

Judgement Begins at the House of God

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[0 : 00] All right, we're going to turn now to our Bibles, and we're reading together in the first book of Samuel in the Old Testament. If you have one of the Red Church Visitor's Bibles, it's page 226.

And last week, Andy Ritson began a little series in these first few chapters, which begin the story of Samuel, and therefore the story of the coming of the king at last to Israel.

This book of Samuel follows on the tumultuous period of the Judges, and the book of Judges, as you probably remember, ends with a verse that tells us that in those days there was no king in Israel.

Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes, and a right royal mess everything was most of the time. But Samuel began, as we saw last week, with this unremarkable family, Elkanah and Hannah.

But a remarkable prayer from this woman for a son, and God's answer to her prayer. And the son that was born to her, called Samuel, brought forth great praise and thanksgiving in this marvelous song that's called Hannah's Prayer there.

[1 : 11] And she had dedicated her son, if he was to be born, to the Lord. And here we begin to see how Hannah kept that promise. And so at verse 11 of chapter 2, after the whole family being up at Jerusalem, giving thanks to the Lord, Elkanah, that's Elkanah the father of Samuel, and no doubt his whole family.

Elkanah went home to Ramah. But the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord in the presence of Eli the priest. Now the sons of Eli were worthless men.

They did not know the Lord. The custom of the priests for the people was that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come when the meat was boiling with a three-pronged fork in his hand, and he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot.

All that the fork brought up, the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servants would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, Give me meat for the priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you, only the raw.

And if the man said to him, Let them burn the fat first and then take as much as you wish, he would say, No, you must give it now. And if not, I'll take it by force. Thus the sin of the young man was very great in the sight of the Lord, for the men treated the offering of the Lord with contempt.

[2 : 49] But Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy clothed with a linen ephod. His mother used to make from a little robe and take it to him each year. And she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

And then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, May the Lord give you children by this woman for the petition she asked of the Lord. So then they would return to their home.

Indeed, the Lord visited Hannah. And she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. But the young man Samuel grew in the presence of the Lord.

Now Eli was very old and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel. And how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

And he said to them, Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my sons, it is no good report that I hear of the people of the Lord spreading abroad.

[3 : 50] If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him. But if someone sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him? For they would not listen to the voice of their father.

For it was the will of the Lord to put them to death. The young man Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord.

And also with man. And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, Thus the Lord has said, Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt, subject to the house of Pharaoh?

Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest or to go up to my altar to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel.

Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded? And honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest portions of every offering of my people Israel.

[5 : 00] Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel declares, I promise that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever. But now the Lord declares, far be it from me.

For those who honor me I will honor. And those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that will not be an old man in your house.

Then in distress you will look with envious eye on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed on Israel, and there shall not be an old man in your house forever.

There will only one of you, whom I shall not cut off from my altar, shall be spared to weep his eyes out to grieve his heart, and all the descendants of your house shall die by the sword of men.

And this that shall come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinnes, shall be a sign to you. Both of them shall die on the same day.

[6 : 09] And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind.

And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever. And everyone who is left in your house shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and shall say, Please put me in one of the priest's places that I may eat a morsel of bread.

Now the young man Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli, and the word of the Lord was rare in those days. There was no frequent vision.

Amen. May God bless to us. His word. Well, please do have one Samuel open in front of you.

We left off last week with the hope of great reversal of fortunes. Hannah's prayer pointed God's people, who were reading the book of one Samuel centuries later, to put their hope and trust in God for the turnaround that they so desired.

[7 : 30] Hannah reminded God's people then, and us today, that God is in control, and that he loves to turn circumstances on their heads. He loves to act in history to bless his faithful people and to humble those who arrogantly oppose his people.

Now with all that in mind, Now with all that in mind, I wonder what you think God's people expected to happen after Hannah's remarkable prayer. Perhaps they expected immediate victory over all their enemies, prosperity to come to the land that had known famine and been plundered for decades.

