in and worship God alone, or they carry on in the way of the world until eventually serving God is just a distant memory.

They start off thinking they can serve both, God and what the world has to offer, experience blessing from both. But quickly find out it's impossible.

for God demands verse 3, all of our hearts. And verse 4, to serve him alone. Only then will he fight for you and not against you.

He won't fight for you if you're siding with his enemies. No king would do that. No king would bless and show favour upon someone who he knows is sleeping with his rival.

[15:46] And wonderfully, Israel heed that warning, verse 4. They put away the Baals and the Ashtoth. It may have taken them 20 years to get to that point but they got there in the end.

God's people respond to God's word through Samuel and they gather at this place called Mizpah, verse 6. And there they show their singular undivided devotion to the Lord by fasting and pouring out their water on the ground.

It's a sign of utter dependence. They've come to a point where they recognise there is only God that they can depend on and no one and nothing else. It's a visible sign of internal repentance, of throwing yourself on the mercy of God and forsaking all his rivals.

Now that might look very different for us today. Our repentance probably won't look like going out into the middle of the desert and fasting together and pouring out our water on the ground. But there should certainly be visible signs of our repentance, shouldn't there?

In fact, we con ourselves, don't we, if we think repentance is just saying sorry and carrying on just the way that we are. For example, you can't say that you're going to trust and serve in God alone for now and carry on dating your non-Christian boyfriend and girlfriend or sleeping with them.

[17:10] you can't say that you've repented of making belittling comments to people if you make no effort whatsoever to change the way you speak to people. True repentance is always visible and it's always costly as you give up things that you wrongly love to serve God alone.

Confession, verse 6, the Israelites say, we have sinned against the Lord. That should always result in change. Without both confession and change, well, it isn't true repentance and there's no hope of God being for you rather than against you.

So the first step is repentance. So what must we do once we've repented or rather, what are we actually doing when we're repenting?

Answer, we're relying, verse 7 to 11. We need to rely. God's people must rely on something other than themselves in order to experience God's favor again.

Yes, we're called into action, we're called to turn around, but we're doing that because of someone else. They've just poured out their water, they've started fasting, showing that they can't depend on themselves.

[18:29] They know they can't claw themselves back into God's good books, they can't merit becoming God's friends rather than his enemy. So it begs the question, what or who can they rely on?

If you just look at verse 7, it's clear that they desperately need to rely on someone, they need God back in their corner. Verse 7, now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mispa, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.

And when the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. The Philistines see an opportunity, they see an opportunity to deal a crippling blow to their enemy.

If they could catch this huge gathering of Israelites off in the desert, off guard, and rout them in battle, then they could decisively subjugate them under their rule.

That's what they're wanting to do. And they wouldn't get a better opportunity, would they? I mean, they're facing a depleted enemy. After all, the Israelites were in the middle of fasting, and they just poured out all the supplies, all their water on the ground.

[19:47] It wouldn't be all that taxing, would it, to beat such a weakened enemy in battle? So rightly, when the Israelites hear of the Philistine advance, they're absolutely terrified.

they can't fight this enemy on their own and expect to win. They desperately need God back in their corner, fighting their battles for them, just like he did when he entered the land in the first place.

They couldn't face this enemy alone, let alone be warring against this holy God we've read about in chapters 4 to 6 at the same time. It was impossible.

But how on earth could they get God back on their side? We said earlier that when these people, these sinful people came in contact with God, they were incinerated on the spot at the end of chapter 6.

When confronted with sin, God in his righteousness rightly fights against it and fights against those sinners. So how could these sinful people possibly get God who they'd wronged so terribly to fight for them again?

[20 : 56] Well the answer in 1 Samuel is the same as the answer throughout the rest of the Bible, throughout the New Testament too. They needed someone to intercede for them and they needed atonement.

Let's look at intercession first. They needed someone to fight their corner, to plead for them before God and ask God to show mercy upon them.

Notice verse 8, that God's people asked Samuel to pray for them. They say, do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us that he may save us from these Philistines.

They defended God with their worship of other gods and thus needed someone else to plead their case for them. Someone who was in favor of God, someone who hadn't sinned in the profound ways that they had.

For you can't make a case for yourself, can you, if you can't even stand before the person you've offended without being vaporized. Someone else had to stand in their place and make an appeal on their behalf.

[22 : 04] And that's what Samuel does. But intercession on its own isn't enough either. you also need atonement. Read verse nine with me.

So Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a burnt offering to the Lord. And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel and the Lord answered him. Not only did Samuel intercede for God's people, he also made sacrifice for them.

Remember back in chapter two, dodgy sacrifices by Hophni and Phinehas had brought judgment upon God's people? Well, right sacrifices brought forgiveness to God's people.

Samuel could appeal to God to show mercy all he wanted, but there needed to be grounds for their forgiveness. There had to be a real means of dealing with God's people's sin and guilt if he was to show mercy and still be just.

You can't just sweep it all under the rug and play let's pretend. Let's just pretend my people have been faithful to me all this time. Let's pretend they've always been wholly devoted to me and had nothing to do with Asherah and all the rest.

