Repentance Unto Life

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Date: 28 June 2026

Preacher: Jeff LeDuc

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us.! This is a reminder of what we say here often, and that is we are striving to reach the neighborhoods and the nations.

That's what we do each and every week when we gather here on Sunday morning. We're gathering together as a family, as a gathering of believers, where we are fed from the Word of God.
We receive from the Word of God. We practice the spiritual gifts that God has given us. And then we hopefully are practicing the one another's with each other as well as we gather here.
But then we're commissioned to leave from this place to take the gospel and we demonstrate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by our lips.
So that which we articulate, we share the message of the good news. The gospel points to Jesus Christ and we articulate that with our words.
[1:45] And so we share the gospel, but then our lives should be a demonstration of the gospel as well. So people see our lips, or they hear from our lips, and they see our lives as we bring the gospel into the neighborhoods and then ultimately into the nations as well.

And that's what we find here in the book of Acts. We didn't just come up with that. We didn't sit around a conference room table and say, what should our motto be?
And what should we be doing when we gather together? This comes straight out of the book of Acts. In fact, you see that it begins in Jerusalem, and then it's going to spread out.
The message of the gospel is going to spread from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth.
And you find that in the book of Acts. And so here in chapter 11, we have actually a recounting of what has already taken place in chapter 10.
[2:56] And that is that God has sent Peter to Cornelius, who is a Roman centurion, which means he is a Gentile.

God sends him to preach the gospel to a Gentile. And this is going to create some controversy within the church.
You can see even the direct application of what happens even thousands of years later in the modern church. When we take the gospel and we cross cultures and ethnicities and we present the gospel to others.
And as God is saving and drawing people, there are those who are stuck and struck by tradition that may get uncomfortable.
And hence, we have controversy that springs up. And that is the context here in Acts chapter 11. So look with me, beginning in verse 1, but we're really going to bore down and dig down deep in verse 18.
[4:11] But just to give us the entire context, Acts 11, beginning in verse 1. Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party, or those of the circumcision, criticized him.
Saying, you went to uncircumcised men and ate with them? But Peter began and explained it to them in order.
I was in the city of Joppa praying. And in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners.
And it came down to me. Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, rise, Peter, kill and eat.

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[5:21] But I said, by no means, Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth. But the voice answered, a second time from heaven.

What God has made clean, do not call common. This happened three times. And all was drawn up again into heaven.
And behold, at that very moment, three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent from Caesarea. And the Spirit, verse 12, told me to go with them, making no distinction.
These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter.
He will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household. As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as at the beginning.
[6:26] And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If then God gave the same gift to them as he has given to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?

When they heard these things, they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also, God has granted repentance that leads to life.
Let's pray. Our Father, we once again look to you. We and I confess before you and before these people my great need of you, and my desire is to speak that which you would have the listeners to hear from your word.
Father, we are dependent upon you to move in our midst, and I pray that even as we look closely at repentance unto life, that you would draw people to yourself.
If there be any here today you do not know, Jesus is Savior and Lord, that today they would turn from their sin, and by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, trust him.
[7:51] And for those who are believers, we pray that even this reminder of repentance unto life would be the reminder that repentance is daily, and is to be lived throughout our lives as followers of Christ, always turning from our sin and self and works to Christ, for Christ is our only hope, even as we've sung the song, all I have is Christ.

And so we pray with the psalmist, open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things from thy law. We ask this in Jesus' name, and all God's people said, Amen.
Repentance unto life. What we've just looked at in Acts chapter 11, and it starts even in Acts chapter 10, has been called the Gentile Pentecost.
It is the pouring out of the Holy Spirit unto the Gentiles. This is the reminder that we find in Scripture that God is doing a work, and it's going to not only be with the Jews, but it's going to go forth into all the world, and be for the Gentiles as well.
And the Jewish people had a tough time accepting this. They were steeped in their tradition and Old Testament teaching that pointed to that which was clean and that which is unclean.
[9:18] And lest we look down on them, let me remind you that their motives could have been pure, in that they were seeking to call holy that which God calls holy.

They were seeking to preserve that which they have been taught, and yet as God is doing in the early church, He is moving through the early church in bringing the message of the gospel to the ends of the earth.
But I want us to look at verse 18 this morning, and just hone in there. That after hearing this report, which mind you, this now is the third time that Luke records this in the book of Acts, of what has happened with the gospel going forth to the Gentiles, and that's going to set the stage for the Apostle Paul bringing the gospel to the Gentile world.
So he's driving his point home. But in verse 18, their response is one that leaves them silent. And take note of what they do next.
They glorified God. Now why would they glorify God? Well, first they're silent because there's eyewitness testimony of the work of God in saving a Gentile and his family, drawing them unto himself, and they recognize only God can do that.
[10:55] And there's testimony. So they fall silent, but then they glorify God. And then their response, the Gentiles also, God, then to the Gentiles also, God is granted repentance that leads to life.

