



Amen: Jesus and Confident Faith

Message by Pastor Andrew Kulasingham 10th April 2020

“Amen” - What does it mean?

The dictionary definition is: “uttered at the end of a prayer or hymn, meaning ‘so be it.’”

“Amen” is “So be it” but it is so much more.

During the last 2 weeks we looked at the use of the Hebrew word “*Aman*” where the word “Amen” is derived from. It means: to build up or support; to foster as a parent or a nurse.

So when we say “Amen” it includes the idea of nurturing, nourishing, building and supporting what we have ‘Amen’ed.

When we say Amen at the end of a prayer, or when we say Amen at the end of a Scripture, or when we say Amen at the end of a prophetic word, it is more than just agreeing with it or saying, “So be it.”

Sometimes it sounds like we are saying Amen and really meaning - “I hope so, may it be so – please God let it be so.”

These last 2 weeks we have seen that saying amen has much more significance to it.

When we say Amen –

we are coming to agreement with what God has spoken – through God’s word, or through a prayer said in Jesus name, or prophetic declaration that has been made – we are saying, Yes.”

but it also requires me when I say Amen – to go beyond agreement into an active faith position – to believe, to nurture, to nourish, to build upon, to support what I have just ‘amen’ed.

We saw that in Abraham’s life last week.

Genesis 15:6 (NLT) **And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.**

Abraham believed – he ‘aman’ed – he sustained his belief, he nourished it.

Every time fear came knocking, every time doubt tried to sneak in, he heard afresh, he saw anew and he *amened* again.

While Abraham continued active faith – “amen”ing God’s promises, God was weaving his amens into a beautiful tapestry of confident faith – to the point fear could no longer exist because Abraham was fully convinced that God was able to do whatever God promises.

Today I want to end this short sermon series by looking at Jesus and his use of amen.

Before I go to the Gospels I must take you to the book of Isaiah

The old testament actually uses the word Amen 25 times – in all of those times, it is used to affirm as certain, positive, valid and binding. In Isaiah 65, the prophet Isaiah prophesies the coming of a new heaven and a new earth – a new Jerusalem – a new people of God. God calls this group of people – “My servants.”

READ Isaiah 65:13-16

Verse 16 (NKJV)

**So that he who blesses himself in the earth
Shall bless himself in the God of truth;
And he who swears in the earth
Shall swear by the God of truth;**

The word **truth** there, is actually the word **amen**.

Isaiah is saying –

This new people of God

will bless themselves in the God of Amen,
will swear by the God of Amen.

A little background about the Hebrew people in this context might be helpful. When the Bible speaks of those who swear by the God of amen – it is actually talking about a custom where a person is certain of something they are saying that they will declare it 7 times, to ensure everyone knows they are certain about it and they are binding themselves to what they have just declared. In some parts of Scripture it is also called taking an oath.

Isaiah prophesied there will come a time the people of God will be so confident in the nature of God – that God is truth – He cannot lie. They will cease questioning what God says, and will just wholeheartedly – say with great confidence - “I bless myself in the God of Amen, I declare 7 times with assurance by the God of Amen.”

Amen will cease to be something we hope will happen, but amen will be a confident assertion that it will happen as sure as God is God and God is truth.

Now let’s go to the Gospels.

In the Gospels the word *amen* is found 106 times. Five of those times it is used at the end of the sentence but 101 times used at the beginning of the sentence. All 5 times it is used at the end of the sentence it was used by the Gospel writers. The remaining 101 times it was used by Jesus. Every single time Jesus used it, he used it at the beginning of the sentence. The King James Bible translated it as “verily – verily, verily I say unto you.” Other translations use “truly” or “assuredly”. But it was the word “amen” that Jesus used – “Amen I say to you.”

The use of the word Amen at the beginning of the sentence was intentional. Jesus was affirming what he was saying as certain, valid and binding (TDNT 1:97-99). Jesus was binding himself to his declaration – “This is true and I proclaim it with utmost conviction and confidence. Amen, Amen – verily, verily I say to you”.

This is the first fruit of Isaiah’s prophecy – My servants will bless in the God of Amen, swear by the God of Amen that –

confident assertion that it will happen as sure as God is God and God is truth.

