

2026-05-06 Points

Title: The Reluctance to Warn: Heeding God's Judgment and Living Righteously

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the uncomfortable but necessary topic of God's judgment through the book of Amos and 2 Peter 3. The pastor addresses the natural human reluctance to both hear and share warnings about divine judgment, emphasizing that true love and grace require speaking the whole truth. The message challenges believers to examine their lives for areas of complacency, materialism, and self-justification, while maintaining balance between God's grace and His justice. The sermon calls Christians to be content with what God provides, to share generously rather than hoard blessings, and to remain vigilant about spiritual priorities rather than being consumed by worldly pursuits and accumulation. Ultimately, it's a call to spiritual maturity and responsible stewardship.

Key Points:

- Reluctance and procrastination often prevent us from doing what God calls us to do, especially sharing difficult truths about judgment
- God is gracious in giving warnings before judgment comes, revealing His plans to His prophets and servants
- The people of Israel were judged not for lacking blessings but for hoarding them, becoming self-satisfied, and neglecting God and others
- Americans face similar dangers of materialism, believing blessings indicate God's approval while actually drifting from Him
- Contentment is a learned secret that counters our culture's constant craving for more
- We must distinguish between moral, immoral, and amoral issues, being careful not to let freedom in neutral areas crowd out obedience in clear commands
- God's timing differs from human perception: a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day
- The Lord is patient, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance

- Believers should live holy and godly lives, anticipating Christ's return and the new heaven and new earth
- We can fall from our secure position if we become presumptuous rather than growing in grace and knowledge

Scripture Reference:

- Amos 3:1-15 (primary focus)
- 2 Peter 3:1-17
- James (reference to knowing what to do but not doing it being sin)
- Luke (the rich man and Lazarus)
- Revelation (churches addressed with warnings)
- Genesis 1 (God speaking creation into existence)

Stories:

- The pastor's childhood experience of reluctance about farm chores, particularly cleaning out chicken houses and hog pens with the manure spreader
- The biblical account of the rich man and Lazarus from Luke, illustrating how earthly wealth doesn't indicate spiritual standing
- The rich man who planned to tear down his barns and build bigger ones, only to lose everything
- Israel's exodus from Egypt with enough gold to build the tabernacle despite being slaves
- Abraham and Jacob being blessed with material wealth while remaining faithful
- The divided kingdom context: Israel (northern ten tribes with capital in Samaria) versus Judah and Benjamin (southern kingdom with Jerusalem)
- The golden calf erected in the northern kingdom's temple at Bethel
- Cultural shift illustration: how American society moved from respecting Sundays and Wednesday nights for church to constant activities and sports schedules