What I want to do this morning is just walk you through really three different words or phrases to help us understand repentance unto life.

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Repentance unto life. So, the first word being just that. What is repentance? When you hear the word repentance or repent, what does that mean?
Well, the Old Testament uses two verb roots that essentially mean to turn or to return. To turn or to return.
We see this in passages like Isaiah 55 verse 7. It says, Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts.
[12:04] Let him turn to the Lord and he will have mercy on him and to our God for he will freely pardon. Or Joel chapter 2 verses 12 and 13.

Even now declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments.
Return to the Lord your God for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in love and he relents from sending calamity.
Ezekiel chapter 33 verse 11. As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.
Then Ezekiel says, Turn from your evil way. Why will you die, O house of Israel? There's just a brief overview of the Old Testament idea of repentance is to turn or to return.
[13:19] Now the New Testament carries with it really three different Greek words that all carry with it the idea of to change one's mind. To change one's mind or a change of mind.

Also, to turn, just like the Hebrew, or to do an about face. To do an about face.
Well, where do we see this? In the pages of the New Testament, we see even Jesus came preaching repentance. As seen in Matthew chapter 4 verse 17 and Mark 1 15 says, From that time, Jesus began to preach saying, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
After Jesus' life and then death and burial and then his resurrection, these words are recorded by Luke in Luke 24 verses 46 and 47.
Jesus, the resurrected Christ, proclaims, This is what is written. That the Messiah should suffer and rise from the dead.
[14:38] on the third day. And that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations.

We find that repentance is a turning from unbelief or turning from sin to belief in Jesus. Or turning to Jesus.
That would be the idea found in the New Testament. We see even in Acts 26 verse 20, Paul said to King Agrippa, Repent and turn to God performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.
This about face involves the totality of a man or a woman. It's their mind, their heart, their will is turned from sin, from self, from works to Jesus.
You turn to Jesus. So, for the unbeliever, the message has not changed. Repent.
[15:54] For the kingdom of God is at hand. The Messiah has come. Jesus has come and he was born of a virgin. And Jesus was perfect and sinless.

He fulfilled and kept the royal law and never failed, never sinned. He lived the perfect life that you and I could not live.
But not only that, Jesus was beaten. He was whipped. He was tortured. He was crucified on a cross. And that happened to him as a substitute for your sin.
For my sin. But praise God, Jesus didn't just die on the cross for our sin, but he rose from the dead on the third day.
We serve a risen Savior. Savior. And so the message of the gospel still goes forth. Repent. Turn from your sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
[17:06] Now for the believer, this life that we live is a life of constant repentance. We are constantly turning from sin, turning from self, turning from self-righteousness and looking to Christ and embracing Christ and trusting Christ.

It's what Martin Luther would begin his 95 theses with this understanding that repentance is met with in entirety of your life.
So, we find in Scripture what repentance is with numerous references.
But let me just draw out still under this what is repentance. Let me just draw three key elements. Three key elements that highlight what repentance is.
Number one, an apprehension of sin and a hatred toward it. An apprehension of sin, what sin is, and a hatred toward it.

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[18:20] You understand sin is costly. You understand sin is destructive. You understand sin leads to death.

You understand that sin leads to hopelessness. you understand that sin separates you from the very one who created you. You understand that sin as it's manifest in your life will reap destruction not only in your life but in the lives of those around you.
And you understand that judgment awaits you. an apprehension of sin and what sin is and then a hatred toward it.
You see this even in Luke chapter 15 verses 18 and 19. We see it in Romans chapter 6 verse 21.
Number two, key element of what repentance is, is an apprehension of self.
An apprehension of self, of yourself and that you're hopeless in your own sin. You're hopeless in your own sin.
[19:36] That you essentially have come to the end of yourself. Which sets us up for point number three or key element number three in apprehension of the fact that Jesus is my only hope.

