

Prepare to Meet Your God

by Brian Long

Brian Long's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for repentance and selfless living in preparation to meet God, as illustrated through the message of the prophet Amos.

Duration: 54:03

Scripture: Amos 4:1-3, Amos 4:12, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 10:26

Topics: "Genuine Worship", "True Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of genuine worship from the heart. He criticizes those who engage in religious activities without true devotion to God. The preacher highlights a passage from Amos chapter 8, where God despises the insincere songs of the people whose hearts are far from Him. He also mentions the example of five teenagers in Pakistan who risk their lives to spread the gospel, demonstrating true devotion to Christ. The sermon concludes with a call to prepare to meet God, emphasizing the need for genuine repentance and surrender to Him.

Transcript

Amen, where would we be without the grace of God? And without knowing that we, his children, are in the palm of his hand, if I didn't know that right now, brothers and sisters, I would run for my life. You surely wouldn't see me standing in a pulpit if I did not know that God was with me. It'd be too much for me.

Turn to Amos, chapter four, if you would, Amos is in the Old Testament. One of the minor prophet books, Amos, chapter four. And my message today is prepare to meet your God, prepare to meet your God.

There are 13 verses in this fourth chapter, and I would like us to read all of them, the whole chapter. So we'll begin in verse one. Hear this word, ye kind of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, bring and let us drink.

The Lord God has sworn by his holiness that, lo, the day shall come upon you that he will take you away with hooks and your posterity with fish hooks. And you shall go out at the breeches, every cow at that which is before her, and you shall cast them into the palace, saith the Lord. Come to Bethel and transgress at Gilgal, multiply transgression and bring your sacrifices every morning and your tithes after three years and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven and proclaim and publish the free offerings for this.

Liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God. And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and want of bread in all your places. Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

And also I've withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest and I caused it to rain upon one city and caused it not to rain upon another city. One piece was rained upon and the place whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied.

Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I've smitten you with blasting and mildew when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased the palm or worm devoured them. Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt. Your young men have I slain with a sword and have taken away your horses, and I've made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils. Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

I have overthrown some of you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and you were as a fire brand plucked out of the burning. Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, for lo, he that formeth the mountains and created the wind and declareth unto man what is his thought that maketh the morning darkness and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name. Now, Heavenly Father, we ask you, Lord, to anoint the preaching of your word. I pray, mighty God, that you would also anoint our ears to hear what your spirit is saying to us.

Father, I know that you've given me this word, that you've placed it upon my heart, that you've burned it upon my heart. But we're asking you, O God, now to speak it through me. We're not here to look to any man.

We're here to look to you, God, and to hear a message from your heart that comes from your throne. So have your way in this place and let your word go forward, Lord, like Pat with power, like the hammer that breaks the rock in pieces, like fire that burns up all the chaff, like an arrow that pierces our hearts and brings us back to you, Lord. Speak to our hearts is my prayer, O God, and turn your people back to yourself in Jesus name.

Amen. Now, my text obviously comes from verse 12 when God says. Prepare to meet your God, O Israel.

Prepare to meet your God. That's not a gospel appeal that God is giving here. That is a message of judgment.

God is saying after you have I have done all these things five times. He's he said, I've done this and yet you would not return to me. So I did that and you still would not return to me.

I did this and you would not return to me. I did that and you still would not return to me five times. And then he says now, therefore.

You wouldn't return to me, I'm left with one solution. Prepare to meet your God, O Israel. It's a message of judgment.

It's a message that's coming through the prophet Amos. And this is very special to me because Amos was not a professional prophet as it is. He was not trained in the school of prophets.

Amos was a shepherd. God took Amos from the flocks in the herds of cattle. He took him and he made him a prophet.

He made him a preacher. He didn't go to school. That's so encourages me because I never went to Bible school, never went to seminary out there with the cattle, a horseback.

And the Lord took me from the saddle to the pulpit. What an encouragement it is that God can use nobody's, that God can call ordinary people in ordinary places and put a calling upon their life. That's what Amos was.

