

Warning Against Israel's Ongoing Rebellion

Let us turn to our Bibles, to the Old Testament, to Hosea chapter 8. Hosea chapter 8. We're going to go through verses 1 through 7. Hosea 8, 1 through 7. Let us listen attentively to the Word of God. Set the trumpet to your mouth. He shall come like an eagle against the house of the Lord because they have transgressed my covenant and rebelled against my law.

Israel will cry to me, my God, we know you. Israel has rejected the good. The enemy will pursue him.

They set up kings but not by me. They made princes but I did not acknowledge them. From their silver and gold they made idols for themselves that they might be cut off.

Your calf is rejected, O Samaria. My anger is aroused against them. How long until they attain to innocence? For from Israel is even this.

A workman made it and it is not God. But the calf of Samaria shall be broken to pieces. They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

The stock has no bud. It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, aliens would swallow it up.

Let us pray. Indeed, God, as we read this exhortation, and again another stark, strong reminder, in two particular ways, God, we read here, of the coming judgment upon people of God and the Old Testament, upon Israel, and to see, Lord, how serious you take the purity of your people, of your church, both individually and collectively, God, our Lord and Savior, and may we learn the lesson for ourselves, indeed, and for our churches today. In your name alone we ask these things.

Amen. So here we have a warning against Israel's ongoing rebellion. The prophet here, the prophets in general, were known to do all kinds of interesting things to get the attention of the people of God in a day and age where there was no TV ads or social media.

Instead, they had public squares and marketplaces and that's where they would go. They didn't have the public rules the way we have them today. They didn't have what we consider police officers in the same way you may have some soldiers or you may have a large crowd who decides to kill you.

I mean that's about it. All this meant the people could do all kinds of things to get somebody's attention. In this case, of the prophets, they could do things like get married, he did in the opening chapters of Hosea, to get everyone's attention, and have kids.

Or it could mean wearing rough clothing, eating honey and locusts as John the Baptist did, as you recall in the New Testament era, and yelling forth the call of repentance. Here in this section, Hosea calls for a trumpet. He calls for a trumpet.

Let's see what that's all about. Warning against Israel's ongoing rebellion, verses 1 through 3, is the first point. A public warning.

Warning Against Israel's Ongoing Rebellion

The idea here in verse 1 is set the trumpet to your mouth. Trumpets are a public declaration so that people can hear and pay attention. Today we have national alerts on TV, on radio, on phone.

You can be driving and walking and all of a sudden get this vibration or beep on your phone about a missing person or an emergency of some such. We still have air sirens in some places, probably Kansas, I don't know, where you have tornadoes in the middle of the country because you're not always near a TV. You know, you can't hear your phone, but you can hear those air sirens.

They are loud. That's the point. And back then, like today, in many ways, the trumpets were for two important reasons.

War, the call for war, or public announcement. Now's the time to pay attention. Everyone come here, come over to where the trumpet is playing right now.

That's how they will get everyone's attention. And here he's calling everyone to, as we know, repentance. To pay attention to the words of the man of God.

Was there an actual trumpet used? It could have been. Doesn't say it was actually blown. It says set the trumpet to your mouth.

Maybe he had a servant. We know Elijah had a servant and he put the trumpet to his mouth. But the point, either way, is he's emphasizing the importance of what he has to say.

Everyone needs to listen to what this man of God is to declare before them. Of the message of repentance and impending punishment and doom. That the truth should be shouted out to everyone, everywhere, at all times.

And thus showing that it's a serious, dire warning for the people of God. Now we have, the way I've broken it down here, if we read it this way, he speaks in general of their sins and then in the second part we'll see he gets more specific about their particular sins. Of two particular sins he has in mind in this case.

Now I'll remind us that this was done over the life of his ministry. He may have done more and it's not written down. What we have written down isn't necessarily done sequentially, like one day after another.

We don't know. But what we have is written before us. And so this unit here is what they needed to hear at that time.

These particular sins. But in general the sin he talks about here, we read of a God coming to them like an eagle, is the idea, against the house of the Lord. He's going to punish his own people because they have transgressed the covenant and rebelled against my law.

I hope you see that when he says transgressed the covenant, rebelled against the law, those are parallel ideas. They're not two separate things. He's more or less saying the same thing twice.