Jesus is my only hope. That's the message of the gospel. That's the good news. That we're not left in our sin awaiting judgment but we have a savior.
We have one that we can turn to. We have one that we can return to. We have one that we can place faith in. He is our hope.
So an apprehension of sin and a hatred toward it. An apprehension of self and that I am hopeless on my own in my sin and then an apprehension of the fact that Jesus is my only hope.
I love what the Puritan Thomas Watson said. The two great graces essential to a saint in this life are faith and repentance.
[20:42] The two great graces that are essential to a saint in this life are faith and repentance. And then he says this. These are the two wings by which he flies to heaven.

These are the two wings by which he flies to heaven. Faith and repentance. They're inextricably linked together. The Westminster Confession states it this way.
By it referring to repentance a sinner out of the sight and sense not only of danger but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God and upon apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent so grieves for and hates his sin as to turn from them all unto God purposing and endeavoring to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments.
repentance. It's the idea wrapped up in those three key elements. So what is repentance?
Repentance is a turning from sin and self to Christ.
It's a change of one's mind that involves the totality of their being. Their mind, their heart, their will that turns from sin and self to Jesus Christ.
[22:12] And what Luke shares with us here in Acts chapter 11 is God has granted this to the Gentiles, to Cornelius and his household.

God has given this. But what is it? Repentance unto life. Number two, what is life? What is life? What we're looking at here is zoe, life.
It is full life. It is eternal life. It is life the way that God designed our lives to be.
And in fact, scripture would point to the many different ways that we run to and fro looking for fulfillment in this life, seeking after the good life or the happy life or the blessed life or the eternal life. And the only way that we come to know this kind of life is from God above. He is the one who gives life. So you see here that even is a tip of the hat, if you will, as you look in the pages of scripture to the one who gives this life.
[23:32] We see it in John chapter 3 when Jesus is interacting with Nicodemus. His interaction, he says, unless one is born from above, unless one is born again.

How does that happen? Well, the spirit blows where it will. The spirit is the one who gives life. We see it in John chapter 4 with Jesus speaking to the woman at the well. If you asked for a drink of water, but if you only knew that I could give you living water, water that will never run dry.
It's the idea of the spirit is the one who gives life. We see it in Romans chapter 8 that the spirit is the one who gives one life. You see, we've got to understand that in our sin we are dead in our trespasses and sins.
Ephesians chapter 2 and we need to be brought to life. Again, Ephesians chapter 2, but God being rich and mercy brought us to life.

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He caused us to be born again. That is the work of God. You can't do that on your own. You can't say to self, come alive. Just like you can't perform heart surgery on yourself.
[24:52] You can't unstop deaf ears on your own. You can't unblind your eyes that are blinded. Only God can do that. For God is the one who brings one from death to life.

From rejection to acceptance. From condemnation to being accepted in the beloved. So, this life is eternal life.
Now, point number three, how does this happen? How does this happen? We look at repentance unto life how does this happen?
Well, again, looking at how the Westminster Shorter Catechism answers this question. What is repentance unto life? Here is the answer.
Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience.
[26:13] It is a saving grace. It's the recognition that there's a true sense of sin in my life, and then there is the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

You see, it's not enough, now listen carefully, it's not enough just to be sorry for your sin. We see biblical example after biblical example of worldly sorrow.
We see it in King Saul, when he rejects God, and God says, I'm going to replace you as the king of Israel with one who is after my own heart in David.
King Saul felt sorry for his sin plenty of times, but he turned back to his sin over and over again. What was the missing element, if you will, in Saul's life was he didn't turn to God because David had sin in his life.
And what did David do? He confessed his sin and he turned to God. Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in thy sight. Psalm 51, Joey read from Psalm 32, the blessing of confessing your sin.
[27:29] You see, it's not enough just to feel remorse or sorrow for your sin, but you must turn to Christ. We see in the New Testament with an example of Judas Iscariot and the apostle Peter.

Judas felt tremendous remorse over betraying Jesus. In fact, he even threw the money that he was paid back. And what did he do?
He turned to self and he turned away from Christ, hence going out and hanging himself. himself.
And then you see Peter. What did Peter do?
He denied Jesus, not once, not twice, three times. Denied him. One of the inner three in the band of disciples.
The one who said, oh, if you go, I'll die with you. And Jesus says, oh, Peter, you don't know what you're saying. And yet, what does Peter do? he sees the risen Christ and he jumps out of the boat.
[28:37] He gets to the shore. Why? Because he turns to Christ. You see this throughout Scripture, how faith in Christ and repentance turning from sin are inextricably linked together and both are gifts from God.

