

Death's Defeat

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[0:00] Hosea chapter 13 verse 12 and I'm going to read through chapter 14 verse 2.

A sermon in this great book started back in September or October, I believe.

And when I come to passages like this morning's passage and the one especially from last Sunday, it reminds me of a time in seminary and preaching class where not only was our seminary professor a wonderful man but a very tough grader, but some of the students in the class were also pretty tough graders.

And I remember preaching this sermon. And you know how there are some statements that people make to you and you just never forget them? You know, you ever have those statements?

You just, they were made and you just don't ever forget it. And I'll never forget one of my classmates handed me back his review of my sermon with his grade and he handed it to me and he said, Mike, that'll be a great sermon for you to preach when you have a mega church.

[1:30] And at first I thought, well, what a great compliment. Thank you, brother. But then I got to better know my classmate and I realized that it was not a compliment that he was making.

Because I thought about it and I remember that sermon was very lightweight. It was very fluffy. It's like eating cotton candy, you know, it tastes good, but there's no real substance to it.

And his word, his friendly word of rebuke has always stuck with me. That when it comes to God's word, we don't need to dull it down. In fact, we should not do that.

And when it comes to preaching his word, we aren't looking for texts that might taste good, but lack any kind of real nourishment. And so I hope that that will be the case for us this morning, that you will see how deep and how nourishing the word of God is, how much we need it.

So if you have your Bible, would you please stand with me? If not, there's a Bible in the pew. And as always, if you don't own a Bible, we would like for you to take that Bible home with you today as our gift from our church to you in hopes that you will continue to be reading God's word.

[2:37] Hosea chapter 13, beginning in verse 12. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up. His sin is kept in store. The pangs of childbirth come for him, but he is an unwise son.

For at the right time, he does not present himself at the opening of the womb. I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol. I shall redeem them from death.

O death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from my eyes. Though he may flourish among his brothers, the east wind, the wind of the Lord shall come rising from the wilderness, and his fountain shall dry up.

His spring shall be parched. It shall strip his treasury of every precious thing. Samaria shall bear her guilt because she has rebelled against her God. They shall fall by the sword.

Their little ones shall be dashed in pieces, and their pregnant women ripped open. Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

[3:45] Take with you words and return to the Lord. Say to Him, Take away all iniquity. Accept what is good. And we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips.

May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? My nephew plays high school football in Bethany, Oklahoma, and many of you know that during the course of the season, Danny and our kids and other family will travel over there to watch him play on Friday nights and have a great time doing that.

And then we drive back home, and, you know, that's a long night, and it makes for an even longer night, and so we're often coming home during those games in the wee hours of the morning. And I'll remember this one time where we were close to Bartlesville, driving on the highway, and my eyes began to get a little bit heavier and heavier, and I would pop them back open, you know, stay the course.

But then this one moment, my eyes became so heavy, and I drifted to sleep for just a few seconds. And you know the rumble strips that are on the side of the highway there?

They serve a couple of purposes. One, to wake you up, to remind you that, hey, you're off course, and you are veering towards a direction that will end in destruction, and also to slow your vehicle down, if possible, to try to make things not as bad as they could be.

[5:22] So I'm asleep at the wheel, and I hit the rumble strips, and before I can wake up, Danny wakes up. And she shouts at me. She pleads with me, Wake up!

Wake up! And so my eyelids pop open, and I go back over, and she said, You're asleep! I said, No, I wasn't. No, I wasn't.

She's like, Yeah, you were. You were asleep. And she said, Pull over. I'll drive. And I said, No, I'm fine. And so for the rest of the 25 minutes or so to go home, her eyes were on me that entire time. Because there are moments like that where gentle reminders and gentle words of encouragement aren't sufficient. In cases of emergency, where lives are on the line, it wouldn't have been appropriate for Danny to just kind of shake my shoulder.

Hey, wake up. Wake up. I think we're all going to die. Right? That doesn't work. That's a moment where we must shout. We must plead.

[6:31] It's time to make a course correction. This is where Hosea is at with the people of Israel at this point in chapter 13. It's not as if he hasn't been pleading with them all along.

He certainly has been doing that. But here, I sense, I feel, that his pleas, his shouts are intensifying. His message from God is coming to an end.