But that would be an obvious application of Hannah's prayer, wouldn't it? Chapter 2, verse 9, Well, the big surprise of this passage tonight is that the judgment promised in Hannah's prayer went to Israel's religious establishment first, not the surrounding nations.

The biggest barrier to the turnaround Israel desired was not opposition they faced from without, but rather the toxic religious establishment that had plagued them from within for so long.

I think we might find that equally as surprising today. We are rightly troubled, aren't we, at the state of the world all around us. We worry about the liberal agenda that our government is pushing through.

[9 : 08] We worry about post-truth ideology taking hold of universities. And students just not being able to think anymore. And we worry about teachers being forced from an ideology that could irrevocably harm a generation of children.

But if this chapter is to be believed, and countless other chapters all throughout the Old and New Testament, then the biggest threat to the prospering of God's people, the church, doesn't come from outside the church, but rather from wolves inside.

Now, before we delve into the passage tonight, just a quick word about the structure of the passage, for I think it helps us to see what the author's intent is. Chapter 2, verse 11, and chapter 3, verse 1, act as bookends for the whole section.

We start with Samuel ministering before the Lord under Eli at the start, and end with him doing the same. And in between, you might have noticed as we read it earlier, the author interleaves narrative about Eli's sons with narrative about Samuel.

The author is intentionally comparing Hophni and Phinehas with Samuel. He wants us to see the differences in their attitude towards the Lord, his laws, and his people, and what the consequences are going to be for their different actions.

[10 : 34] Now, hopefully that's helpful to notice before we begin. So let's now delve into the passage. We have two simple headings this evening. God tears down leaders who dishonor him, and God raises up leaders who honor him.

So let's look at the first heading. God tears down leaders who honor him. The writer of 1 Samuel comes out all guns blazing in verse 12.

Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the Lord. He is straight to the point. This is God's assessment of Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons.

Worthless, worthless, and did not know the Lord. And it's particularly a damning assessment, considering how Hannah has just been described in chapters 1 and 2.

Do you remember what she said to Eli when he falsely accused her of being drunk in the temple? Chapter 1, verse 16, she says, Do you not regard your servant as a worthless woman?

[11 : 39] She instead was a servant of the Lord. She was utterly devoted to him. But these men, who were meant to lead Israel in worshipping the Lord, were the absolute opposite of Hannah.

They didn't know him, and they did not want to honor him. Notice how their content for God is revealed in how they treat the sacrifices. Verse 13, The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling with a three-pronged fork in his hand, and he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot.

All that the fork brought up, the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. These men weren't interested in honoring God, but rather in filling their bellies.

They were self-indulgent men. The offerings mentioned here were peace offerings, which you can read more about in Leviticus 3 if you've got spare time on your hands.

The worshippers would have already made a burnt offering to atone for sin, and then would make another voluntary offering to the Lord afterwards. This offering, they would boil in a pot, the right leg and the breast would be given to the priests as their portion, and then the worshipper would sit down and have a meal, right in front of a tentative meeting, as if having a meal with the Lord himself, intimate fellowship around his table after sin had been atoned for.

[13 : 21] They'd been reconciled. They were at peace with one another, having a meal. But tragically, this beautiful moment of heartfelt and intimate worship and fellowship with the Lord was brutally hijacked by Hophni and Phinehas and no doubt other priests who were following their example.

Dissatisfied with the generous provision the Lord had already made for them, remember, they already were given the breast and the right leg, they would interrupt this moment of heartfelt worship to indulge their appetites further and stick their fork in the pot.

They cared nothing for the worshipper and they treated the sacrifice of the Lord with great contempt. The sacrifices were purely there that they might get their fill from their perspective.

Furthermore, read verse 15 and onwards with me. Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, give meat for the priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.

And if the man said to him, let them burn the fat first and then take as much as you wish, he would say, no, you must give it now and if not, I will take it by force.