He was a shepherd. We're told that in chapter one of verse one, the words of Amos, who was among the herdmen taken among the cattle, away from the sheep, he says in chapter seven and verse 14. Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet.

Neither was I a prophet's son, but I was a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit to be like today saying, Sean, I was a cowboy. I was I was on the ranch and he took me. He took me a herdman, also somewhat of a farmer, gatherer of sycamore fruit, that is, he gathered figs.

And the Lord took me as I followed the flock. And the Lord said unto me, go and prophesy unto my people. Amos was a shepherd.

The first early apostles were ordinary fishermen. Elijah was just an ordinary farmer. And God put a calling upon their heart.

He put a burden on their heart. Amos's name means burden, and that's what he had upon his heart, a burden from the Lord. It was a burden to call God's people back to him in repentance, to call them to repent of their sins and return to the Lord.

He had a burden for the righteousness of God, for uncompromising justice. He had a heavy heart and Amos was giving a given a very difficult ministry because he was called to preach to a people that really didn't want God. They were living in luxury, they had prospered, Israel had prospered, they were rich and fat and well fed.

And what do they need? They didn't want God, they wanted what God could do for them, but they didn't want God, nor did they want to hear anything that God had to say to them. Now, that's a difficult ministry to preach to a people that wants nothing to do with God. Give me his blessings, but don't give me him.

Give me his blessings, but I could care less about him. Israel was prospering, they were rich, they were building ivory palaces. Some of them had a house for the winter and a house for the summer.

There was no justice in the courts anymore. Iniquity abounded and the worship of God basically became just a sham, just a show, or it was replaced with idolatry. And because of that, this prophet with a burden on his heart and a message straight from the heart of God comes to this people and he calls them to repent.

He calls them to turn from unrighteousness and return to the Lord. Notice how he begins in verse one. Hear this word, you kind of patient now kind K.I.N.E. means cows.

Maybe your translation says cows. Hear this word, you cows of patient. That's something Amos could relate to taken from the herds of cattle.

Now he looks at a rich, well-fed, prosperous people who care nothing about anybody else but themselves. And he says, hear this, you cows of patient. Basically, you sleek, fat cows of patient that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppressed the poor, which crushed the needy, which say to their masters, bring and let us drink.

The Lord has sworn by his holiness that, lo, the day shall come upon you that he will take you away with hooks and your posterity with fish hooks. And you shall go out at the breeches, every cow at that which is before her, and you shall cast them into the palace, saith the Lord. Now, the cows of patient, he's referring to the rich, well-fed women of Samaria.

But it's more than that. It's everybody in that day who was living only for themselves. They were living in luxury, but they could care less about the poor.

They despised the poor. They crushed the needy, he says in verse one, under their feet. And all the while they say to their husbands, just give us bring me something more to drink.

Bring me something more to eat. And Amos says, you're no different than those slick, fat cows on the hillside grazing in green grass who are prospering. They have plenty to eat, but they just crave for more.

You know, God uses sarcasm through his prophets. Many times God used sarcasm through his prophets. Jesus used sarcasm when he was preaching to those self-righteous Pharisees.

He said, you strain at a gnat, but you swallow a camel. Here he says, you, you cows of Bashan, who's he speaking to? But the self-centered, the selfish folks, I want to ask you this morning, are the selfish and the self-centered ready to meet their God? Are they prepared to meet their God? Those who despise the poor and crush the needy under their feet, but all the while just say, give me something more to drink. Give me more to eat.

Cater to me, serve me, bow down to me because life is all about me. I tell you, I pity the self-centered, selfish person when he stands or she stands before Almighty God on judgment day. The one who has lived only for themselves and they stand before the face of Almighty God.

What a dreadful day that will be. That's who he is speaking to, those who could care less about the poor. Can I ask you a question? Are you more interested in serving others or having others serve you? Are you living this life for the glory of God or for yourself? Are you ministering to the poor or despising the poor? Do you have eyes to see the needy? Are you crushing the needy under your feet? This applies to every single one of us in this house today.

