

The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

A Weekly Publication of the Christians Meeting at
Westlake church of Christ, 2291 Highway Z, Wentzville, Missouri 63385

Website: westlakechurchofchrist.org

Sunday: AM Bible Study – 9:30 a.m., AM Worship – 10:30 a.m., PM Worship – 5:00 p.m.; Wednesday: PM Bible Study 7:30 p.m.

Dedicated to the Proclamation of the Truth in the Spirit of Love (Ephesians 4:15)

Volume 14, Issue 36

Evangelist and Editor:

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Oct. 20, 2013

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Amen

by David Holder

On a platform above a huge assembly, Ezra opened God’s law before men, women and all who could understand. When Ezra blessed the Lord the great God, people answered “Amen, Amen” (Neh. 8:5-6). By adding their “Amen,” the people joined in blessing God and in effect committed themselves to obeying his law. Will we say such an “Amen?”

God Is Amen

Amen is a Hebrew word that is transliterated into Greek and English, as well as into other languages. The Hebrew word *aman* means firm, sure, true, faithful. God is *aman*: “know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful (*aman*) God.” (Deut. 7:9). He is “the God of truth (*aman*)” (Isa. 65:16). God is sure, firm faithful, and true. As the result, “The testimony of the Lord is sure (*aman*)” (Psalm 19:7); His precepts are sure (*aman*) (Psalm 111:7); and in warning his people, God declares “what is sure (*aman*)” (Hos. 5:9).

God instructed his people to say “Amen.” Once Israel entered Canaan, the people assembled at Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim where the blessings and curses were announced and agreed on (Josh. 8:30-35). As curses were stated, the people engaged in each one by saying “amen” (Deut. 27:14-26). This meant they understood and agreed to the terms of the covenant for their new life in the land. Their “amens” brought people within the compass of God’s will and way.

Jesus is Amen

Jesus often prefaced statements with the word “truly” – “Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:1). Did you know the word “truly” or “verily” is literally the word “amen?” In the NT record only Jesus prefaced statements with “truly I say to you . . .” Jesus was the Amener!

John shows that Jesus had the habit of doubling the word “Amen.” Twenty-five times, John records Jesus saying, “truly, truly, I say to you . . .” Jesus’ native tongue, Hebrew, does not have superlatives such as

“most” or a suffix such as “-est” (as in greatest). In Hebrew, a word may be repeated to convey the superlative degree. The seraphim cried out, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:3). Jesus said “Amen, amen, I say to you ...” Calling special attention to His words and emphasizing their truth.

Jesus not only speaks the truth; He is the truth. He did not only say Amen; He is Amen. To the lukewarm church at Laodicea, Jesus presented Himself as “the Amen, the faithful and true Witness” (Rev. 3:14). The Laodiceans were being unreliable in their walk with the Lord; they needed to take a good look at Jesus the Amen. They needed to repent, see some things differently, and get with it. They needed to adopt “Amen” as their motto.

Saying Amen

Paul writes at length to the Corinthians about their use of supernatural spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12-14). The gifts were not for show, but were to be exercised understandably so people could be built up (14:15-16). Paul implies that believers not leading in worship could engage in worship by saying “Amen.” They were not to be casual onlookers at a public performance. They were to understand the prayer so they could confidently say “Amen,” expressing their personal engagement and agreement.

A spectator spirit can characterize worship; we can think people are leading and the rest are watching. But God doesn’t want watchers; He wants worshipers (John 4:24). We are not performers, but participants. Saying “Amen” is a way to address the spectator spirit. By adding “Amen,” we join in the praying and preaching; we actively participate in the worship and the Word. And not only does this express our engagement and agreement but it also engages and encourages others.

Have we become too sophisticated and too detached in our worship? Have we allowed some who have gone too far to cause us to pull back too much? If you can make the prayer your own, don’t let the prayer end with a single “Amen” followed by stony silence. Say “Amen!” When the preacher makes a point with which you have strong agreement or that you think need emphasis, say “Amen.” With “Amen” we both engage ourselves and embolden others in God’s way and will.

And don’t forget we can say “Amen” with our lives as well as our lips. Paul writes that the promises of God are all “yes” in Jesus (II Cor. 1:18-20). He says in effect that we can respond with the “Amen” of our lives to God’s glory – that we believe the promises and intend to live by them. Jesus is the Amen, and we should be too.

Do you believe Jesus came into the world as a man and died on the cross for our sins? Amen! Do you believe Jesus was raised from the dead and reigns today as Lord and Christ? Amen! Do you believe Jesus is coming again for those who are His? Amen! The next time you participate in a public prayer or hear the gospel preached, will you say “Amen and amen” with your lips and life?

News and Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” - James 5:16