[14 : 41] Thus, the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the Lord, for the men treated the offering of the Lord with contempt. When making an offering to the Lord, there was a super important rule you had to keep and that was that the fat belonged to the Lord.

God had to get the best bits, the most calorific, the juicy bits, the tasty bits at the sacrifice. Today, we tend to like our meat lean, but that is mainly due to our concern for our waistlines rather than any consideration for taste.

The fat is the good stuff, especially in days when concern against obesity isn't what it is like it is today. You wanted the calories, you wanted the good stuff.

So God decreed that in devotion to him, the fat must be cut off the animals first and burnt up. It was his portion for him to enjoy.

He was the one and the only one worthy of the good meat and nobody else. Then afterwards, the portions could be allocated to the priest and also to the worshipper.

[15 : 56] But Hophni and Phinehas, well, they didn't want any old boiled meat. They didn't want the lean stuff. They wanted the fat and they wanted it raw so they could roast it and have a tasty meal.

They didn't care about God's instructions in Leviticus 3. They didn't care if they took what belonged to the Lord. They showed utter contempt for his law for all that mattered was that their carnal appetites were met.

Even when the worshipers rebuked them in verse 16, they wouldn't listen but rather threatened violence against the worshiper if they refused to be complicit in their sin.

Verse 17 summarizes their actions. Thus, the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the Lord for the men treated the offering of the Lord with contempt.

Now, you think that those sins were bad enough but read on to verse 22 with me. Eli catches wind of what his sons have been up to with the sacrifices.

[17 : 04] He hears about their behavior taking what was the Lord's, taking what was the worshippers as well, defiling the sacrifices and brazenly at the temple having contempt for his law.

But on top of that, Eli hears on the grapevine about what they were doing at the entrance of the tent of the meeting, God's dwelling place on earth.

Eli's sons lay with the women who were meant to be serving the Lord. They treated God's sanctuary like a brothel.

Eli highlights how terrible this sin is in verse 25. If someone sins against man, God will mediate for him.

But if someone sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him? It's a reminder to us that not all sins are equal. Yes, all sins need atoned for but they're not all equal.

[18 : 08] What makes sin more grievous is not only what the action is but also where it happens and who it's against. And these men have sinned more profoundly than you could possibly imagine.

They sinned against the Lord in his very own house. You can't show much more contempt for someone than that. Their sin was against the Lord directly.

They spat in his face and nobody was able to stand between them and God and protect them from his fierce wrath. And the result of their actions they not only undermined the sacrifices that were supposed to atone for sin and bring favour upon God's people but they sullied God's name and the honour that was due to him amongst the people.

Notice verse 22. Eli kept hearing about their behaviour. verse 23. He heard their dealings from all the people.

And verse 24. He heard the report that the people of the Lord were spreading abroad. The report of Hophni and Phinehas' contempt and disdain for the Lord was spreading like wildfire.

[19 : 25] If left unchecked then their behaviour would become normal practice in Israel. The holiness of the Lord would be scorned and true worship of the Lord would be utterly abandoned.

And as a result even greater curses would fall upon God's people than what had already fallen upon them. So you'd think with so much on the line that Eli would act decisively and as judge in Israel which we read he was in 1 Samuel 4 you'd expect him to remove his sons from their position of office as priests and discipline them.

You'd expect him to re-instate other priests too who would lead the people well and honour the Lord that God's name might be praised and blessing might come to his people again. But what does Eli do?

Well he falls pitifully short of that doesn't he? Yes he rebukes them he's grieved at what he hears his sons have been doing he even states how terrible their sin is but when they do not listen he fails to act he does not go far enough does he?