Transgression of the covenant as we know is mentioned a few times in the beginning. Of course the marriage covenant as a picture, a metaphor, a living example to the people of God, this is what you have done in your spiritual harems, right? And here emphasizing with respect to the first table of the law is this language of transgressing the covenants, of breaking what God has given them as the people of God in the Old Testament. He mentioned it elsewhere as well.

He has, he is going to sue them as it were. He has to go to court. It's the court language in a couple chapters earlier as well, of breaking the covenant and showing them how serious this matter is before him.

Now when he speaks of breaking the covenant, transgressed or breaking the covenant, running roughshod over it we might say today, he is speaking to a mixed multitude. Pastors typically speak to a mixed multitude. What do I mean by that? I mean the church has both wheat and tares.

It has believers and unbelievers. I don't know who they are. I can only go by your actions and your words.

And same with you. You cannot read a man's heart. And so when you give these exhortations, when the pastors and the prophets of old do these things, they're speaking to both of them.

And both of them need to hear whatever the message is, but of course it's relevant to their, or that is it's with respect to their spiritual condition before God. And so in breaking this language of breaking the covenant, we shouldn't take it as though nobody here is saved. I mean they've all thrown away God, like I mentioned this morning, like going to the first commandment and saying I don't believe in God at all.

I'm an idiot. Forget God. Who wants anything to do with them? It may have been, but not necessarily because it's a mixed multitude.

So the same language of breaking the covenant can have different significations depending on someone who's elect. They hear it. They repent.

They cry out to God for mercy. Their transgression of the covenant was not permanent, but the non-elect, those who are rebellious, who stay hardened in their hearts, it reflects most clearly that they will and have broken the covenant in that most serious sense. And so the final sense of apostatizing.

And often as we've seen, I hope you recall, I didn't go through the list here, but go back through the first seven chapters, he'll stop at the end of several chapters and give an exhortation and a prophecy, an encouragement that God is with them and God will bring

back a remnant. That is there will be people who hear this message and believe and repent in the church, and that's a good thing. God's people will be in sin.

They will sin. You will sin. You have been in sin, and it will happen again, but it will be temporary, even if that's years.

I mean, I say temporary with respect to eternity, of course, but you will eventually repent. David repented. God's people will repent.

You may not see it. They may leave the church and never see him again, but if they're his, he will call them and their hearts will melt, like David. But this general charge is based upon specific detailed sins, as we'll see in verses four and following.

Now verse two we read of Israel's sad response. It may seem like a good response at first blush, but as you read this, if you are able to sit down and read through an entire book of the Bible in one sitting, which can be hard sometimes, it's the shorter books can probably pull off. Read up to chapter 8 here in Hosea.

You realize over and over again they're ongoing rebellion. They're just persisting in their wickedness and doubling down even in their violation of the first table, especially the first four commandments. And so when you come up to this verse 2 and you read, Israel cried out to me, My God, we know you.

Do you take it as them actually repenting and saying, Lord, it's us. Please, come on. Everything's great.

Or do you realize, you know, this isn't really serious. It's, again, crocodile tears. It's crocodile tears, I think we all know.

It's basically them saying, look, it's us. Don't punish us. We're your people.

Right? We're part of your covenants. To know, my God, we know you, as you may remember, is this idea of being in a personal relationship. Here, I'm sure, the idea of the covenant.

And therefore, pleading it and saying, we're like your kids. Please don't spank us. Please don't hurt us.

Have mercy upon us, in the sense of, we don't like what you may do, even though we're not repentant. So it's not very serious. Their cries for leniency, in other words, were not rooted in godly repentance.

Their actions showed over and over again, that's not what they really mean. It's just talk. They're trying to pull the pity card.

That's what they're doing. But God will punish them. Now, I don't like Jesus' description.

It's one of the things that came to my mind. In fact, two verses that Jesus talks about. Slightly different context, morally speaking, but there's a lot of overlap, I think, to this text.

My God, we know you. What does that remind you of? In Jesus, yeah. Matthew 25, 33.

We're reading, he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. When Jesus Christ comes in his fullness and his glory in the second coming. Verse 37, then the righteous will answer him and say, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you as a stranger and take you in, or naked and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick or in prison and come to you? The king will answer and say to them, I surely say to you, as much as you did to one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it to me.

