

“Amen and A-woman” by Brett Petrillo

According to longstanding tradition, the 117th Congress was opened with a prayer. As Rep. Emanuel Cleaver came to the end of his prayer, he concluded with “Amen and a-woman.” Yes, you read that correctly, “a-woman.” As if, in some way, “amen” was actually some chauvinistic masculine word.

To set the record straight, “amen” is an ancient Hebrew word that has been used for thousands of years. It simply means “may it be so.” In other words, after a prayer, we are collectively requesting that the words of the prayer would happen.

There is a tantalizing desire to take this article into the dumpster-fire discussion of politics, but there is a much more important lesson to learn about our culture right now – **The United States is ignorant about Christianity.**

While Rep. Cleaver may have shown us an extreme example, this religious ignorance is more common than you might think. Personally, I’ve had conversations with people who have “heard of Jesus but didn’t know what He did.” Another person hadn’t heard of Moses or knew anything about the difference between the Old Testament & New Testament. Let’s not even get started on complex Bible words like redemption, sanctification, and righteousness.

The days have long passed when we can make religious *assumptions* in our nation.

We need to stop assuming people know about Jesus.

We need to stop assuming people know Bible “words.”

We need to stop assuming people know Bible people.

We need to stop assuming people know how to pray or worship God.

We need to stop assuming people know what is happening during worship to God.

We need to stop assuming people know any “basics” of Christianity written in the Bible.

The bottom line is...we need to stop *assuming!*

At this very moment, we’ve reached a place in our nation where people may not know Jesus, know the Bible, or know that “amen” isn’t a gendered word. We very well may be heading towards another time when people are darkened in their understanding because of the ignorance that is in them...

“This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, “LET EACH ONE OF YOU SPEAK TRUTH WITH HIS NEIGHBOR,” for we are members of one another. “BE ANGRY, AND DO NOT SIN”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.” **Ephesians 4:17-29**

If we’re going to reach our world today and fulfill the Great Commission (yes, see Matthew 28:18-20), we may need to change the way we’re doing things now: We may need to change how we think. We may need to change how we teach. We may need to change how we talk. We may need to change what we do. We may need to change how we evangelize. We may need to change the way we pray. However, we do not need to change the way we conclude any prayer to the one true God...



Can I get an “Amen”?