[23 : 19] No, God is just and God tells us that the wages of sin is death. Therefore, only the death of another could atone for their sin, put things right.

So Samuel sacrifices a lamb on their behalf. The lamb would bear the penalty of sin so that they wouldn't have to. And so that God would be for his people again rather than against them.

Well, some of you might be thinking, how on earth is that just? A whole nation gets involved in a religion centered around orgies and forsakes their God and a poor wee nursing lamb is seen fit to die in their place.

God's. That doesn't seem all that fair. Well, if you're thinking that you have a point. And Hebrews chapter 10 tells us that it's impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away the sins of men. It's not a fitting substitute. It doesn't do the job on its own. But by performing these sacrifices in faith, trusting God's word that through obedience to these sacrifices, they would indeed be forgiven.

[24 : 35] They were participating in Jesus' death on their behalf. It's as if that future event for the people of Israel, of Jesus dying in their place, was happening there and then in their own time and was made real to them.

In a similar way to the fact that we look back at Jesus' death in the past in faith and it's made real to us now. So the sacrifices back then, the sacrifice Samuel made, it really did deal with their sin because by performing it in faith, they were participating in the once and for all sacrifice for sin that Jesus made on our behalf.

God doesn't just put our sin out of sight and out of mind, but he really has dealt with it. And as a result, the thing that has caused animosity between God and his people is finally dealt with.

And as a result, God can finally show mercy, fight for his people again and be just. And notice that's what he did. God answered Samuel, verse nine.

The Philistines drew near to attack at the point he was sacrificing, verse 10. When Samuel was performing the sacrifice, ready to decimate the Israelite ranks. But the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into commotion and they were defeated before Israel.

[26 : 06] God turns from enemy to ally. Israel's sin had been the problem. It provoked God to anger, but now that anger was appeased. Now God fights for his repentant and contrite people, just as Hannah had promised he would do back in chapter 2, verse 10.

Can you remember her song? She said, God will tear down the proud, but he will rise up the humble, raise up the humble. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces. Against them he will thunder in heaven. That's exactly what we see happening here. Hannah knew that God is the one who brings down the proud, but fights for the humble and his contrite people. And here was evidence that she was absolutely right. God's people have humbled themselves, they've repented, they've relied not on themselves but on God. And as a result, God fights for them. Whereas before, back in chapter 4, remember, when they were arrogant, proud, treated God like a lucky charm who could be lumped around with them to do their bidding, then he'd fought against them.

[27 : 20] If you want God to be for you and not against you, you must follow Israel's lead, repent wholeheartedly, rely not on yourself and trust in God's means of mercy alone.

Well, what does that look like for us today? And who are our enemies? What's the equivalent for us? Well, perhaps surprisingly, we have a very similar problem to God's people back then. We may not be fighting Philistines, but we're in a fight with an enemy that we cannot defeat on our own, who would subjugate us under his rule, just like the Philistines, and lead us to destruction. We're in a fight with an invisible enemy, the devil. The devil wants us enslaved to him, to live under his rule, trapped forever, facing a godless eternity, and on our way, we can do nothing to prevent that from happening.

And our only hope of defeating such a powerful enemy is the God that we have scorned and offended by our sin. We not only face a great enemy who would enslave us, the devil, but our only hope of rescue and deliverance counts us as an enemy too.

[28 : 39] We're just like the Israelites by nature. And thus our only hope is to follow in their footsteps, to follow in the footsteps of our Old Testament brothers and sisters.

We mustn't just lament our circumstances, but wholeheartedly repent, turn around. We have no means of being reconciled to God ourselves, so we must trust in someone else to plead our case, someone else to bear our sin in our place.

And for us in this age that we live in, we recognize that that is the Lord Jesus we must trust in, who God's people also trusted in back then, but unknowingly by faith.

As Hebrews reminds us, Jesus always lives and makes intercession for his people. He's continually pleading our cause before God and reminding him that we belong to him now.

We're no longer enemies based on Christ's atoning work on the cross. Christ is continually pointing God to the sacrifice he has made on our behalf.

[29 : 42] He fights our corner saying that we stand forgiven, not because of anything we've done, but because he's died in our place, bearing God's anger. And we're friends and allies now.

And as a result, God hasn't just stopped fighting against us. We don't just sit under his condemnation. That's not the only thing that's been dealt with. But he now fights for us.

Not against Philistines, like in Samuel's day, but against our greatest enemy, the devil. He can no longer accuse us and ask God to condemn us for our sin.

But Christ has broken the devil's power against us. We stand spotless, sinless, because Jesus has dealt with our sin. And thus we no longer will face our greatest enemy, hell and condemnation that the devil throws at us.

So if you're here tonight and you know that you're not right with God, you know that things have gone terribly out of hand, and you know that's because you haven't lived under his good rule.

[30 : 51] Well, the message is clear, I think. There's a means to make God an ally rather than an enemy. And all you must do is repent and rely on Christ alone.

You can't appease him by your own merit. No measure of good service or religious performance will make any difference at all. Without Jesus pleading your case for you and dying in your place, you have no hope.