You treat my people this way, you're treating me that way. And that has so much parallel to Hosea, as you recall, in chapter 6 and elsewhere, that they're lying and stealing and murdering and committing adultery to one another, breaking the second table of the law. Destroying their fellow Jews.

Hosea 4.1, by swearing and lying and killing and stealing, committing adultery, they break all restraint with bloodshed upon bloodshed. There is no compassion for their fellow Jews. And Jesus will say to them on that day, I never knew you.

Right? Matthew 7.22, many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have they not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. They are saying, we know you, God.

Please, don't punish us. Leave us alone. But did they? Did they know God? As we know, it's a mixed multitude.

Many did not, but others did, and they actually repented. Praise be to God. We know you.

We've even sacrificed in your name to shift gears to back to Hosea. I know Jesus speaks of the amazing things, right? Cast out demons. It did many wonders and prophesied, right? Well, this is more humble.

We did sacrifices before God. We have sacrifices to the Lord of the covenant. In a prior chapter, we saw L-O-R-D.

We're sacrificing to Him. Well, and to Baal at the same time, and maybe we call him Ashtoreth, and maybe he has a consort named Ashtoreth, but that's not really important, God. We know you.

They claim this relationship to the Lord God, and these more mundane and yet, formally speaking, outwardly proper things you're supposed to do. Sacrifice to the Lord, have His days, and things like that. But God judges the heart, and He will say to those who are unrepentant, I never knew you.

I don't care if you did sacrifices in my name or did marvelous miracles in my name. Israel rejects the good, verse 3. Israel has rejected the good. The enemy will pursue him.

It's a very simple summary of their condition at that point. The general description, good. Good is a good way to describe what they have done.

A rejection of the good. The good is all that God has given them that's for their benefit. The blessings of the covenant, the land, the protection, the food, the rain, the temple.

Although they ignored and spurned the temple in the northern tribes, as we know. The law of God, that's good. To reject the good is to reject God's law.

To reject God's law is to reject the good. To reject His benefits is to reject His good. To reject His worship is to reject the good, and the beneficial, and the helpful.

The good for themselves, their family, and the church. They want nothing to do with it. They're happy where they are, the ten northern tribes.

And it's quite a state to be in, unfortunately. A terrible state. God's law is good and brings good, Romans 7.12. Therefore the law is what? Holy, and the commandment is holy, just, and good.

Today, as we know, our neighbors around us, although we may like them a lot, and our fellow citizens, they don't see Christianity as a good. They may see it as something indifferent. They may even think about it sometimes.

A number of times we've seen, they think it's even bad and evil. They're holding us back from our freedom. Of course that's freedom to what? Sin, debauchery, and the like.

And unfortunately we have that in the church at times. Remind us again, and I know I've said it before, the clear parallel here is to the church. Speaking to the church, yes, they're citizens as well, because they wore both hats at the same time back then.

We don't have that today anymore. So in many ways it's more relevant just to speak to the church situation. And there is a struggle.

People don't always see the law of God, the worship of God, what He requires, what He forbids, as a good thing. They think it's a burden upon them. When Christ tells us, rather, my burden and my yoke is easy.

It's the burden of adding to God's law, of doing your own thing, following in the New Testament context there in particular, the pharisaical way is an actual burden. And they don't want the blessing. God is good, and even says the blessings are to a thousand generations.

Right? And the Ten Commandments. Israel is throwing all of that away. And unfortunately America has thrown it all away.

And now they're stomping on it. And trying to shove it out the back door. More and more embracing evil in the name of good.

But God is not bought. And the consequences are here among us and growing, unfortunately. And here, one of the consequences they have in verse 3b is the enemy will pursue them.

That's a typical refrain of punishment in the Old Testament, right? You're going to curse God. You're going to do your own thing. You're going to be wicked, rejoice and worship a bale.

Now I'll punish you with foreign powers. And I like to remind us, although it's supernatural in the sense of often we see angels perhaps involved or prophets talking about these things. But it's natural in another sense.

We don't want a foreign power conquering us. Whether we're Americans, English, Africans, or whatever. We just simply don't want that.

It's not a good thing. And in the Old Testament it's doubly bad because it's tied explicitly in their case to the covenant. The covenant in the church.

And them being the holy people of God. But the particular Israeli rebellion in verses 4-6 where he gives two specifics. The first one he doesn't dwell much on.

