

GOD IS NOT HUMAN

PRAISE HIM

As we begin this morning in praise, we turn to scripture to teach us about who God is.

Numbers 23:19 God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

When we come to our time of praise each morning, we normally read scripture and focus on a verse that directly says something about who God *is*, but today we are going to focus on a verse that tells us who God *is not*. This is important to because sometimes when we come to God, we picture God as just a bigger, better version of ourselves. Maybe he's stronger than we are or smarter than we are; he's just a bigger, stronger person. The truth is, God is completely different from us, and because of this he doesn't fall into any of the things that we fall in to. He doesn't lie, he doesn't make promises that he doesn't keep, he doesn't change his mind. He is faithful, he's truthful, he's honest, he's consistent and he keeps his promises.

Today we will praise God that he is all of these things. Maybe for you one of those truths is more pronounced in your life right now than the others and you want to focus your praise on just that one part. That is just fine. Pray a prayer of praise for all or part of those things this morning.

God, you are Holy, you are different, set a part, you are different than anyone else. You do not think like I think, you do not act like I act. I praise you this morning for being truth, for being trustworthy, for being faithful, for never changing your mind. I praise you for always keeping your promises to me.

REPENT AND CONFESS

As we reflect more on the passage here in Numbers 23, it also leads us to a time of repentance, where in humility we stand in front of God and who he is and how perfect he is and how great he is and how good he is to us. We can begin to see that we haven't always measured up; We've missed the mark. Scripture tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And this morning, if we go back to that passage and allow the scripture to read us, it begins to point some things out in us that could lead us into a time of repentance.

Numbers 23:19 God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

As humans we all have lied, have thought wrongly about things, have had the wrong opinions about things, have not always followed through with what we say we are going to do, and have made promises we didn't keep. In light of who God is, we can see more clearly who we are and can see our desperate need to repent and be brought back in to alignment so that we can live the life he's called us to and that we can honor him in it.

This is one of those times when the Scripture challenges and humbles us.

Maybe today you have some specific things you need to repent of. Maybe there are specific lies you've told or maybe specific promises you didn't keep. Or maybe you are just learning generally from God's word that as a human being we fail and we need God's constant realignment. Take this time to remember how desperate you are for God's grace.

Father, forgive me for my lack of faithfulness, trustworthiness, truthfulness, and inconsistency. I repent of my sinfulness and in humility ask you to restore me and make me new again today.

REQUESTS

Numbers 23:19 God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Reflect again on Numbers 23:19 as you move into a time of asking and requesting some things of God. While in the time of repentance, we reflected back that we are not like God, so even though he's always truthful, we're not. He never breaks his promises; we sometimes do. He never changes his mind; sometimes we think wrongly. All of that being said, there have probably been times when we've had people break their promises to us. We've been hurt when people told us they would do something and they didn't. We've been hurt when someone lied to us and we've been let down when someone changed their mind about how they've felt about us. When that happens to us, we can carry that for a long time.

As you move to a time of requests and before asking God to do things for other people, reflect on your own life and ask yourself if there is anywhere you haven't forgiven; if there is anywhere that you've been hurt and haven't overcome that hurt. Ask God to heal you there. If you've had promises broken to you or have been lied to, give God an opportunity to speak to you and heal you and bring you his peace.

If that describes you this morning, ask God for healing and restoration. Sometimes when we get hurt, it can be tough to get over it. Today request of God that he give you his grace in the situations where you are feeling hurt.

Lord, I have been hurt by _____ and I need your grace today to overcome my hurt. I also ask that you lead me by your Holy Spirit that I might not hurt anyone else this way.

YIELD

As you move toward the conclusion of your prayer time, surrender your day to the Lord. If we turn over every day to God, eventually we will turn our whole life over to him, so this is a practice and habit that we need to build on during our prayer time. God has a plan for our lives, which means he has a plan for today and we need to turn this day over to him.

Psalms 90:12 Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

The psalmist is asking that we would consider each day valuable, that God would show us each day's value and every day's potential, and that we would use every day to grow a heart of wisdom. As the

heart of wisdom grows in us, we being to think and act more in alignment with God. We become more Christ like as we gain a heart of wisdom. Today, that is what we want. we want him to teach us to number our days that we would take this day and would find its full potential, and that we would use today to gain more wisdom so that we might be more like Christ. Today, surrender the day to him; whatever he wants to teach you, whatever he wants to show you, however he wants to lead you, be open to that.

Pray that you would yield each day to becoming more and more like Christ.

Lord, thank you for another day. Use today to teach me your wisdom, lead me today to become more like your son, and take today as yours. Use today and use my life for your glory. Amen.