I have heard so many times this lame excuse – “But Jesus was Divine.”

Yes I believe Jesus was Divine when he walked on earth. He was 100% God but he was also 100% man. I'm not going to spend time explaining this mystery today but I do want to take you to Philippians 2. In chapter 2 of Philippians, Paul explains it this way:

Philippians 2:5-8 (NLT)

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Note the phrase "gave up his divine privileges" in the NLT.

The NKJV says "made Himself of no reputation", and the NIV "made himself nothing."

The Greek word Paul used literally means "emptied himself".

This is what Good Friday is about – Jesus emptied himself, gave up his privileges, made himself nothing – so he could identify with us, and be the first fruit, the first born of this new creation of God that Isaiah prophesied about.

The beloved 3rd Century Church father Augustine said it so wonderfully:

“Man’s maker was made man that he, ruler of the stars, might nurse at his mother’s breast; that the bread might hunger, the fountain thirst, the light sleep, the way be tired on his journey, the truth might be accused of false witness, the teacher be beaten with whips, the foundation be suspended on wood, that strength might grow weak, that the healer might be wounded, that life might die.” (Sermon 191)

Jesus emptied himself – and in his humanity, the Bible says in Hebrews 5:8-9 (NKJV),

“though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”

This is how I believe the man Jesus developed his confident faith:

1. Total Submission to God’s way – His baptism

(NKJV) **But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”**

Even though John the Baptist realised he was unworthy to baptise the One sent by God, Jesus insisted that the right thing had to be done – God’s way. Right from the onset of his adult life and ministry Jesus submitted to God’s way.

2. Total Submission to God’s word – In the wilderness when Jesus was being tested, He overcame devil by these words – “It is written, it is written, it is written.”

He was the Word – He could have rewritten Scriptures. But the Word submitted himself to the written word.

3. Total Submission to God’s work – He only did what God did.

John 5:19 (NKJV)

Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

In John 4 – He had to go through Samaria.

While Jews would take an alternative route, Jesus goes through Samaria.

Father was going to visit a woman at Jacob's well, so Jesus went. Where Father goes, Jesus goes.

In John 5 – He heals a man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath.

John 5:16-17 (NKJV) **For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."**

He understands the law but is clear with his priorities: If my Father works on the Sabbath, I work on the Sabbath.

In John 11 – He waited till Lazarus died before going to Bethany.

- John 11:5-6 (NKJV) **Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.**

I cannot imagine the discipline required not to go and heal his friend. But Father stayed two more days, so Jesus stayed two more days.

He only did what he saw His Father doing – total submission to God's work.

4. Total Submission to God's purpose – Gethsemane

Matthew 26:39-46

(NKJV) **"O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."**

(NKJV) **"O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."**

The passage also states that Jesus was (NKJV) **exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.**

What was he experiencing? We will never understand or ever experience what Jesus went through that day. The prophet Isaiah gives us a glimpse..

READ Isaiah 53:4-6

No one can ever fathom the weight of sin, all the effects of sin, all the brokenness – he carried in his shoulders that day.

Is there any other way Lord? – If not, your will is my priority. – Total submission to God's purpose.

The man Jesus in all his humanity – walking this earth with unwavering confidence in the God of Amen. Amen, Amen – full confidence – affirming everything he said and did - as certain, valid and binding.

Confidently asserting that it will happen as sure as God is God and God is truth.

I want to close with this passage of Scripture found in Romans chapter 8

I want this to be a declaration

I am inviting you to join me in becoming this people of God Isaiah prophesied about.

the ones who:

shall bless themselves in the God of truth;

shall swear by the God of truth.

READ Romans 8:31-39

God is for me, no one can come against me.

God gave me his only beloved Son, He will surely freely give me all things.

God has justified me, no one can bring a charge against me.

Christ died, he is risen, sits at the right hand of God and makes intercession for me. So no one can condemn me.

And God loves me so much, nothing can separate me from the love of Christ.

I invite you to declare this over your life, your family, your loved ones this Good Friday.

Declare it over you 7 times. Declare it till it becomes so ingrained in you. Make this a binding declaration. **“Amen, Amen.”**