It's something that's not, I don't think, brought up very often in the prophets. But here it is before us. They set up kings, but not by me.

They made princes, but I did not acknowledge them. They're not legitimate is what we're going to say today. What's he talking about? Do you remember this? Well, we've covered this Wednesday night.

Bible study. First kings. They made their own kingly line in the north.

Remember that? They made their own kingly lines. Not the Davidic line. The south, Judah and Benjamin, has the Davidic line as promised by God that Christ would be through that line, through those southern tribes.

Judah in particular. He's the Lion of Judah. It's there from 1 Kings 12 onward where we have the division after Solomon of Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

I always forgot who's which. Which one's in the north? Which one's in the south? And it finally dawned on me. Jeroboam is the really bad king.

The other king was bad too. But he's the really bad king. But he doesn't fit with Judah.

So the J goes north, Judah stays south. I don't know. It works for me.

Jeroboam is the king of the north. He wasn't originally of any princely power, but he was an administrator and a worker under Solomon. And he showed himself to be well educated and a smart man in many ways.

But let's start with Rehoboam's father of course. That is the son of Solomon who ignored the pleas for leniency. You think my father was hard on you when it came to taxes? Uh-huh.

Wait until you see what I do. So he gave them a reason to rebel in other words. He was wrong, but we find out of course in the story here that they were wrong as well.

They established a new rule in a reign up north, but it quickly turned into a new religion. Not absolutely new, right? In many ways it's very much like the old religion, but enough that it's worse in many ways. In fact, the Lord gave Jeroboam an opportunity to have a new lineage.

It's really interesting there. In 1 Kings where God through the prophet tells him, look, if you obey me and follow my word and honor me, I'll give you a throne and it will last and you'll have your own lineage. What kind of kindness is this? Think of the kindness of God in doing that.

The goodness upon this man who was about to bring division upon his own people. God offers this, but Jeroboam didn't want anything to do with it. He said he didn't want all the northern tribes to go to Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Not that you have two nations. He made his own religion in Samaria. That's where you get the Samaritans hundreds of years later.

So generations after generations of northern tribes were finally falling apart. Here, they're the first ones to get conquered in 722 by the Assyrians in Samaria Falls, thereby. This is slowly working its way to that final culmination.

This warning under Hosea, because it happens under his ministry, their greater sins were horrendous. God basically is saying your political rule is illegitimate and you're being punished for it. It is.

You put the charts together of the kingly rule up north and the kingly rules down south. They have about twice as many kings up north. And collectively, although some last like 20 or 30 years, collectively they last about half as long.

And it's a shorter period of time because they get conquered earlier. It's more compressed. It's more chaotic.

More people die. More rebellions than in the south, although they still have their own problems. It's quite interesting.

The second sin, so that's the first one, political. The second one, of course, is the spiritual one. Their own idols, verses 4b-6.

Particulars of Israel's Ongoing Rebellion

Samaria was the center of that, although they had the high places all throughout Israel and the like. From their silver and gold, they made idols for themselves. They made their own calves.

The calf is rejected. Mentioned twice there at the end of verse 6. But the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces. God will bring final judgment and punishment upon them for this.

The idols from silver and gold. Common description there because that's exactly what they did. The two types of pagan worship I'll remind us in this time period, roughly speaking.

Those that believe the idols and images housed the gods themselves. So in honoring the image, the water bottle, the gods inside it somehow. So you want to give them the best house.

You give them silver and gold. Give them the best kind of honor. Others believe that this was a vehicle to get to their god.

We don't know exactly which is which because again we're not given a category, a description of demonology, let alone fake religions. It's just here. This is the culture they find themselves in.

These are the problems going on. We dig up all this stuff. We research it and it fits.

As I've pointed out a number of times, especially in Wednesday night Bible study, we dig up the archeology. It fits. A lot of this stuff we understand all the more what's going on here.

So here in giving these idols of silver and gold to honor fake gods, or as covered before, these idols were often for worshipping Jehovah himself. Either they thought it housed Israel's god, probably not but possibly, or it was a way to honor and commune with him at the same time as compromising with the Baal worship around them. And a reminder again, I made allusion to that for you all who were there Wednesday night, you remember, but they've dug up and it mentions Astaroth, the consort of Jehovah.