Please feel free to continue in prayer. Maybe you have some more requests to make for some other people. Maybe you want to go back and talk to God about some of the things in your life that you need to repent of. Now is the time for those things as you take this time to reconnect with God this morning.

GOD IS GREAT

The days just fill up so quickly with things to do and things to think about and decisions to be made and before you know it, the day has flown by. Life can be so busy and so full of activity and decisions; that's why it is so very important that we reconnect and go to God first thing.

PRAISE HIM

This morning we want to spend a little time to praise God for simply being **great**.

Psalm 96:4 For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.

Psalm 145:3 Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

We get to praise God just because he is **great**. His *greatness* makes him worthy of our praise. And the psalmist says he's so *great* that our brains can't even handle it. His *greatness* can't be fully understood. His *greatness* is beyond us.

When you are watching sports on TV and you see an athlete make a big play and do something that seems super human; it's so amazing that you have to slow it down and watch it on instant replay frame by frame and we watch it and are amazed and say, "WOW, that was great!". Or maybe there was a time when you were outside in nature and got to see a great view. I remember going to the Grand Canyon and walking up to the edge of the rim of the Grand Canyon and just standing there in awe of the view; you are struck with how big, and beautiful and great it is. Or when you take that first bite of a perfectly cooked steak, you smell it and you eat it and let out this sigh and think to yourself "this tastes great". The psalmist says God is so great that those things don't even belong in the same conversation with him. Those things might be "good", but God's *greatness* surpasses it all and is so far beyond anything that we can imagine or anything that we've ever experienced.

Praise him today for his *greatness* by simply praying back to him the truth in these verses.

God, you are great and worthy of all my praise. You are greater than everything else and you are so great, my mind cannot even imagine your greatness.

CONFESS AND REPENT

As you move into a time of repentance, remind yourself of why you come to repent. It is not to make us feel shame or condemnation surrounding repentance; that's not the case and it should not be our motive.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

We don't need to repent because we're sitting under the weight of some condemnation or judgement. God has already taken care of that on the cross. When we come to repentance we don't just want to think of our sins as a "failure of performance" like God had a rule and we broke it, although that's true - that's what sin is. We want to understand the "failure of intimacy" or the "failure of relationship" that our sin has created. When we sin and choose to go our own way instead of God's way, we damage our

friendship; we break our friendship a little bit. And we want to be made right with him. Just like a close friend, if there was an offense between us, we would want to make that right so that our friendship can continue to grow and continue to be good.

Joel 2:13 (NLT) Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead. Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.

In the Old Testament "tearing your clothing" was a sign of grief, of sorrow and heartbreak. They were mourning the loss of someone that they loved. When we come to repentance, we have sinned against God we should have that kind of grief. But Joel is saying that God doesn't care about the outward expression of your grief, he wants for you to have a broken heart. He wants you to understand that the relationship is what is hurt, so have a broken heart and come back to God in repentance so that you might restore your heart and that the relationship might come into alignment again. It's not just about breaking the rules and it's not just about not hitting the standard; it's about damaging the relationship we have with God. Our relationship with God is hurt when we sin. That should grieve us. We need to repent because we have offended someone we love very much.

God, I'm sorry for all the ways I failed you yesterday. (if you feel led to tell him what those things specifically are, take the time to do that). I love you and I want to have a great friendship with you. I repent of my sin. I ask you to forgive me.

REQUESTS

Pray and ask God for some things for some very specific people. Take a minute and think about these groups of people and what you could ask God for on their behalf.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Paul tells us that we should pray for everyone and then he specifically says that we should pray for those that God has put into authority. So today, we are going to pray for our Mayor, our Governor and our President.

Father, thank you for the leadership you have established. I want to lift up the Mayor of my city (use his or her name). I ask you to give them wisdom in all they do today. Lead them to do what is right to you, and what is good for the city. I want to lift up the governor of my state (use his or her name). I ask that you that you lead them with wisdom and lead him by your Holy Spirit as he makes tough decisions today. I pray also for our President. I pray for him as he leads today and for those who will help him lead today. He needs to hear from you, he needs your wisdom. I ask you to lead him as he leads us. I pray for all three of these leaders today.

You may need to spend some extra time here praying for your leaders. You may also have some other people you want to pray for today; those that you love, those that are close to you. Or even for yourself; those needs that are physical, spiritual or emotional. He wants to hear your requests – he wants to hear your needs.

YIELD

Finally, we close today with a prayer of surrender and yielding to God; that we would set our lives before God and give him our everything.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

For us to truly worship God and be a living sacrifice we must surrender our whole lives, our everything to God; our motives, our goals, our skills, our resources. Everything that God has blessed us with we give back to him for his use.