And the end of Israel is near. Assyria is coming. They may even be there at this time. At their door. Destruction is awaiting them.

In fact, it may even be underway. But he says, he pleads, he shouts with them, hey, there's hope if you'll return to the Lord.

Please, wake up. Please, correct your course. But they don't. And they won't.

[7:35] We know what ultimately happened. That Assyria did level Samaria. They laid waste to the land. They drug many of the Israelites into captivity, killing many others in brutal ways, as we've read.

And they did so because Israel had rejected their God. They had rejected His offer of salvation. Though they claimed to be God's people, though they claimed to know God personally, and they claimed to know Him intimately, they were a spiritually dead people.

They did not truly know Him. In biblical language, when a person is in intimate relationship with another, the Bible says that they know that person.

For example, in Genesis 4, verse 1, there it says that Adam knew his wife Eve, and that is a way of saying in a very delicate way how intimately they became acquainted with one another, for we know the consequence of their knowing one another was that she conceived and bore Cain, their first son.

[9:01] Jesus says that on the day of judgment, there will be those who, much like Israel during Hosea's day, claimed to know God intimately, but reality is that they are imposters.

Let's look at that sobering passage of Scripture, Matthew 7, 21-23. Jesus, speaking of that day, says, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, repeating the word Lord, as if I, hey, I know you, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name?

Then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. These are people like Judas Iscariot.

Remember him, one of the disciples? They all thought, at least from the world's perspective, even the perspective of the own disciples, that he was one of Jesus' chosen disciples.

[10:16] That he was one of God's elect, but they were fooled by him. Contrast that with how Jesus describes someone who has eternal life.

In John 17, 3. And this is eternal life, that they what? That they know you. The only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

The Bible also says, then, that for those of us who know God, that we are called to plead with those who don't know him, that they would know him.

2 Corinthians 5, 17-21. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and he gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, now counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us this message of reconciliation.

[11:33] Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, making his appeal, pleading on his behalf, him pleading through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

For our sake, he made him who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. So my question for us to consider right now as a church, as individuals who make up the body of Christ, how well are we doing that right now?

How well are we who know Christ? How seriously are we taking this? to plead with those who don't know him, to know him.

We all know people who are on the rumble strips of life. We see it. We know that they are heading towards a great accident.

we know that our nation is either heading towards or is already driving over those same rumble strips towards destruction.

[12:52] Are we like Hosea shouting and pleading with those who don't know God to know him? Now, I don't want you to be confused.

What I'm not suggesting is that we become megaphone Christians where we go find a busy place and we get a soapbox and we get a megaphone and we just shout at people all day long about how they're going to die and fry in hell and nobody's going to listen to anybody who talks like that, especially in our culture, in our world.

That's not going to be effective. That's not at all what I'm suggesting. But it is up to us to share the good news of Jesus Christ in hopes that they will be saved.

Warning them, teaching them, with all wisdom, seeking to present everyone to Christ mature. We are called to bear witness.

We are called to give warning. We are called to point everyone to Christ. And this, I believe, is what Hosea's message boils down to in our main point for this morning's sermon.

[14:02] The wages of sin is death, but the good news is that God is a God of resurrection.

Throughout our study of Hosea, there have been points where he has predicted with certainty that the nation will die.

Yet there are other points where he predicts, and describes a glorious future for this very same people. So we think, well, which is it?

Is it death? Or is it life? Are they going to be destroyed? Or are they going to be restored? Well, the answer to that question is yes.

Yes. They will die. They will live. They will be destroyed. They will be restored. So the first thing I want us to see here in verse 12 is that all unconfessed and unrepentant sin is known by God and kept on record.

Verse 12, the iniquity of Ephraim is bound up. His sin is kept in store. And so here what God tells us, what we see is that unrepentant hearts and unconfessed sin leaves a permanent record on the mind of God.

[15:26] Hosea's metaphor here pictures a document like a scroll. And it's been rolled up and it's been bound. It's been tied together.

And the contents of that scroll contain a list of all the sins that were made by the Israelites as individuals and also collectively as a nation.

All the sins that they've ever committed. And it's kept by God in store. Kind of like how the police will collect evidence from a crime scene and they will keep it in store.