And as a result the Lord thus holds him accountable as well as his sons read verse 27 onwards with me and there came a man of God to Eli and said to him thus the Lord has said did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest to go up to my altar to burn incense to wear an ephod before me I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded and honour your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people of Israel God had been incredibly gracious to this family and gave them great privileges what an honour to serve the Lord to keep his house and ensure that he is rightly worshipped let alone be provided for by the people of Israel whilst you do that job but Eli and his sons had scorned that

[21 : 54] Eli put his sons above the Lord Eli didn't consider the blood of the covenant to be thicker than the water of the womb and notice what is implied in verse 29 Eli was fattening himself on the sacrifices too he rebuked his sons with regards to their sexual practice whilst being complicit in their sins with regards to their sacrifices how perverse and as a result God points his finger at Eli as well he stands accused too so what will God do about Eli's household and their sin will he just stand back in silence stand at a distance as the religious leaders decimate his Old Testament church and bring curses upon his people and make God's name a byword among all the nation and the outside world no there reaches a point where the

Lord will not see his people afflicted any longer or his name sullied any longer he longs for the church to prosper and he will indeed without hesitation lop off the dead wood if it means preserving the tree there comes a point where the religious leaders are well beyond the pale and repentance just is no longer an option only judgment God has been kind enough as it is and given them enough time it's likely I think that the religious establishment was in disarray in the days of one time you'll first reader too they might have attributed the nation's decline to many different reasons bad kings the economy not being quite right affliction from surrounding nations but the author here would have had them look to the temple first often is the worship of Yahweh that is corrupt that is the problem rather than the machinations and philosophies of the surrounding nations true worship is what is important true worship had to be restored under

God honoring leadership if Israel God's Old Testament church were to prosper again God must remove those who are well beyond the pale notice again verse 25 Hophni and Phinehas didn't listen to the voice of their father for it was the will of the Lord to put them to death notice it wasn't the will of the Lord to put them to death because they hadn't listened they hadn't listened because the Lord willed for them to be put to death these men had well and truly crossed the line and as a result they had to be dealt with and they had to be judged repentance was not an option and that's both comforting and terrifying isn't it especially if you're in a position of leadership or in ministry if you show contempt for the

Lord in serving him do not know him use his people for personal gain use his church to line your pockets or boost your ego but there are many who do that in today's church well you should be seriously terrified some churches offer a handsome salary and you can sit having tea all day and do nothing meaningful for the Lord there are many in ministry today who would never make it in any of a secular job so they land on the church use them to meet their needs boost their ego give themselves confidence and care little about the church only about themselves if you have that attitude then you should be very worried the Lord does not tolerate it and you might hit a point where repentance is no longer an option for you you have harmed the church too long and sullied God's name amongst the pagans so badly that

God has to call time on you remove you from office and ensure that you go down as a byword and not him so for those of us in ministry or leadership we must tread very carefully and assess our motives regularly but it's a great comfort too for those of us in the pew and for those who are faithful to the Lord who lead the church well but see other leaders ravaging the church and dishonoring the Lord as 2 Timothy reminds us these leaders will not get very far for their folly will be seen by all when scandals come up about church leaders inappropriate sexual behavior we naturally want to bury our heads in the sand don't we we don't want to think about it and we don't want anyone outside in the world to associate us with them or associate what they've done with Christianity that's quite right I think but perhaps we can be encouraged when these things happen too