The Christian author AW Tozer once wrote:

"If you do not surrender, it will be totally impossible for the Lord to do anything for you. Surgeons have to have the surrender of their patients. If I went to a surgeon and insisted that I was going to tell him how to do the job and not only that but stay awake and resist him, the surgeon could not work. It would be impossible. Surgeons must put their patients to sleep so they cannot resist, so they are in a state of surrender."

Tozer's point is that God uses us when we are in a state of surrender. He can help us and point things out to us and he can convict us and he can lead us and he can grow us in wisdom when we surrender ourselves to him.

*Father, you know what is best for me, you know what I need. You know where I have been and where I need to go. I trust you because you are **great**, and you know what you are doing. I surrender my will to you today. You have my attention, lead me and I will follow. – Amen*

Take as much time as you need to go back and fill in some more prayer requests. Maybe take some additional time in surrender and some more time in praise just telling God how great he is. There are a lot of scriptures out there that point to his greatness, so maybe spend some more time reflecting and meditating on scripture this morning. God Bless You!

LORD MOVE, OR MOVE ME

There was a Christian band called FFH and one of their hit songs was titled “Lord Move, or Move Me”. The song is about how we can pray when we’re going through really difficult situations in our lives.

There is a story we are all going to tell with our lives as we walk out of the most difficult situations we will confront. The quality of our story will be reflected in our prayer. That prayer makes us think about Paul and the conversation he has with God in 2 Corinthians 12:8-10. Paul was afflicted with what he would call a thorn in his flesh and although we don’t know what his struggle was, we do know that despite asking three times for God to take it away, He did not. This was a real “move this situation or move me” moment and where Paul lands is where many of us today will find peace.

So, as you begin to reflect on this prayer in your time with God today, pray:

Father, I come to you this morning and I acknowledge my need for you. Today as I confront difficult circumstances, I am thankful that I can speak openly and honestly with you.

REQUESTS

Open up with a time of asking.

When faced with difficult obstacles that seem impossible for us to “move”, there is no one better to cry out to than to God. That’s why Paul opens up his prayer by asking God to do what he cannot.

2 Corinthians 12:8 Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.

Sometimes we can get very passive in our prayer life and in our wrestling with what to do with the struggles that we are facing. It’s easy to forget our greatest strength. Paul understood what it would take to remove the thorn was not a “what” but it was a “who”. He understood it so much that scripture says he *pleaded* 3 times.

When you face a crisis where do you turn first? Is it your own understanding and strength? Is it in the security of what you have? Is it in the counsel of the people around you? Or is it with God?

Christian author AW Tozer famously said, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” Similarly, where we go when crisis comes may just be the most revealing thing about us.

Take a moment, if you haven’t already, and truly lay down your struggle before the Lord today. *Visualize* laying whatever this thing is, this struggle, this thorn in the flesh, at the feet of Jesus. It’s amazing how when we deal with difficult circumstances we spend most of prayer time trying to figure out a way around our problems instead of trusting in the one who is bigger than our problems.

Take a moment right now and truly ask God to help you be honest about your situation.

God, I come before you with my struggles today. I recognize in this moment that there is nothing in my power to overcome. I am thankful in this moment that you are a God who hears me when I

plead. I am thankful today that regardless of the outcome, my situation does not change who you are.

PRAISE HIM

Now enter into a time of praise.

Whatever you're going through today and what thorn may be causing a struggle in your life, know that God offers us grace in these moments.

Paul writes that this is God's reaction to his struggle:

2 Corinthians 12:9 Each time he said, "My grace is all you need."

As we read about Paul's struggles and think about our own, we should be so thankful that God offers us grace. He offers us grace to ask him to move difficult situations out of our lives and he offers us grace when we are frustrated when those things do not move.

So, as you think through difficult thorns that may be causing you struggle, just take some time right now and thank God for the grace that he supplies.

God thank you for your grace today. Even though what I am going through is difficult for me to understand, I know that it is not beyond your understanding. I trust the decisions you are making for my life.

ACCEPTANCE

Now, enter into a time of acceptance.

As Paul comes to the reality that his struggle is not going away, he is faced with a decision. It's the same decision we all face in moments like these. If the situation can't move, then maybe we need to. It's in this moment that Paul receives these words from God:

2 Corinthians 12:9 "My power works best in weakness."

There is something absolutely beautiful that happens when we truly lay our lives at the feet of Jesus and willingly accept whatever plan he has for us. We come to discover that it is in our weakest that God is strongest. That's because in these moments, we are completely dependent on God which honestly is where we are always at. Unfortunately, we get distracted by this truth and forget our incredible need for God. That's why these moments are so important; because they remind us that all we ever needed is what we always had.