I begin with you, young people, youth, are you living for yourself or for the glory of God? When is the last time someone said to you that life is not about you? It is about the glory of God. I wish somebody would have gotten my face when I was a teenager. I know what I was when I was a teenager.

I was a punk. I wish somebody would have got in my face and said, Brian, life is not about you. It is about the glory of God.

Get your eyes off of yourself. How let God give you eyes to see the poor and needy walking down the hallways of your school. When last have you seen the poor and needy walking down the hallway of your school? When last have you reached out to that young man or that young woman in the classroom or the locker room with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you have eyes to see them? Do you care, young people? Do you understand that life is not about you? The church has even bred that in young people that we just cater to youth, give to the youth, make the youth happy.

Serve the youth. I'm telling you the words of Jesus. Deny yourself.

Take up your cross and follow him. Be poured out for the sake of Christ. Let him touch your eyes to see the people that you meet with every day that don't have two parents in the same home.

They don't have a mom and dad who love them and pray for them like you do. They don't have parents that are bringing them to church every Sunday morning like you do. Have eyes to see the needy, have eyes to see the poor.

Bring them Christ. Who's praying for them? If you do not, there's nothing more powerful. What a mighty weapon, a young man, a young woman is in the hand of almighty God, a teenager that has forsaken the things of this world to follow Christ.

One mighty weapon. A dear friend of mine invited me to go to Pakistan this month. I would have gone, but the Lord didn't give me liberty to go.

But he said to me, Brian, you're going to see you're going to see five young men who are teenagers, teenagers who have forsaken all to follow Christ. And they're taking the gospel of Jesus Christ up into the mountains of Pakistan to radical Muslims who very well may cut off their heads. But the love of Christ compels them to go through the snow, through the mountains, to sleep on the ground, to sleep in a cave.

They understand what Jesus said when he said, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. If any man come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it.

But whoever loses it for my sake, the same shall save it. What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? I know it's not all you young people. Some of you young people love God with all your heart.

But I fear some of you are living for yourself and only yourself. And it's time to look at Jesus. Does that verse apply to the youth, to the teenager? When Jesus says, take up your cross, you better believe it does.

It applies to you as much as it does to me. What about us, middle age? Those who are in their 30s or 20s or 40s, half of our life is now gone. Have you lived your life for the glory of God? Are you living your life for yourself? Self-centered and self-focused, I often think about this, especially here lately, I'm 33 years old and I think of this all the time.

Lord Jesus, where were you when you were 33 years old? You know where he was? Preaching good news to the poor, healing the sick, delivering the captives, healing up, binding up the broken heart, administering to the poor. He came, he said, I came not to be served, but to serve and to give my life as a ransom for many. And at 33 years old, he was so close to laying down his life upon a cross.

He was going to a cross to die. And I think of that and it moves me to say, Lord, take my life, a living sacrifice to be holy and acceptable unto you. God, let me not waste another second of another minute of my life, but get glory out of this life.

Every fiber of my being received glory. Lord, I'm not my own. I've been bought with a price.

Are we ready? Middle aged brothers and sisters, are we prepared to meet with God? Are you youth prepared to meet your God? Are the senior adults prepared to meet your God? Your life is almost gone. At the last hour, you're at the very threshold of crossing over into eternity. Has this life of yours been lived for the glory of God or consumed upon yourself? And I say it with all due respect.

But let me ask you, are you ministering to the poor? Or living in luxury? Are you seeking to serve or to be served? We've heard it. Well, Brother Brian, I served in my day. It's the young people's turn.

Now it's time for them to serve. I challenge you with all due respect to show me that in Scripture. Show me retirement in the word of God.

Show me in Scripture where the older people stood back and say, now it's your turn, younger people. And they did nothing. Show me that.

It's the older people that should be pouring their wisdom into us. It's the older people that should be on their knees becoming prayer warriors for the glory of God. Tis one life, tis will soon be passed.

Only what's done for Christ will last. What's lived, what we lived for ourselves will be consumed, burn up like wood, hay and stubble. What we've done for the glory of God will last for eternity.