[27 : 22] God is removing these men from office he is sullyng their names rather than his and true worship now has the possibility of occurring in this place for the first time perhaps for decades God might well just be at work protecting his flock taking out the dead wood that new life could flourish God we should be both unnerved and comforted by God's judgment all at the same time well back to Eli Hophni and Phineas notice how apt the judgment is that the man of God who seemingly comes from nowhere in verse 27 declares privileges will be revoked God will break covenant with Eli's household verse 30 God had promised that Aaron's line would serve him forever but that promise was conditional Eli and his sons had broken the conditions so God wasn't going to uphold his end of the bargain either God is not one to be taken advantage of and verse 31 their strength will be cut off and nobody will live to old age in Eli's household they had cared only for themselves for so long making sure that they had flourished on the back of God and his people and now they would flourish no longer the same sentiment is echoed in verse 36 Eli's descendants who had fattened themselves on the Lord's and his people's portions will be left begging for a morsel of food they'll be left longing for the priestly provisions that they had scorned in fact verse 32 they will look on in envy as God blesses Israel under new leadership and they go without whilst Israel has plenty and eventually Eli's line will die by the sword a fitting judgment for those who threaten violence against God's people to get what they wanted God will judge justly defend his honor and protect his people he is not afraid to cut off the dead wood that the tree might flourish well our second point for this evening God raises up leaders who honor him it's all good clearing out the mess but God also needed to replace the bad leadership with good leadership if Israel was to flourish again and that's where these little mentions of Samuel come in all through the text he's going to replace Eli as both judge over Israel and to some extent priest too we read in 1 Samuel chapter 7 verse 15 that Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life after Eli had perished so he so Samuel did indeed become judge in Eli's place and he also appointed kings which later became a role associated with the priests and he clearly also performed sacrifices because later on in this story Saul is condemned for offering sacrifices himself rather than waiting for Samuel to come and do it for him so he definitely has some sort of a priestly role too you see the author is not just putting Samuel's example in amongst Eli's son just to demonstrate how wicked and awful Eli's family was but also the hint to his reader who is going to be the fitting replacement for Eli and his family notice the details we get about Samuel in amongst the grime of Eli in his household verse 18 Samuel was ministering before the Lord a boy clothed with a linen effort and his mother

used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice where Eli was complicit in his son's sins to break Levitical code Hannah was busy ensuring her son was provided for that he might keep the Levitical code she ensured that Samuel had both the effort and the overrobe he needed to minister before the Lord before the Lord in his sanctuary in keeping with Levitical practice and it's perhaps unsurprising isn't it that Samuel later on followed in his the God honoring footsteps of his mother which is a side note I think to us parents and would-be parents in the church this evening we can't expect our children to follow the Lord and be godly offspring if we don't show devotion to the Lord ourselves we must take our responsibilities parents seriously and if we do we can trust the Lord with our children but back to the passage the portrait we get of these two families couldn't be much more different could it not only is Samuel's family concerned with honoring

God's Levitical laws but they also experience great blessing whilst Eli's family show utter contempt for the Levitical law and thus experience great curse Samuel's family was promised life as Hannah was blessed with more and more children whereas Eli his family was sentenced to death the author is showing us that Samuel is from good stock he is concerned with the honor of the Lord like his mother was God is clearly blessing him demonstrating his favor upon Samuel and showing that life and prosperity for Israel will come through Samuel and not through Eli and his household and verse 26 builds on the portrait even further not only is Samuel favored by God as seen already but also by man it was made clear to all that Samuel was

God's man or boy he was still young and he stood in stark contrast with Eli's sons and God's word in verse 30 makes clear that Samuel is the kind of person that God loves to honor the kind of person that God loves to lead his people God says in verse 30 far be it from me for those who honor me I will honor and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed Samuel is the kind of man who can be trusted with leading God's people and advancing God's plans for his people God is in the business of raising up leaders that honor him who protect and prosper his people and we see the climax of God's promises to raise such a leader up in verse 35 God says and I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind and I will build him a sure house and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever in those days it was Samuel who led God's people out of the dark days of the judges and into the brighter days of King David he was the diligent priest and did according to what was in the heart and mind of God

Samuel's good leadership was key to God's kingdom purposes advancing God's people flourishing again he became the king anointer and pressed forward God's purposes for Israel to live under an earthly king now there was certainly no chance of that happening under Hophni and Phinehas was there they weren't going to advance God's plans if God hadn't torn them down Israel would have continued to languish in the dark days of the judges as everyone did what was fitting in their own eyes but interestingly one king picks up on this promise of a faithful priest and a curse upon Eli's house but applies it to a very different time in Israel's history let me read with you what it says in one kings 2 27 so Solomon who was the king at the time expelled Abiathar from being priest to the Lord thus fulfilling the word of the Lord that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh seemingly some of Eli's descendants continued to serve in the background in some kind of priestly role after the death of Hophni and Phinehas as Samuel then came to the foreground but under Solomon