God does the same. In Deuteronomy chapter 32 verses 34 and 35 God speaks of a locked storehouse in which He says the sins of a nation lacking counsel are kept.

And He also says that in due time His judgment will fall upon them and that that judgment would involve life and death. In verse 39 He says it is I who put to death and it is I who give life.

[16:33] The Bible says that God sees everything. The Bible says that God knows everything. That there is nothing hidden from His sight.

That there is no place for us to hide our sin from Him. But guess what? That doesn't stop us from trying does it?

To try to hide our sin from Him. To try to act as if we're better than we truly are. Because you know what? We're a lot like our first parents. Adam and Eve when it comes to trying to cover up the reality of our own sinfulness.

Genesis 3 8-13 Remember after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God and they ate from the tree that they were not supposed to. It says there that they heard the sound of the Lord of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man and said to him where are you? And he said I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.

[17 : 50] He said who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? The man said well the woman the woman whom you gave me she's the one who gave me the fruit and I ate.

Then the Lord said to the woman what is this that you've done? The woman said well the serpent deceived me and I ate.

Do you see how Adam and Eve the moment after they sin are completely different people no longer walking in fellowship with God but now seeking to hide from Him and when they couldn't hide from Him physically they tried to hide from Him internally they tried to hide the truth from Him but there was nothing that they could do to cover themselves up.

God sees all things and ultimately their sinfulness was fully exposed before His eyes and so it is still the case for us today we cannot hide from Him.

We cannot hide our sin from Him. We may think that you know what I'm not as bad as I could be that I'm just born this way I can't help it but those excuses do not hold up in God's courtroom.

[19 : 16] Hebrews 4 12-15 for the word of God is living and active sharper than any two-edged sword piercing to the division of soul and to spirit of joints and of marrow and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart and no creature is hidden from His sight but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account and we will give an account.

So Hosea warns Israel that God's judgment towards their sin has been stored up. It's been kept on record and it's only a matter of time before He carries out His judgment upon them.

And so this is similar what Hosea is doing to how we present the gospel. We bring the law first. We share the bad news so people see the truth of things before we bring the good news.

So He says to them you are guilty but God is gracious. Genesis 3.21 we see the graciousness of God with Adam and Eve.

And the Lord God after pronouncing all the curses that would result from sin that we suffer today made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin and clothed them.

[20 : 40] And so here we see very early on in the first pages of Scripture how God sets a precedence for how He will cover up our sin. Blood must be shed.

One life must be substituted for another. It doesn't say what kind of animal the Lord sacrificed to get that skin but I tend to believe what would be in line with Scripture is that it was probably a lamb that gave its life to cover the sins of Adam and Eve.

And in so doing God foreshadowed ultimately what He will do what He has done through Jesus Christ who is the Lamb of God who is the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

There are ways to expunge a criminal record aren't there in our society. You could go on diversion you could do community service you could pay a fine you might have to attend some classes and if you do so there's an opportunity for you to have your record expunged.

And so we think that we can use those worldly ways to try to do the same thing with God to get Him to expunge our record of sin. So we're tempted to think that hey we can go on a different kind of diversion which would be like serving in the nursery for a week.

[22 : 24] Or maybe we could pay a fine which would be something like giving our tithe to the church or maybe we can do community service which would be like yesterday when a lot of us came and we did a church clean up day and we think well maybe God will be pleased with that and He'll forgive me for what I've done as a result of that.

Or instead of attending classes we think well if I go to church hey I only go the extra effort and go to Sunday school in the morning and God will see that and He'll expunge my record but let me tell you that God sees right through all those things.

He sees right to the heart. He knows our motivation behind everything and He knows that our motivation in trying to expunge our record in those ways isn't motivated by a heart that is repentant because we still don't acknowledge sin the sin that we've committed nor do we agree with Him that it is worthy of the just punishment that His word says that it is which is death.

Isaiah 64:6 says there we have all become like one who is unclean and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment we all fade like a leaf and our iniquities like the wind take us away.

You see a person's good deeds cannot cancel out the record of their sin. It's still on God's record books and He will justly punish.

[23:56] That's bad news. Here's more. Verse 13 Mankind's sinful condition renders them incapable of responding to God's offer of salvation because they're spiritually dead.