Jesus said it this way in Matthew chapter 25. He said on that day of judgment, when he separates the sheep from the goats, those sheep, those that belong to him on his right, those goats, those that rejected him on his left, he will separate the sheep from the goats. And he will say to them, he will say, I'm going to read what he says to the goats, those who are not prepared, those who live for themselves.

He will say to them on his left, then verse 41, Matthew 25. Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no meat.

I was thirsty and you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and you took me not in, naked and you clothed me not, sick and in prison and you visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered or a thirst or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. When did we see you hungry, Lord, and not feed you? When did we see you poor and not minister to you? When did we see you in need and not serve you? Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. Folks, when you minister to the poor, you're ministering to Christ.

When you feed the hungry, you're feeding Christ. When you minister to that hurting that the poor physically, yes, but what about the poor in spirit? What about those who are desperate for somebody to tell them about Jesus? You do it to them, you do it to Christ. I graduated from high school from a pretty

good sized school.

I don't know, maybe 150 in the senior class. In graduating class, I cannot remember one one person who was a Christian in my class in my high school. Not one can I remember.

I have thought many times, I have thought, was there one who was a Christian but just wouldn't tell me? Maybe there was one, but they sure didn't confess Christ openly, everybody's living for himself. Everyone's living for herself. Not one openly confessed Christ, will that be said of you? Your environment, your school, your workplace, not one person, suppose someone God does save someone on your workplace, will they have to say not one person on my workplace? Can I remember as a Christian that openly confessed Christ that I had eyes to see the poor and needy, that's had eyes to see me and offered me Christ? Our lives characterized more by selfishness and self-centeredness.

Like the fat cows of Bashan. Our lives that are consumed with the glory of God. To serve him with all of our heart till our last dying breath.

That is the only way to live. That is the only way to be prepared. To meet your God, you have lived for the glory of God, the selfish are not prepared, but there's somebody else he addresses here, notice with me in Amos chapter four.

He says in verse four and five, and I'm going to read these two verses in the end from the NIV, he says, go to Bethel and sin, go to Gilgal and sin yet more. Now, when do you ever know of God telling us to go and sin? He's using sarcasm again through the prophet, go to Bethel and sin, go to Gilgal and sin yet more, bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years, burn leavened bread as a thank offering and brag about your freewill offerings, boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do, declares the sovereign Lord. What is he saying, you who worship God in vain are not prepared to meet your God, you who worship God in vain, go and sin some more.

You want to go to Bethel and sin, go to Bethel and sin. You want to go to Gilgal and sin yet more, go to Gilgal and sin yet more, but prepare to meet your God. Now, they were worshiping God, so supposedly they're going through the motions, they're giving tithes, they're giving offerings, but you see, though they offer up so-called worship to God, their heart is far away from him.

They are worshiping other gods at the same time that they are confessing Jehovah. Hearts filled with idolatry and adultery. And God says, prepare to meet your God, you want to go sin and live in idolatry, go do it.

Such people who worship him in vain are not prepared to meet with God. Listen to how God's God views their worship. Let's just look at a few passages here.

Look with me at verse twenty one of chapter five, Amos, chapter five, verse twenty one. God says. In verse twenty one, he says, I hate I despise your feast days, I will not smell in your solemn assemblies, one translation says it this way, I hate I despise your religious feast, I cannot stand your assemblies, God says, though you offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beast.

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy vials. He's saying stop singing to me. Stop offering up your I will not listen to your music, no matter how beautiful you think it is.

Why was God despising their religious activity, their songs? It's because their songs were not coming from their heart. Their hearts were far away from God. And God says it's better for you not to come, it's better for you not to sing than to go through the motions of some pretense and worship.

Their hearts were far away, chapter eight and verse four. Chapter eight, verse four, hear this, oh ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, when will the new moon be gone? That we may sell corn and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small and the shekel great and falsifying the balances by deceit. What are they saying in verse five? But when will the Sabbath be over? In other words, yes, we're here, but we can't wait till this is over so we can go do our own thing.