But most of us here tonight, well, we will have done that, won't we? Most of us here are Christians. So how does this apply to us, especially?

Well, those of us who have trusted in Jesus, who have the wonderful privilege of knowing that God is for us and not against us, the message to us is that we must remember.

That's our final point for this evening. Remember. Looking at verses 12 to 17. We must remember God's great act of mercy in our lives.

[31 : 56] for we're just so prone to forget what he's done for us. Notice, as soon as the battle is won, Samuel erects a stone of remembrance in verse 12.

It was to remind God's people of what the Lord had done for them. He says, till now the Lord has helped us. This stone was to remember the Lord's help. See, the problem with the human condition is that we're just so quick to forget the Lord's help and start relying on ourselves all over again or start relying on things that he hates.

Verse 13. The Philistines were subdued and didn't hassle Israel again all the days of Samuel. Cities were restored back to Israel, verse 14. And God's people experienced peace for the first time in a long time.

And then, seemingly, normality ensues. Samuel continues to judge Israel, verse 15. And things become far less eventful as Samuel goes on his circuit year by year, judging Israel, verse 16. It's very easy when life stabilizes and things become far less eventful. There are no major crises to forget the Lord's help and his mercy in times past and his everyday mercies that we see.

[33 : 17] We either slip into religious pride when we think that we are the makers of our own predicament. When life is going swimmingly, we pat ourselves on the back, do we not? And think, this is all down to our own efforts.

My good life decisions have led to this. Whereas the truth is that without the work of the Lord Jesus interceding for us, dying for us, we would still be living as enemies of God.

Or the other danger, we slip into overlooking the goodness that comes in our lives as a result of God being for us and not against us. We just think it's common that we miss it altogether.

We could clearly see him working, fighting for us in times past and his radical acts of mercy, like when we became Christians, or big crisis points in our lives. But now things are okay.

We just completely underappreciate his discreet work in our lives. We don't think God is active. We're unappreciative of the kindness he shows us.

[34 : 24] So we turn to rivals instead. We think the good life that we're living, the prosperous, flourishing life under God's rule is no good life at all. And we think we must have something else to make it even better.

And sadly, that's the situation God's people back then who initially received this book found themselves in. They returned to the Ashtoreth.

They returned to Baal and other foreign gods. They forgot God's great acts of kindness despite Samuel putting that pillar up in the wilderness. And they overlooked his discreet kindnesses every day in their lives.

And as a result, they became utterly thankless and forgetful. And they found themselves becoming his enemy again. We know where that trajectory led to.

They ended up in exile. And people do that today, don't they? They show initial joy and thankfulness for God saving them, being for them and not against them.

[35 : 28] They're overawed at it. But over time, that becomes a common thing. Living under God's good rule just becomes a small thing. and they find themselves returning to old habits because they think they've missed out on something in life.

Seeking prosperity and fulfillment in the world instead. It's very sad because we know where it leads. So if we want to avoid going backwards, if we want God to remain for us and not against us, it's so important that we don't forget what he's done for us in Christ.

We mustn't grow tired of the gospel with what God has done to save us from his wrath and we must be attentive to his kindnesses and his mercies every day.

And that's why we do communion, isn't it? To remember all that the Lord has done for us. It's such a helpful thing to do because we're so prone to be unappreciative for God's saving acts in our lives.

And that's why I think it's good to remember to thank God in prayer. If you're anything like me, you'll find yourself going from one request to the next and even forgetting when God has answered prayer, not even registering because we're just so keen and going on to the next thing we want.

[36 : 50] We need to remember when he answers our prayer, remember those times when he answers and fights our cause. And it's important as well that we remember the big acts of mercy that God has performed in our church life.

I think it's important to remember those events like providing buildings for us. Sermons that struck you to the heart. We all have them, don't we? To go back at them and remember God's work in our lives back then.

Or even to write down the dates in your diary of a time where your friends, your family, your loved ones turned to Christ. God's work in our lives. And every year whenever that date comes around, remembering to thank him for it or remembering that he is a God who is active, a God who fights for his people and a God who saves.

Remember his great mercies and that will keep you repenting every day, relying on him when his mercies are seemingly less dramatic.

It's a simple message. If you want God to be for you and our church, then we must listen to the gospel according to Samuel.

[38 : 02] Keep repenting. Keep relying on Christ. And keep remembering that. Because if we're not careful, we'll go backwards just like the Israelites did many years later.

Well, let's pray together. Father God, we confess that the gospel can often seem old hat to us. We recognize that we forget how blessed we are to be living under your own and having you for us. We treat the stability of our lives as just normality when actually when we look at the world around us, people not living under your good rule, we realize how chaotic life could be.

Help us to be thankful for what we have and recognize your kindness and mercies in our lives. Help us not to turn to other loves, other rivals that you hate, thinking that we've missed out on something or that prosperity and flourishing can be found anywhere else.

Help us to keep remembering what the Lord Jesus has done for us. Help us not to take it for granted. And we pray that as we do so, you'd continue to bless us as a church and that others might be drawn in to worship the Lord Jesus Christ for themselves.

[39 : 34] And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.