They have the Hebrew. They dug it up from the 900s. Really, really amazing how far they have fallen.

Cut off, 4D. Now these two go together depending on how your grammar, your translation makes the connection there. They made idols for themselves and we have the dash that they might be cut off.

Right, you have it right there. End of verse 4, they made idols for themselves, from silver and gold, they made idols for themselves, that they might be cut off. Who would make false worship with the intent of being cut off or cast or punished from the covenant? Is that what they were thinking? No.

So what are you left with? This is irony. It's that literary device I mentioned on First Kings, where Elijah was using some irony and mocking and what not, where you say the opposite. You say the opposite of what the intent, the intention is the opposite of the words, is what irony typically is in literature.

And that's not what they're doing here. They clearly weren't trying to bring harm upon themselves. To be cut off is to be punished from the covenant.

It's a common refrain in the Old Testament. It's related to the idea of making a covenant. You make a covenant by cutting.

If you want to take the word literally, the word make there often used is to cut, to cut a covenant. But we know they're not cutting anything. We have a number of examples, in fact, where they make a covenant without cutting anything.

So apparently over time it became just a way of speaking about making covenants because we do have cases, Jeremiah being one and Abraham, where you literally did cut the animals and you walked between them. God did himself, saying, I'm walking through it, I'm taking the curse upon me if I break the covenant. A picture of Christ.

And of course he will never break it, because he's eternal and eternally good. But here, to be cut off is to be cut off from the covenant. It's a negative, it's a bad thing here.

Of course they didn't make the idols to cut themselves off. That's not the point. The point is, look what you've done to yourself.

Isn't it ironic? You think you're bringing prosperity? We saw that before. They're very prosperous in the northern tribes, and they're resting upon their prosperity as evidence that God was with them, that God was good with them and okay with what they're doing because nothing bad had happened yet. And God's like, all that goodness ends up being actually a very bad thing and it's going to cut you off.

The judgment is here. The calf rejected, verses 5 through 6. Your calf is rejected, O Samaria. My anger is aroused against them.

I'm not going to accept your false worship. A thousand times no. It's useless to them.

First, it is not pleasing to the Lord God of Israel, of course. And in fact it's downright offensive and repulsive, as he says explicitly in the commandment, the second commandment. And then unpacks that in Deuteronomy 4, for example, and saying explicitly, look, you went to the mountain and you saw no image.

Because you saw no image, you can't make anything. A creeping in heaven above, you can't make an image of neither male nor female. Nothing.

Because God is a spirit. And secondly, the way in which the golden calf is useless to them and rejected as a punishment, as it were, is its own, in its own right, such idols are worthless

already. Jeremiah uses this language in Jeremiah 10, in 5, where we read, they are upright like a palm tree, and they cannot speak.

That is the idols. They're up straight, stiff like this, like a palm tree. They can't speak.

They must be carried. You gotta carry your gods around. Because they cannot go by themselves.

Do not be afraid of them. For they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good. They cannot punish and bring about bad things for people who attack them.

And they can't do good things for people who bless them. These are dumb, blind idols. They're worthless.

How long until they attain unto innocence, we read there. The calf is rejected, your false worship is rejected, not just the calf itself, but everything around it and related to it. And how long, we read here, after his anger is aroused against them, how long until they attain to innocence.

The picture here is attain to the innocence that comes about through purity of repentance. Not as though they can make themselves intrinsically innocent, of course, but rather to go back to the days in which they worship God, we would say like children, in innocence, without doing wickedly and the like, in impurity. It's a shorthand for purity often in the Bible.

And so the Lord asked them, how long until they attain to innocence? And the Lord asked them then, and the Lord asked that question now. How long will churches ignore the pure worship and repent before the Lord God Almighty? How long will they keep entertaining people instead of honoring God? There was recently a scandal in a church that made minor news in some circles. You might find it on the Quill Report eventually, in which a man, pastor, stood up and said, oh, by the way, my wife and I are going Roman Catholic.

And he proceeded to give the Lord's Supper. So he believes what he gave them was literally the body and blood of Christ. And they proceeded to take that from that man.

And then one of the leaders in the church stood up and prayed a positive prayer for the man and his family to prosper. As opposed to, wait a minute, we're gonna stop the worship. We're gonna pray for your repentance.