They were not looking forward to the Sabbath day. They were not looking forward to worshipping God. They were looking at it with dread, drudgery.

Oh, it's Sunday again. Oh, I have to go to church again. I ask you, my dear friends, are such people prepared to meet with God? Are you prepared to meet with God if you are here only because your parents dragged you here? Are you prepared to meet with God if you offer up songs, but your heart's not in it and you give tithes and offerings and boast about doing so, but your heart's not with the Lord? It's vain worship.

Listen to what Jesus says about it. Matthew, chapter 15. Matthew, chapter 15 and verse seven, Jesus says, you hypocrites, well, did Isaiah prophesy of you saying this people draw nigh unto me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their heart, their heart is far from me.

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men, Jesus is saying if we worship him only with our lips, only with our mouth, but our heart is far from him, we're worshipping him in vain and we are not prepared to meet with our God. You see, the question is, brothers and sisters, where is your heart? Does God have all of your heart? Remember the first commandment, God says, I am the Lord, your God, you shall have no other gods before me. That means you you are not to love anyone or anything more than me.

You're not to place anything, anyone before God. Jesus then says this is the first and greatest commandment. You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength.

And if you worship, but your heart's not in it, it's vain worship. So the question is, when I sing, am I singing from my heart? When I serve God, am I serving him from my heart? When I give, am I giving from my heart? When I pray, am I praying from my heart? It's your heart that the Lord wants. It's your heart that God desires.

What good is it to be married to someone, but you don't have their heart? What a tragedy to profess the name of Christ, but he doesn't have your heart. You see, it's these things that Amos says. You're grieving, God, you're not prepared.

To meet with God when your heart's not with him, your heart's not in it. And he says, this is what God did to get your attention. God begins to send remedial judgments.

You say, what are remedial judgments? The remedial judgments of God are the judgments of God that come from his chastening hand. He brings his chastening hand to discipline us through forms,

expressions of judgment in order to turn our hearts back to him. They're judgments that God brings in order to get our attention and bring us back to him and watch what God does.

Verse six, he says, and also because of all these things, he says in verse six, I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and want of bread in all your places. Yet have you not returned unto me? God's first thing God does. You see this pattern throughout the scriptures.

He touches the economy. He touches the economy, shakes the economy. Now they're experiencing some lack, some hunger, you know, touch a person's belly.

Maybe he'll cry out to God as his provider again. They're suffering lack. That was a remedial judgment.

God is patient. If at that moment they would have said, God, we've sinned against you and they come back, God would have been waiting with open arms. But what does he say? Verse six, yet you have not returned unto me.

So God shook the economy. Now he's going to shake the ecology. Verse eight.

So two or three cities, verse seven and eight speaks of him sending a drought. And verse eight, he says to two or three cities, wandered unto one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied that they were experiencing thirst. Yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord? So he touches it again.

Verse nine, I smitten you with blasting mildew when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer worm devoured them. Don't you think, folks, when things happen like that, we should say, Lord, what are you wanting to say to me? God is wanting to get our attention. God is wanting to get the attention of the church in this nation, especially.

He is shaking her. And I don't blame the nation, it's the church, as go the people of God, so goes the nation. We've got to return to the Lord, our God.

But he says you would not return to me. There it is again, verse nine. So verse 10, he says, I've sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt.

Your young men have I slain with the sword and have taken away your horses. Here's what you see. God judged them by shaking the economy.

He judges them by shaking the ecology. Now he judges them by sending warfare. And throughout the scriptures, you see that when God is judging a nation, she hands he hands that nation over to her enemies warfare.

Would they respond? Verse 10 says, yet have you not returned unto me? None of this was working. So he sums it up in verse 11 and he says, I have overthrown some of you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and ye were as a fire brand plucked out of the burning. In other words, when I judge these cities, I still had mercy upon you.

I still when I didn't have to spare you, I spared you like a burning stick that's in the fire, it's on fire, it's going to burn up, it's going to be destroyed. But God comes and rescues you at the last minute and he keeps you from being destroyed. He blows out the fire.