Let's look at verse 13 again. What is Hosea saying here? He says the pangs of childbirth come for him. Speaking of Israel. But he is an unwise son for at the right time he does not present himself at the opening of the womb.

So here Hosea uses a metaphor to shed light on Israel's desperate condition. And so he speaks of childbirth. But from the viewpoint of a baby being more not the mother who is delivering the child.

The woman is in labor. The child is about to be born. But the child refuses to come. The child refuses to present himself.

He won't come out. could you imagine mothers? He won't come out. Now this is not very scientific illustration that Hosea is using but his point is clear.

[25:14] The point that the nation has been offered an opportunity. You know what opportunity they've been presented with? An opportunity for new birth.

They could be born again. However, the child lingers in the womb unwilling to take that opportunity that's been given to it.

And so we think why? Why wouldn't they? Well, in Hosea, as in the rest of Scripture, we learn that the wages of sin is death.

Again, God warned Adam and Eve that if they ate of the tree of knowledge that they would die. We notice that after they ate of the tree they didn't die physically at least not immediately but they did die in that moment spiritually.

And as a result of that all of the rest of us are born spiritually dead too. sin is a word that means something or someone is not where they should be.

[26:33] And in one sense sin literally means missing the mark. If we were all shooting arrows at a target every arrow that we shot would miss the bullseye.

It would be not where we intended for it to be. Scripture says that God made mankind to know Him. That He made us to love Him. That He made us to be like Him.

That He is the center of the bullseye that we all are to be aiming for. However, every person who has ever lived besides Jesus Christ has failed to hit the mark.

We've failed to hit the bullseye. Instead, we have lived our lives in sin. Now, hey, some people get closer to others. I would say that Mother Teresa came closer to the bullseye than Adolf Hitler did. But the fact of the matter remains, they both missed. We all miss. The Bible says that we've all fallen short.

[27:40] That we're all incapable of hitting the bullseye. And Scripture says that this has been the case for mankind since the moment of our conception for each of us from the moment of our conception.

Psalms 51:5, Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Scripture also says that a person born in this corrupted and disordered state is born spiritually dead.

Ephesians 2:1-2, and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

Remember that though Adam and Eve did not die physically immediately when they sinned, they did die spiritually.

The Bible says their eyes were opened and they knew their shame and they felt their guilt. They died spiritually and their attempts to cover up their sinfulness were unsuccessful.

[28:50] They hid, they lied, they covered themselves up with their own works of the fig leaves. But God says none of it is sufficient. So then we ask, what does it mean to be spiritually dead?

Well, the answer to that question, in order to answer that question well, I think we have to look at what it means to be physically dead. The worst possible condition that a person can be in is in the state of death, right?

Because if you're in critical condition, there's still a heartbeat. And there's potential that the physicians or whomever can bring you back to life.

But when you're dead, there is no hope of bringing you back to life. Once a person has died, there is nothing left that anybody else can do that they can do for themselves to come back to life.

I'll never forget the first time when I saw somebody die up close. And it was a man whose wife was a long-term member of our church, and he had cancer for a really long time, and I would go and see him in the hospital.

[30 : 14] She said he was a believer, but every time I would try to read scripture with him, pray with him, he would kind of tolerate it, but he was really uninterested.

Polite, but I just got the sense that, you know, we really need to be praying for him. And so I'll never forget he was in the hospital and he coded and I got a call from her and she asked me to come up to the ER where he was in the intensive care unit and I walked in and, you know, a young pastor and there he was on the operating table, on the table there, surrounded by doctors and nurses. It was chaos. Loud beeping, shouting. They were pumping his heart. His limbs were just flying up in the air, violently, doing everything that they could to bring him back to life.

And after about five minutes of watching them do this, standing next to his wife, the doctor came over to me, the lead physician, whoever was there, while they were still operating on him, and came over to her, his wife, and said, we've done all that we can.

We'll keep trying if you want us to, but the decision is up to you. And you know what she did? She turned and she looked to me. It's hopeless.

[31 : 43] When somebody is physically dead, there is nothing left that can be done. And the Bible says that we are spiritually dead.

There is no human power capable of bringing a dead person back to life. The Bible uses death as a metaphor for our spiritual condition in order to convey to us two realities about mankind's desperate sinful state.