We got a talk in the back. Now I bring that up because, again, we don't have this kind of crass, primitive paganism. Here's my idol.

I'm worshiping before it. But we still have bad acts and bad worship, harmful worship, that God is not pleased with. How long until they attain to innocence and repentance? Pray for men like that.

We've had a man go Roman Catholic in the OPC, I don't remember how long ago, as well. So it can happen. So idols made by man, he continues on here, from Israel is even this.

Even this comes from these people. A workman made it and it's not of God. This is made by man.

You think God's in here? But you made it yourself. What kind of God is it that has to depend upon the worker to make something for him to reside in? This is ridiculous. This whole thing is ludicrous.

So verse 6, in other words, is a stinging rebuke to their false worship. A workman made this thing. It's made by men, not by God, let alone the true God.

And so it's a stinging rebuke that it was false worship rooted in man's opinion, man's decision to make it, man's power and might. It doesn't represent God, therefore, for he has not a body like man. And it's not a conduit, of course, to the Lord God Almighty.

That's through Jesus Christ. And they were taught true worship, but threw it all away through generational unfaithfulness. Because this ongoing, overt violation of God's Word and making these golden calves and the like, warnings ignored by the people, given by the prophets, and more than just Hosea.

Other prophets were existing at the time as well. There will be serious consequences. Verse 7, they sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

Consequences of Israel's Ongoing Rebellion

Small sins beget bigger problems. It's a strong metaphor mixing farming with the imagery of the weather or of wind. And kind of ridiculous on the face of it, who would sow a wind? How do you sow a wind? You throw it out there like seed or something? But it's a powerful effect of Hosea's words, the sowing of the wind.

He that sows the wind of iniquity, one commentator says, shall reap the terrible tempest of inconceivable misery. But also, I think, a double signification. They are sowing emptiness.

The wind is empty. I speak as a man. We know scientifically.

No, no. That's not what's going on here. It's a way of speaking to emphasize the vanity of their false worship, in particular.

You sow this little, little here, a little idle here, a little idle there, but it's gonna reap much worse, much terrible things for them. They will reap the whirlwind. If they persist in false worship and honoring of God as though he were Baal or alongside Baal, the greater judgment is around the corner.

The same is true today, of course, as well. If men turn not back to God, in the churches like that pastor who apostatized right before his congregation, their dabbling in false religions is like playing with the wind that will turn to a greater wind, a whirlwind, a tornado that will consume them. And it does consume the northern tribes.

Listen to Job 4, 8 through 9. The blast of God, he shall perish. By the blast of God, he shall perish. And by the breath of his nostrils, he shall be consumed.

You're playing with fire, we would say, although he's saying here you're playing with wind. It's the same idea. It's a poetic way to say, you sow what you reap.

If sowing lies and deception, which is what false worship is, you will reap lies and deceptions tenfold. From a small little wind to a whirlwind is a stronger, greater mass, like a tornado. Playing around with God's worship leads to greater misery, brothers and sisters, for the Christians and for the church.

Here it leads immediately to a lack of prosperity for them, a twofold there at the end of verse 7. The stock has no bud, it shall never produce. But any that does produce, or if it should produce, stuff that survives, aliens will swallow it up. Whatever you think you're going to get, the material prosperity, is all going to dry up one way or the other.

And that's part of the punishment God gives them for such flagrant violations of the law of God. And just this kind of crass, not kind of, it is crass paganism. Bowing down before an idol, offering the idol a sacrifice, a burnt incense or something.

Let us examine ourselves that we not make excuses for false worship, for false religions. Let us pray and work for spiritual health for all of us in the church, brothers and sisters. And let us always be humble and sensitive to the warnings of God's Word for us and for those around us.

Let us pray. Indeed, Lord God, we thank you for the blood of Christ Jesus, for indeed we have sinned, although it may not be crass. We have our minds distracted.

We play around sometimes and make excuses, Lord, and worship you. Again, not just the worship on Sunday, God, but any time we think of you, we praise you. We speak to you in our prayers.

If we do it, God, half-heartedly, that too is a dishonoring of you. And so Lord and Savior, help us, we pray, and strengthen us, encourage us, God. And may we be alert and given more information, more zeal, and more strength to stand firm, and stand firm in your glory, to always honor you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, we pray.

Amen.