He rescued you as a fire brand, as a burning stick. How many of us have experienced that kind of goodness from God when because of some foolish sin or rebellion in our life, we should have been killed, but God rescued us. We should have been destroyed, but God delivered us.

We should have been exposed and everything destroyed. But God covered us in his mercy. What is it? It is the goodness of God that's supposed to lead us to repentance.

It's God's goodness, five times, he says, I did this, you would not return. I did this, you would not return. I did this, you would not return.

And if you continue to despise the goodness of God and reject, reject these remedial judgments. Taking advantage of his goodness that he's only left with one solution, and that is to come and judge you himself face to face, and when that happens, you're done. That's why he says in verse 12, therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God.

Prepare to meet thy God, turn with me, if you would, to Romans chapter two, Romans chapter two, folks, do you understand that it's the goodness of God that you're here this morning? Someone said, I don't know about that, brother Brian, I assure you, it's the goodness of God that you are here this morning hearing the word of God where you could be hearing fables. And fairytales, hearing the word of God, but listen, listen to what God says, verse three of Romans chapter two. Verse three of Romans chapter two, and thinkest thou this, O man, that judges them which do such things and do us the same, that thou shall escape the judgment of God or despises thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.

It's the goodness of God that's supposed to lead us to repentance. But when the goodness of God doesn't lead us to repentance, watch what happens next verse, verse five. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.

He's saying if you continue to take advantage of the goodness of God, if you continue in your sin, your willful rebellion and you will not repent, though God has been good to you, giving you chance after chance, after chance, after chance, he says finally, because of your hardness of heart, you will get what you deserve. That's the word of God. The word of God is respond to his goodness, let his goodness move you to repentance, let his goodness drive you to the cross, drive you to back to him, giving him praise and glory and honor.

If you don't, there's only one thing left, prepare to meet your God for final judgment, prepare to meet your God. You say, well, is it the same in the New Testament? You're reading from the Old Testament, Hebrews chapter 10, Hebrews chapter 10. In the New Testament, God says, verse 26, for if we sin willfully after that, we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses of how much sore punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who have trodden underfoot the son of God and have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, for we know him that has said vengeance belongeth unto me. I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. He's saying if the goodness of God doesn't bring you to repentance and you continue in willful sin and rebellion, it's the same as stomping on the son of God. Putting his blood under your feet, almost like spitting on it.

Looking at the cross and the crucifixion of our Savior as if it is nothing. As if it's cheap and worthless, the death of the son of God and God says to such people, your judgment will be just. Vengeance is mine.

I will replace it, the Lord, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Now the question. Brother Brian, what do I do to prepare? You see, God's if God were to say right now, prepare to meet your God, that means he's coming right now in judgment.

It's too late. But folks. We're experiencing the goodness and grace of God this morning.

It's God through the prophet Amos, it's God through the word of through his word warning us, speaking to us, calling you, calling everyone here in this room today. To himself saying, prepare, are you prepared to meet with God? Are you prepared? And when I say prepare, I mean right now, if Jesus were to part the skies and suddenly come to his temple and reveal himself, how would you stand before him? Are you prepared to meet the son of God face to face? There are only two classes of people that will stand before God on judgment day. Those prepared and those unprepared, only two classes of people will be on the earth when Jesus Christ comes again, those who are ready and waiting for him and those who are taken by surprise because they didn't think it would happen so soon.

I was just a teenager, Lord, I thought I had lots of time to get ready, won't work on judgment day. I've been a Baptist for 60 years, won't work on judgment day. Are you prepared to meet your God? How do I prepare one way? Jesus, Jesus said in John 14, six, I am the way, the way, the truth, the life.

No one comes to the father except through me. One way, Jesus, the narrow way, Jesus, the only way, Jesus, the straight way, Jesus. The only way to be right with God is to come to him through his son, Jesus Christ, who suffered judgment for you, suffered the wrath of God upon himself, was crucified for your sins and raised again one way, Jesus.

