

2026-06-17 Points

Title: Standing at the Altar: God's Call to Authentic Living

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the book of Amos, examining God's judgment on Israel for their dishonesty, injustice, and religious hypocrisy. The pastor emphasizes that God sees all our deeds—both good and bad—and calls believers to authentic Christianity rather than superficial religious observance. The message connects Old Testament prophecies to Christ's crucifixion, showing how signs like the earth trembling and darkness at noon were fulfilled at the cross. The sermon challenges listeners to move beyond "Sunday Christianity" to daily surrender, presenting themselves as living sacrifices at God's altar. While acknowledging God's judgment is real, the pastor emphasizes His grace, mercy, and desire for genuine relationship over religious performance. The message concludes with a call to meet Jesus at the altar, asking what He sees in us and what He desires to see.

Key Points:

- God knows all our deeds—nothing escapes His notice, which should either comfort or convict us depending on our walk with Him
- Religious hypocrisy involves looking good externally while being corrupt internally; God sees through superficial righteousness
- Israel's sins included dishonest business practices, cheating the poor, and going through religious motions without genuine devotion
- God's judgment isn't about finding dirt but responding to persistent sin that becomes a "stench" to Him
- The prophecies in Amos about the land trembling and darkness at noon were fulfilled at Christ's crucifixion
- A famine of hearing God's word is worse than physical famine; we must actively seek God's word, not take it for granted
- Being a "living sacrifice" means dying to self-control and surrendering fully to God's purposes
- God's grace is sufficient even in our weakness and suffering; we don't earn salvation but should live like we're saved
- Christians often "clean up" on Sundays but live differently the rest of the week; God calls us to consistent authenticity

- Having faith means trusting God through the crisis, not just believing He'll end it

Scripture Reference:

- Amos 8:5-14; 9:1 (primary focus)
- Matthew 27:50-54 (earthquake and darkness at crucifixion)
- Revelation 2-3 ("I know your deeds")
- Romans 12:1 (living sacrifices)
- 1 Samuel (word of the Lord was rare)

Stories:

- Jacob's wrestling with God and his moments of both pride and humility
- The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16) illustrating eternal reversal of earthly circumstances
- Noah finding favor with God when all others were unrighteous
- Abel's acceptable sacrifice versus Cain's rejected offering
- The Titanic band allegedly playing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" as the ship sank, illustrating how people turn to God in crisis
- Abraham offering Isaac on the altar and God providing the ram
- The disciples' experience of "famine" for Jesus' words during the three days between crucifixion and resurrection
- Children learning to feed themselves as illustration of spiritual maturity