Now to take a moment and think about how these situations have caused you to depend more on God.

God, thank you for knowing me better than I know myself. Thank you that the moments where I feel weak are the moments that I need. I recognize the situation might not be moving soon or

maybe even ever and that is ok. I accept what you have for my life and I know that if you are for me then nothing could truly be against me.

YIELD

Now enter into a time of surrender.

It's one thing to *accept* something as truth but it's another thing entirely to *submit* to it. Consider what happens next with Paul. Remember that when we face difficult situations, we can ask God to move or move us. That's exactly what Paul does. He says this:

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul has definitely bought in. When the prayer for the situation to move doesn't happen, Paul completely surrenders to the idea of God moving him.

As you close out this time, regardless of your prayer today, whether it's for God to move the situation or God to move you, be assured that *God is going to move*. And today if you're feeling weak, you're in a good space because it's our weakest moments that God is strongest in our lives.

Take a moment and visually imagine laying yourself now at the foot of the cross surrendering to His will over your life.

God, today I surrender my life to you. I recognize that this situation may not move so I am prepared to have you move me. Thank you that your strength is made perfect in my weakness. I know that I do not need to fear what is happening because it is in these moments that your power is greatest.

Thank you for taking a chance laying some vulnerable needs before the Lord. It's our hope that these First Fifteen Minute Prayer Guides help stir your love and affection for Jesus and help you as you walk out your faith. We are in this together and God is in this with us. Have a great day and God Bless.

Lord Move, or Move Me (by FFH)

I can't find the words to pray, I'm a little down today
Can you help me, can you hold me?
I feel a million miles away, and I don't know what to say
Can you hear me anyway?
What I need is for You to reach out Your hand.
You have taught me no matter what You'd understand.

Lord move in a way that I've never seen before
'Cause there's a mountain in the way and a lock on the door.
I'm drifting away, waves are crashing on the shore.
So, Lord move, or move me.

I've looked everywhere to find a simple peace of mind
But I can't find nothin' on my own.
So, I gotta leave myself behind, take up this cross of mine
Give away everything I hold on to.

Lord, I know the only way is through this.
But Lord, I know I need You to help me do this.

Out of this place of complacency
To a place of fellowship with thee
'Cause I am weak, but Lord, you are strong.
And you know it's been way too long
It's been way too long.

Lord move in a way that I've never seen before
'Cause there's a mountain in the way and a lock on the door.
I'm drifting away, waves are crashing on the shore.
So, Lord move, or move me.

GOD IS MERCIFUL

PRAISE HIM

Today begin your time of prayer by praising God for his mercy.

Romans 9:15-16 For he says to Moses, "I will have *mercy* on whom I have *mercy*, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's *mercy*.

As is commonly true with the apostle Paul's writings, He says a lot here in these two verses. In fact, he quotes the Old Testament to make his point which is this: that our God is full of *mercy*. He *abounds* in *mercy*. *Mercy* is something that *no one deserves but that God gives*.

As a recipient of that *mercy* we can't help but give God praise for it and thank him for it today.

God, I need your mercy every minute of every day. You are merciful to me, you forgive me, you bless me, you protect me. You are great and powerful and over all things and you could use your power anyway you choose. I worship you for choosing to be merciful.

CONFESS AND REPENT

When we think of God's *mercy* and about how *merciful* God has been to us, we need reflect on all of the reasons and all of the ways that we have received his *mercy* and how much we *need* God's *mercy*.

In Romans 7, Paul comes strong with his thoughts on this issue:

Romans 7:24-25 (ESV) Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Paul calls himself a wretched man; a man corrupted by sin and a man corrupted by the effects of sin, the body of death. A man in great need of God's *mercy*. And that's where we all are; we are all in very desperate need of God's *mercy* and his kindness to us.

Think of the words to "Amazing Grace"

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a *wretch* like me.
I once was lost but now I'm found
Was blind but now I see.

This time of repentance does tend to bring up some things that maybe we are not comfortable with or things that we don't want to think about ourselves. But when we do, we get to see fully how desperately we need God's mercy and grace. It gives us the opportunity to repent if our life is not in alignment with God's word and will.

Father, I come to you admitting that I am in need of you and your forgiveness today. I know you will forgive me because you are merciful. Thank you for your mercy today.

Repent however you need to. Maybe there are some specific things that you want to repent of. Maybe there are things that God's dealing with you about. Take the time you need here in a time of repentance.