But now what's your part? Your part is to return. What did God say five times here? You would not return to me. You would not return to me.

I did this and you would not return to me. What is it that God is wanting, folks? He's wanting us to return to him. He's wanting us to turn to him.

And you turn to him and return to him only through the blood of his son, like Noah in the day of judgment there, when God destroyed the whole world with the flood, there was one place of refuge and it was inside that ark. And it was only when Noah went inside the ark and was shut in that he was spared from the judgment of God. Jesus Christ is your ark.

He's your refuge, your only place of safety and deliverance from the wrath of God. Run to him, put your faith in him, be placed in him and you will be spared from the judgment to come. What do I do? You return.

And I want you let me close with this, Hosea, I might close with this Hosea chapter 14. No use in telling a lie, Hosea chapter 14, I want you to hear the heart of God. God, it's amazing to me how patient our God is with us, how he longs for us to come back to him when we've gone astray or come to him the first time through Jesus Christ, his son.

Listen to the heart of God, Hosea chapter 14. I'm going to read this from the NIV as well. I think it's a little bit easier to understand some of the words.

Verse one, Hosea 14, he says. Return there that word is again, return, oh, Israel, to the Lord, your God, your sins have been your downfall. Do you hear that as for us, your sins have been your downfall.

Return to the Lord. Take words with you and return to the Lord. There it is again.

Return to the Lord. Say to him, forgive all our sins and receive us graciously that we may offer the fruit of our lips. Assyria cannot save us.

We will not mount war horses. We will never again say our gods to what our own hands have made. For in you, the fatherless find compassion.

I will heal their waywardness and love them freely for my anger has turned away from them. I will be like the dew to Israel. He will blossom like a lily.

You see what God's saying, just return to me. Return to me, come to me with words, these words say, Lord, forgive all my sins. Receive me graciously that I may offer the fruit of my lips to you, that is praise to you.

Assyria cannot save us, in other words, don't come to God thinking there's another way. There's only one way you think you can save yourself. You might as well not come.

You think somebody else can save you might as well not come. If you say, well, I'm going to come, but I'm still going to worship what my hands have made, don't come. There's no use in coming unless you come with all of your heart.

All of your heart. Look at the next book, Joel, chapter two, Joel, chapter two and verse 12. Listen to what the Lord says, Joel, chapter two, verse 12.

Therefore, also now sayeth the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart. Turn ye even to me with all your heart and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning and rend your heart, not your garments. That is, let your heart be torn.

Let your heart be broken. Don't put on some outward show. And turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness and repent of him of the evil.

Now, listen to me, dear friends. Are you prepared to meet with God? Meet with who? God. The one who, he says in Amos, in the last verse that we read, Amos 4:13, the one that forms the mountains, have you ever been in the mountains? The one who made these mountains, these majestic, mighty mountains, are you ready to meet him? The maker of the mountains, the one who created the wind, the one who's in control of the tornado and the hurricane, the Bible says our God dwells in light that no man can approach unto, unapproachable light.

Are you ready to meet him? The Bible says our God is a consuming fire. Are you ready to meet him? The Bible says that his voice thunders like a sound of a mighty rushing water. Are you ready to meet him? The Bible says that mountains flow down at his presence, they tremble, that he says it says the nations are like a drop in the bucket.

It says that his eyes are like fire, his face shines brighter than the sun. Are you ready to meet this God? So many have in their mind, yeah, I'm ready to meet God. I'm going to put my arm around and say, hey, you're my buddy hogwash.

You show me one person in the scripture that met God and didn't fall flat on their face. But God said, you can't see my face and live, Daniel probably got the closest. And you know what happened to him? He said, it's like the life went out of me.

And I said, God, how can I even speak to you? I'm dying. You're in awe at the presence of God, awe at the glory of God, awe, you're in, listen, you're in the presence of absolute perfection. Holiness, righteousness, truth, almighty power.