The first is that the dead are separate from the living. When a person dies, they no longer know those whom they once knew like they once did.

Now, I'm not saying that they don't know anything after they've died, that they don't know anything at all about what's happening on earth, but a real separation has occurred.

I can go to my grandfather's grave, man whom I love and whom I respected, whom I wished had a chance to meet my wife and my kids, and I could take my family to his grave, and I could try to introduce them to him and him to them, but his voice will never respond.

[32 : 55] There will be no movement on his part whatsoever. He is incapable of knowing them in this way because he's dead.

As I mentioned already, the Bible speaks of a person in an intimate relationship with one another as knowing that person. Jesus tells us that those who are spiritually dead on the day of judgment and who will depart from him will do so because they did not know him, because there was no fellowship with him, because they were separated from God.

Sure, they thought that they knew him. Many people today think that they know him, but on closer inspection the reality is that they do not agree with God.

They don't truly know him. God insists that loving him is the most essential purpose of our lives. The Israelites claimed to know God, but reality was they didn't.

The opportunity of their salvation had been presented to them, but they refused to take it because they were separated from God, because they did not agree with him that their existence was to live for him in pursuit of him, in loving him.

[34 : 22] You know, when we meet someone who we constantly disagree with on our most fundamental beliefs, when we meet somebody like that who condemns what we love, you know what we do to such a person?

We seek to avoid that person at all cost. I don't want to be around you. I don't want to hear what you have to say. I don't want to hear you say that I have to be a different way. And in the same way, sinful people love sin.

They don't hate it. They don't hate it like they should. They love it because it's so much a part of who they are. So like Adam and Eve, we'll seek to hide it.

We'll seek to point the fingers at everybody else for all of the problems that we have in life, for all that's broken in our lives, for all that's broken in our world. We'll say that it's everybody else but never us because ultimately a separation exists between the unsaved and God.

The dead are also in a state of decay. The most physically beautiful woman in all the world will no longer be beautiful after she dies.

[35 : 36] The strongest man who possesses the greatest strength once he dies won't even be able to muster enough energy to wiggle his little toe. That's what death does.

Death takes away beauty and power and it's repulsive and what it leaves is people who are powerless. But while a physical dead body has no ability to function at all, understand this, that a spiritually dead person still possesses understanding.

They still have affections. They still have a will and they will choose what they love most and what they think is best for them.

However, Scripture says that all these components of the human nature are in a state of decay. Let's look at that. Romans 3, 10-12.

As it is written, none is righteous, no not one. What Paul is saying there is that every person is wrong. No one understands.

[36 : 44] Every person's understanding is not functioning correctly is what he's saying. No one seeks for God. What he's saying is all fallen people will not direct themselves towards God.

Nobody truly is seeking after him. Verse 12, and all have turned aside. Together they have become worthless. What he's saying there is that though we were made to love God and pursue the things of God, our affections are instead focused upon the pursuit of other things.

And he concludes by saying, no one does good, not even one. Consider the words of Jesus in John 3, 19-20.

He says, and this is the judgment. The light has come into the world. By light there he means truth. Truth which ought to be embraced by our understanding.

But he says instead people love the darkness. Why? Because they love to be ignorant to the truth. They would rather embrace lies and plug up their ears to what God has to say to them.

[37 : 49] Rather than the light because their works were evil, because their will is contrary to God's will. They want to make their own choices for themselves. They don't agree with what God says about life and death and sin.

Verse 20, for everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his work should be exposed. In the end every spiritually dead person says if God is going to make me leave the things that I love, then I'll just stay away from him.

Is that not what the Lord is saying? This was the spiritual state of Israel. They'd chosen to pursue their own ways.

They'd chosen to pursue the things that they loved. Assyria was close at hand. They were ready to destroy them, but instead of turning to God, instead of going through the birth canal and being born again, instead of leaving that dark state and entering into light, they would not come.

They would not present themselves. They were unwise. Why? Because they lacked understanding. Why? Because they were spiritually dead.

[39 : 04] dead. Now then, some good news. Ready for it? Though we lack the ability to make dead things live again, there is one who is able.