REQUESTS

As we continue to navigate life and all that it brings upon us, we have a great need for strength. For God's strength. We often find ourselves in situations where we don't have what we need to endure; we don't have within us necessarily what we need to solve the problem. But God is in control and we can rest in that knowing that; but emotionally and physically he can give us strength. This is something we can always pray for and ask of God.

Isaiah 40:29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

The reality is that when everything is going great in life, we are dependent upon God's strength. When they are not perfect, when they are not great, when things become stressful and heavy and hard, that is when we can see more *clearly* our dependence on his strength. We see more clearly how *much* strength we need from him. In these moments of clarity, we am reminded to ask for his strength and thank him for it.

Lord, give me your strength to face today. If I try to manage today's stresses and troubles on my own, I will make a mess of things. With your strength I can do more than just get by, more than just survive, I can grow and I can serve others. I ask for your strength today.

Take as much time as you need if you have other requests you want to lift to God for others or for yourself this morning.

YIELD

As we move toward the conclusion of this prayer time today, we want to pray a prayer of yielding, a prayer of surrender. A very helpful and short verse of scripture to memorize is Psalm 25:1. The psalmist just writes:

Psalm 25:1 I offer my life to you, LORD.

That's it. "I offer my life to you, Lord." It's not very many words, but it's incredibly powerful. And it really captures the idea of surrender; the idea of yielding our lives and our days to God's use.

A man who came to be known as St. Ignatius Loyola wrote a prayer of surrender that does a good job of capturing the idea of surrendering. This prayer is helpful for understanding the depth of surrendering and yielding.

Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. All that I am and all that I possess, Thou hast given me: I surrender it all to Thee to be disposed of according to Thy will. Give me only Thy love and Thy grace; with these I will be rich enough and will desire nothing more. Amen.

That is a powerful prayer of surrender and a truth that we are to offer our *whole lives* to God. We would love to have that life, we want to pursue that truth and live in that reality that if we just have God's love and grace, we have *all* that we need.

God, you are enough. Your love is too much. Your grace is overwhelming. You are all I need, so I give everything else to you today. - Amen

Feel free to take as much time as you need in prayer this morning in any of the areas we have covered.

GOD FORGIVES

PRAISE HIM

Micah 7: 18-19 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Now picture for a second our God pardons us and *forgives* us. He doesn't have to do that. He could leave us in our sin. He could treat us as enemies or traitors. But he doesn't. He throws our sins away out of the deepest ocean; he removes them from us. Take a minute and thank God for his *forgiveness*. Let's praise him for pardoning us from our sin and for *forgiving* us and forgetting about our sin.

*Lord, I am so grateful for you and your forgiveness. You have pardoned me from all my sin and you have cast them away from me. You no longer see me with my sin because of your great mercy. You are the God who saves, you are the God who **forgives**. I praise you today for your forgiveness.*

CONFESS AND REPENT

It is such a blessing to be loved by a God who *forgives*. Take a few minutes to reflect on the attitudes and actions or inactions of yesterday. What do you need to ask God to *forgive*?

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance, and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

It is a blessing that we can repent. Take advantage of this gift and ask God to *forgive* you and make you new again this morning. As we try to be like Christ, we will mess it up. In humility, go to God and confess where you messed up. Ask him to *forgive* you. And thank him for his grace.

Father, forgive me of my sins. Forgive me for turning away from your will to my own. Thank you for the kindness of repentance and the forgiveness you provide.

Now take a minute or two and confess anything the Holy Spirit brings to mind and ask God to *forgive* you.

REQUESTS

Today as you come to a time of requests, and asking for things from God, take a look at what the apostle Paul prayed for the church of Philippi.

Philippians 1: 9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-to the glory and praise of God.

This is what Paul prayed for the people that he cared about; that their love would grow for the leadership that makes good decisions to honor God, that they would live for Christ and live a life *like* Christ, and that they would bring glory to God in all that they do.

During the time of asking, pray these things for yourself and for those you love.

Lord, today make me a person of abounding love, show me how to love others more and more today. Give me the discernment to make the right choices today so that you will be honored by my attitude and the outcome. Make me more like Jesus today. Allow my life to be an example to others of who you are so that you may be glorified.

This is a great prayer not only for yourself but also for your kids, your grandkids, your spouse, your co-workers and your pastors. Take whatever time you need here and pray the prayer for those you care about.

YIELD

Close today by praying a prayer of surrender from the Psalms.

Psalm 118:24 The Lord has done it this very day. Let us rejoice today and be glad.
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Dedicate this day to the Lord, rejoice and be glad:

Lord, today is your day. I give you every minute of today. I will live today as an act of worship to you. Amen.

If you have more time, go back and spend some additional time with God this morning. God Bless You!