You see it right in the text. Look with me even in verse 17. If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we what?
Believed. There it is, faith. When we believed in not just anything or anyone but we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Who gave that faith?
God did. God is the one who gives faith to believe in. You see it right there. If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.
Peter says who was I that I could stand in the way? And then verse 18 when they heard these things they fell silent and they glorified God saying then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.
[29:59] God gives. God grants. Sinclair Ferguson said faith is trusting in Christ. Repentance is turning from sin.

They are two sides of the same coin of belonging to Jesus. Faith and repentance. They are two sides of the same coin of belonging to Jesus.
And who is the one who gives this? God does. Now I know what you might be thinking.
If you're a critical thinker you're saying but Jeff I've heard for years that repentance is something that I do. And I would say yeah yes you do have to turn from your sin and then turn to Jesus.

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So there is a human response just like we would say with faith. Jeff I've heard I've got to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and I'll be saved.
[31:11] Yes and amen. Now here I want to pull the curtain back. Would you do that of your own accord or of your own will.

The scripture says God gives it. God is the one who grants this. So you say Jeff I must repent and turn and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
Yes and amen. But now you're saying that God is the one who's doing that and if he didn't do that in my heart then I wouldn't do that. And I'd say yes and amen and you say now I'm scratching my head and I say yes and amen to that.
It's divine sovereignty and the human response of the will. Scripture upholds that God is the one who gives God is the one who grants and then we are the ones who turn and trust but you wouldn't do it apart from God changing your heart or giving you a new heart or causing you to be born again.
2 Timothy 2 25 is another great example that Paul instructs Timothy when dealing with those who are argumentative in the church and those who are seeking to cause division.
[32:39] Paul says these words, God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth. He tells Timothy, you don't need to get in a big debate and a big argument.

You stand for the truth. You don't shy from standing and being bold in the truth, but understand if they're to turn, it's going to be because God granted them repentance, not because of your slick argument.
You trust God. God is the one who grants repentance. So, two aspects of how does this happen? Faith and repentance, and it's seen as a gift and that which is granted.
Number one, it is a gift. In the Greek, something given or freely transferred. Something given or freely transferred. Then to the Gentiles also, God has granted repentance unto life.
granted is to give or to grant, like we see in Matthew chapter 6, give us this day our daily bread. We see it in Matthew 7, 7, ask and it will be given to you.
[33:50] That which is granted is given, and the gift is that which is received, like the woman at the well in John chapter 4.

So, repentance unto eternal life is a gift given from God to a believer and to unbelievers.
To become believers. So, let me wrap this up with some implications from the text. Implications from the text.
And lest I don't do this, I want to give you a great book recommendation. Why? Because I'm always going to give you a book recommendation. A great book recommendation that got me on this journey of studying repentance is by new book out by Chris Braun's The Way of Repentance, Embracing God's Gift for a Transformed Life, which he wrote a previous book to this that's called Unpacking Forgiveness.
You struggle with forgiving? Highly recommend that book. Unpacking Forgiveness. Wonderful book.
[35:08] This is a new book. The Way of Repentance. And he looks not only at like what we're looking at this morning of repentance unto life, but then how we as believers live this out.

Because the Christian life as Martin Luther embraced and understood in the Protestant Reformation wasn't one of paying penance. It's one of repentance.
We're constantly turning from our sin to Christ. It's the essence and the hope of the gospel. But if we were to look and if we had time and looked at Acts 10 and 11, let me just draw out some implications from this text of scripture.
And it'll be alliterated with some R's here. And so, number one, remind yourself that God is the one who saves.
Remind yourself that God is the one who saves. I hear that. I know I'm about to land the plane. Okay? I'm about to finish. But remind yourself that God is the one who saves.
[36:17] In our efforts to reach the neighborhoods and the nations, we need to always remind ourselves we're simply the messenger. We're simply the paper boy.

We're simply the mailman. We're simply the one who is bringing forth the message of the gospel. And God is the one who saves because you can't bring anyone from death to life.
That's not your responsibility. Your responsibility is to be a witness. You've been commissioned to go forth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded.

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But God is the one who saves. So remind yourself and here in this text of scripture, if we had time, you could walk through how God is the one who shows the initiative from getting Peter's attention to his calling and he had prepared Cornelius before Peter ever got there.
And let me tell you something, folks. You're just links in a chain. When you cross people's paths, you're just a link in the chain. God is the one who's doing the work.
[37:28] God is the one who's preparing. How is it that I could share the gospel with one and they're like, I'm ready to repent and believe and trust in Christ. And you think, oh my goodness, wow, that must be a pretty good gospel presentation. No!