[36 : 31] Abiathar one of Eli's descendants who had rose to prominence again in Israel as a priest was finally expelled thus fulfilling the curse on Eli's house and presumably Zadok Abiathar's replacement was considered the faithful priest to lead Israel in his place you see this promise in one Samuel had multiple partial fulfillments throughout the history of God's people but notice that these promises aren't fully met by either Samuel or Zadok or any other priest that might have served before exile none of them had a sure house which is promised here in one Samuel Samuel's sons after him didn't even follow the Lord they weren't priests and Zadok's descendants well they stopped ministering when the exile happened when there was no longer a temple neither of them would go in and out before the Lord forever God has been at work throughout the ages tearing down religious leaders who dishonor him and raising up leaders who do honor him and advance his plans and his purposes for his people at that time but none of them will ever be the leaders we need to bring about lasting blessing on the church these statements about a faithful priest in one Samuel only come to their full fruiting in the Lord Jesus Christ during Jesus' first coming he tore down a really corrupt religious establishment beloved God his father an establishment that had such contempt for the Lord that they wanted his son dead

God gave us the leader the faithful high priest that we so desperately need Jesus was so concerned with God's honor and the welfare of his people that he drove money changers out of the temple he was so concerned with his people's sin being properly atoned for rightly atoned for that he would offer up his own spotless life as a sacrifice that God's people might flourish again he is the priest God's people have always needed but never had making a once for all sacrifice for sin and interceding continually for us that the church might advance in the world we're reminded in Hebrews chapter 7 the former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office but Jesus holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever consequently he is able to save the uttermost those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them

Jesus fits the description here in 1 Samuel he is the faithful high priest who does according to what is in the heart and mind of his father his house is sure for he is risen and he lives eternally and reigns with an indestructible life and as a result we can be absolutely confident as a church today about the trajectory of the global church yes there are many bad leaders of churches throughout the world and throughout all of church history yes they may afflict their people terribly restrict their flourishing and advance of the gospel at their locale and we should rightly long for God to tear down those leaders and replace them with leaders who do indeed honour the Lord and bless his people Jesus very much endorses that thinking that's why Jesus told his disciples to pray that the mountain would be thrown into the sea and it would happen he was talking about the temple mount of all the corrupt religious behaviour that was happening there pray that prayer and God will answer it

God loves to answer those prayers that rid his people of deadly suffocating religion but on the larger scale the worldwide scale our over shepherd our high priest the Lord Jesus Christ has done and is doing all that is needed so that the things that are in the heart and mind of God the Father come to full fruition in the world they will not fail we can be assured of our future flourishing the future flourishing of the global church because Jesus is our faithful high priest he will bring about God's faithful purposes in the world and no matter what happens in our lifetime locally here in Glasgow who knows what this church will be like in 50 years God will bring his people home and he will have them flourish again because of Jesus the faithful priest he will not fail in his priesthood like Eli's house and he will never retire from his duty and all those afflicted by bad religious leaders in the church today and throughout history can have full assurance full confidence that if they have put their hopes in Jesus Christ and his work on their behalf then they will be safely brought home despite the undermining efforts of the religious leaders so let's be thankful this evening for God's care for the church today be thankful that he judges sin that he tears down bad religious leaders and provides good leaders and preachers in their place and let's pray that we that he would continue to do that all over our country tear down bad leaders raise up new ones pray that the world over for it's a prayer that the Lord loves to answer but let's also not forget as we're zealous for him to tear down false leaders and provide good ones let's not forget to be thankful for the wonderful work of our great high priest the Lord Jesus Christ who's ensured the future flourishing of his church globally nothing will stop the church because of his work that's a wonderful promise

Amen