And you think you're going to ask him a few questions. Prepare to meet your God, are you ready to meet almighty God face to face? Only one way, folks, return, turn to him and this is what you will find. Again, two classes of people, those who are unprepared will run, they'll try to run away from God.

If we had time, we would go into the book of Revelation and see where Jesus Christ comes in judgment and every eye shall see him. Even those who pierced him, they're going to know who he is and he's coming in judgment. You know what they say? They crawl in the caves and hide themselves, let the rocks fall and just hide us from the face of the wrath of the Lamb of God.

Terrified, those who are not prepared, try and run from God that you can run, but you'll never hide those who are prepared, run to God. That's how you get prepared, run to God, turn to God, turn to Jesus before you leave this morning. Turn to Jesus, turn to him with all of your heart and what you're going to find is almighty God who's ready to unleash his wrath upon sin.

When he sees the sinner coming home to him through Christ in the blood of Jesus, that almighty God is the same God, but he sees they're coming through my son. I've already unleashed my wrath upon my son. So that God becomes father with arms open wide when you come through the blood of Jesus.

No other way. When you come through Jesus, his arms open wide. And what do we learn from the prodigal son? Luke chapter 15, when the prodigal son finally came to his senses and he was in that pig pen and he lifted up his eyes and he said, in essence, what am I doing here? My father lives in a land where there is plenty.

I'm in this pig pen hungering for hog slop. My father's table is set. Why am I here? He gets up, he says, I'm going to return to my father when he returns to his father.

What does he find? Does he find his dad up on the porch with a horse whip ready to beat him when he gets home? He finds his father, sees him coming. He's a long way off and his father takes off running. Running to embrace this filthy sinner.

Why? Because they're coming home. If you will come to Jesus today, you will come to open arms that are ready to embrace you, ready to lavish his love upon you, ready to clean you up, ready to give you a new heart, ready to raise you from the dead, ready to turn you from darkness and into light, turn you from the power of Satan and into the kingdom of God, ready to forgive, ready to cleanse, ready to save. Set you free.

If you will not come, I have one message for you only prepare to meet your God. In judgment, you'll never forget those words, you'll never forget those words when we're standing before God on Judgment Day and I see you over there, your blood is off of my hands. You can't say, why didn't you warn me, preacher? I say, don't you remember February 22nd when I was pleading with you from the pulpit? Now it's too late.

Return. That's my message. That's the appeal.

As our brother comes to lead us in a hymn of invitation, I have one appeal to you, young people, are you ready to meet with God? Are you ready to meet your God? It's not a game. Middle aged people, are you ready to meet your God? Senior adults, are you prepared to meet your God? Let's return today, come to Jesus, come to Christ with all of your heart. Remember, there's no use in coming unless you come with all of your heart today.

You can find grace and forgiveness in the blood of Jesus. I ask you to come, come. If you're astray, you're backslidden.

Maybe you've said I've come before. It's time to come again. If you've been if you've been astray, if you've been living in sin, come, come back to him and be forgiven.

Be cleansed. Give him your heart. Let's stand together.

Father, God, I pray in the name of Jesus, Lord, that you would speak to every single one of our hearts and you would have your way in this place. Lord, open these altars. Let there be a work of your Holy Spirit today.

God, I pray if there's someone here who doesn't know you, that this day they cannot leave until they get right with you. Get right with God, my friend. Get right with God today.

Lord, lead us now. We commit ourselves into your hands in Jesus' name. Lord, we bless your name.

God, we praise you. And thank you for your goodness and grace. Help us, O Lord.

Help us, those who are called by your name, who belong to you, Jesus, to go from this place and to live for your glory alone. It's no longer God about us. We don't want to live for ourselves, Lord.

We don't want to live selfish lives. We want to be poured out for your namesake, for your glory, Lord, for your kingdom on Earth. God, I just I just offer myself to you and I offer you the church up to you, God, to be glorified, be glorified in our midst, Lord Jesus.

Throughout this week, O God, we praise you. Lord, we cherish you. We love you.

We rejoice in you. In your name we pray. Amen.

I want to.

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net