No! God's the one who prepared them and others who may say, hey, listen, I don't even want to hear it. Well, you were just a link in the chain. You be faithful. Remind yourself God is the one who saves, number one.
Number two, rest in the work of God. Rest in the work of God. So if you remind yourself that God is the one who saves, you can rest in the work of God knowing he is the one who brings one repentance unto life.
But number three, recognize your part in the Great Commission. Recognize your part in the Great Commission. This means that we don't get to just sit back and say, well, if God's going to save the heathen, then he'll save the heathen and he doesn't need me to be a part of that.
No, the means by which God uses is that every single one of us are messengers, are witnesses, are ambassadors, are ministers of reconciliation.
[38:39] Every single one of us. So recognize your part in the Great Commission. And then number four, repent this day.

Repent this day. Do not delay. So let me speak just for a moment. There may be some in this room and I'm sure in a room this size.
You know you're not a believer. Perhaps you're even hostile to the gospel. Perhaps you've got all your arguments airtight. And you think, I'm comfortable.
Listen, there should be cause for fear in your life because you've not been promised another breath. You've not been promised another day.
And God in his mercy and in his grace has brought you to this place this day to hear the message of the gospel that you're to repent and trust in Jesus Christ.
[39:45] That's the mercy of God in your life. You say, Jeff, what do I do? Well, you do just that. You turn from sin. You turn from self. And you trust Christ.

All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. So you repent. Do not delay. For the believer, understand the same call is the call to us that we're to live a life of repentance.
We're to live a life that's progressive sanctification. I'm constantly being confronted through the ministry of the word of God, through time and prayer, through brothers and sisters in Christ, of my need for Christ, of the sin in my life.
That's part of growing in grace is you understand that even as Paul said at the end of his life that I am the chief of all sinners. You don't grow in arrogance.
You don't grow in trust in yourself. You grow in dependence upon Jesus. I need Jesus more today than I needed him yesterday and I'll need him more tomorrow than I needed him today and he is my only hope.
[41:04] So we repent this day. We look to Christ this day and he is the one who gives repentance and he is the one who grants repentance unto salvation or unto life so that in the end he gets all the glory.

He gets all the praise. Let's pray together. Our Father, we stop now and just look to you for the response of our lives is lived out now the rest of this day tomorrow Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and so on.
This is how we live this out. Either we will turn from our sin and self and embrace Christ and trust Christ or we will not.
and so what we do now is just ask that you would grant repentance unto life for the unbeliever that today would be the day of salvation.
For the believer that our lives would be marked by constant repentance turning from sin and self to Christ so that you would be magnified and glorified in our midst.
[42:38] We thank you for the gift of your word. We thank you for the gift of the people of God and for the gift of prayer and for the gift of repentance unto life.

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We pray all this in Jesus name. Amen and amen. Before you're dismissed two quick announcements. Number one if you have a bulletin you have a connection card and you would like to reach out to us just to learn more about what is the gospel what is the way to salvation who is Jesus Christ please just fill that out you can drop it in any one of the giving boxes or if you like prayer perhaps you're saying I know I'm a believer but I need prayer in this area of my life you can jot that down or I need help in this area of my life you can jot it down there.
So remember this announcement number two remember no service tonight and then no service next Sunday evening and we'll just have the one service at 1030 and listen if you have ever been up here for the 4th of July how many of you could raise your hand and say you've been at First Baptist Mustang on the 4th of July how many of you have lit a firework off on our campus how many of you I'm just kidding you don't have to raise your hand yeah but thank you for your honesty repent right now listen all of Mustang and Yukon and Tuttle and the surrounding area comes to the campus here and lights fireworks off so we need your help so next Sunday morning at 730 a.m. if you can be a part of this a great family ministry project we bring if you've got a blower bring a blower if you've got brooms bring brooms and dust pans and gloves and we're just going to clean the parking lot should take us about an hour to an hour and a half so you'll have time to go home take a shower please do that after you and then come back at 1030 now remember this next Sunday it's at 1030 not 10 a.m.
1030 is when we'll have our one service next week all right let's stand together and I'll close us with one final word of prayer and then you'll be dismissed thank you for being here today father let your face shine upon us as we go from this place many of whom will head to areas of service whether teaching in preschool or children's or youth and others will go teach adults or sit in adult classes we ask that the ministry of the word the work of the word would continue in our Sunday school hour and bless this next hour of worship we ask this all in Jesus name amen amen god bless you you are dismissed that are there are just not not or they can't but they not they not they not they or they not they or or fathers or they or hundred

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