Only God has the ability to take what is dead and give it new life. Verse 13, the end of verse 14. I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol, which is a word for death.

I shall redeem them from death. O death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Now, there is some debate amongst Hebrew scholars about what is being said here.

Some say God is asking questions, so in your translation, you might see it presented as God saying, shall I ransom them? Shall I redeem them? Others say, no, these are matters of fact.

He is stating, I shall redeem them. I shall ransom them. But I think whatever translation you prefer, the main thing is being stated, which is this, that God is superior to death.

[40 : 24] That God is superior to the grave. That God is the death slayer. That God is the death killer.

That God is able to take dead things and dead people and bring them back to life. Though we are bound in our sin, and though we are unable to respond to spiritual stimuli, and though we are totally depraved of spiritual life, the great physician is able, he is capable, to remove our heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh that beats in rhythm with him.

How is this possible? John 3, 6-8, Jesus speaking with Nicodemus about the new birth, he says, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows wherever it wishes and you hear it sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.

So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit. It's the spirit, the spirit that takes the initiative. It's the spirit, the spirit who exerts life-giving power to awaken dead people, to unite them with Christ.

[41 : 56] John 1, 12-13, but to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

How did he do that? Look, who were not born of blood, doesn't pass on, through the genes, two Christian parents don't necessarily automatically give birth to a Christian child, nor of the will of the flesh, you can't will it for yourself, nor of the will of man, nobody can will it for you, but how does it happen?

But of God. Do you know that you've been born again? Do you know that in Christ Jesus, God has taken, remember that bound scroll that Hosea is talking about, with the record of all of our sins, when God takes that dead person and brings them back to your life, do you know what he does with that record?

Let's read Colossians 2, 13-14, and you, you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, what did God do?

God did it, God made you alive together with him, having forgiven all of our trespasses, look, he takes that record of sin, he's taken that record of debt that stood up against us with all of its legal demands, and what did he do with it?

[43 : 28] He nailed it to the cross. He has voided that debt of sin forever.

He's given us new birth. He's transferred us from darkness into light. God, he's helped us to see what is true and to live in it forever.

We were blind, but now we see. Colossians 1, 13-14, he's done it. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness.

He, not you, not somebody else, he has transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption. We have the forgiveness of our sins.

Israel was on the rumble strips. There's tension here. And that's why I hope you feel that. Hosea is pleading with his people. These are his family.

[44 : 33] These are his friends. These are people that he lives with. He knows what's coming, and he's pleading with them. Please, hear me. Hear God. Return to Him before it's too late.

In verses 15 and 16, which I don't have time to cover, we see the tragic reality of what happens to those who don't pay heed to the warnings. They die in their sins.

Maybe that's you today. Through this message, God is calling you. Through His word, He is pleading with you.

He is shouting with you. Will you trust Him? Do you see, has the Holy Spirit opened your eyes to see that sin leads to death, but that God is a God of resurrection?

Do you know that in your heart today? Do you feel like you've had that surgery take in place? That heart of stone has been replaced with the heart of flesh then know that you have been saved now and forever more.

[45 : 49] Understand this, for those of us who know Him, we have a responsibility to make Him known, especially to those like Hosea who we live in close proximity with, our friends and our family, our co-workers, our neighbors, that we plead with them to know Jesus Christ in hopes that they will be saved.

I would conclude by saying this, you may disagree with me about how a person is saved, but I have this to say to you, if you love God, if you love Jesus Christ, if you point sinners to Him for salvation by faith alone, in Christ alone, and you call them to repentance, then guess what?

We are on the same team. We have the same objective. We must work together to accomplish this same goal.

I can't save them, you can't save them, we can't spark revival, but guess what? There is one who can. God can.

So we are called like Hosea to go, we are called to speak, we are called to make disciples, knowing that in doing so the cost is great, but guess what? The outcome is certain.

[47 : 22] In two weeks, we'll be out at Sunfest, and this is the application I guess for you today.

Who is it that you can invite to come on that Sunday who does not know, God, who does not know Jesus Christ, whom you can invite in hopes that they will hear the gospel and that the Holy Spirit will transfer them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

You be praying for that person and I pray and I hope that you will invite them on June 2nd. God will God will be to God you will! God Thank you.