

"PREPARING TO MEET GOD"**Introduction**

1. **Illustration:** a woman who was terminally ill.
2. **Illustration:** a boy at school who was foolish.
3. Both had their warning but ignored it.

1. GOD GRACIOUSLY WARNS MEN BEFORE JUDGEMENT FALLS

- 1) This is not perhaps always true, but it is so generally:
 - (i) Adam got a warning first: "surely die"
 - (ii) Those of Noah's day: 120 years
 - (iii) To some extent those in Sodom: Lot's words
 - (iv) So too: Belshazzar / the Jews of Christ's day
- 2) Why does God warn people?
 - (i) He has no pleasure in their death
 - (ii) He would prefer them to repent
 - (iii) God loves to be gracious (Isaiah 55; Matthew 11)
DOCTRINE: God must punish sin if we do not repent.
- 3) Amos preached in 8th Century BC to Israel (N.); he repeatedly warns the people here:
 - (i) v.4: formal worship
 - (ii) v.7/8: no rain – yet no repentance
 - (iii) v.9: no fruit – yet no repentance
 - (iv) v.10: pestilence – yet no repentance
 - (v) v.11: fearful punishments – yet ignored
- 4) So now, God declares he will meet them in judgement – the ref. to Assyria (6:27)
APPLICATION: This is the difference between a fool and a wise man: one prepares and the other does not.
Have you noticed Proverbs 27:12?

2. WHY DO PEOPLE NOT PREPARE PROPERLY TO MEET THEIR GOD?

- 1) Some, because ignorant of what lies ahead of them:
 - (i) "we must needs die..."
 - (ii) "it is appointed unto all men..."
 - (iii) "it is a fearful thing to fall..."
ILLUSTRATION: so recently in the news: 3 in a car / an acrobat on tight-rope / soldier in Afghan.
APPLICATION: O that we might be well prepared!
- 2) Some, because they are too proud to read the Bible or listen to a preacher: "I am an Atheist / Agnostic / Free-Thinker".
OBSERVE: But all these must meet their God.
- 3) All this is a message to us to make sure we are preparing to meet our God:
 - (i) It is hard to do so today because in this country society is very hard.
 - (ii) We see only a very small few who today are serious.
 - (iii) Satan is very active keeping people busy with the good life: sport / leisure / entertainment / money...
- 4) Stop and think about this:
 - (i) Have you experienced conversion or are you just blessed with a good upbringing?
 - (ii) Does God's Spirit bear witness with your spirit that you are saved?
 - (iii) Is salvation the absolutely first thing in your life?
APPLICATION: O listen: "Prepare to meet thy God".

3. THINGS TO KNOW IF YOU ARE TO BE PREPARED

- 1) Seeking will not save you – you must find Christ if you are to be prepared:
ILLUSTRATION: the pearl; the treasure.
OBSERVE: "Ever learning..." How sad!
- 2) Conversion is a radical change of heart: "new birth" – "new creature" – "all things are become new" – "new heart".

ILLUSTRATION: a little ball of gold – tested.

- 3) We are prepared for judgement as soon as we have believed in Christ:
OBSERVE: It need not take years + years.
Proof: the Ethiopian / Lydia / gaoler...
- 4) We are prepared to die if we have a love for the gospel + a hatred of sin:
ILLUSTRATION: our thoughts when in secret – we call it phantasising
- 5) This is what a converted Christian is: someone who is prepared, well-prepared to meet God: the garment / the blood / the banner / the armour / the joy of meeting God soon

CONCLUSION

Are you prepared?

ILLUSTRATION: John Wesley.

PSALM

149: 1 – 5

26: 6 – 12

119: 116 - 120