

God's Just Love

A Love Story Only God Could Inspire

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Bible Text: Hosea 4-6

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Consider with me this morning one of the challenging aspects of being under authority. All of us are under authority in some ways. Citizens under government authority, employees under employer authority, a wife under the authority of her husband, a child under the authority of the parents, a church member under the authority of the leadership, a student under the authority of a teacher. All of us are under authority. What would you say is one of the most challenging aspects of being under authority? At least I would think that one of the challenging aspects of being under authority is a lack of clear and well communicated expectations. So, students have you been in a situation where the teacher has held you accountable for knowledge on an exam? We won't name any teachers names here but knowledge on an exam that the teacher never covered in the classroom and as a result you didn't get a good grade? Some of us have been in that situation before. Children, have your parents ever scolded you for doing something you never knew was a problem in the beginning. Citizens, has the government ever shocked you with a new regulation that you didn't know about? Certainly that has never happened. Employee, have you ever been reprimanded for something that you didn't know your boss wanted. Well, let me give you a personal illustration: during the time that my wife was working to put me through seminary, she worked in human resources and in both places at which she worked God allowed her to quickly promote. Her supervisor saw in her a manner of dealing with people that was righteous and fair and filled with wisdom. They often asked her, "Where did you learn how to deal with people in this way?" Again they just saw something in her, a righteousness in the way that she dealt with people. She would suddenly say back, "Do you really want to know?" And they would say, "Yes, how did you learn this stuff?" and she would say "Well, I learned it at church on Sunday." And they wouldn't ask very many more questions after that. But as a result of her promotion she ended up being a supervisor of supervisors and she ended up teaching supervisors how to supervise. There was one time a supervisor came to her and was ready to fire an employee and as Janice dug into that scenario the employer said, the supervisor said, "My employee is always late. He never comes in on time." So Janice asked the logical first question, "Well, does he know about the problem?" And she, the supervisor says, "He certainly does every time he comes in, I look at my watch." She was about to fire him even though she never communicated other than this.

Clear expectations, provoking that is what that is actually. With that in mind, please turn to Hosea chapter 4 that is on page 641 in the front section of the Bible in the chair in front of you. We are continuing our summer series entitled, "A Love Only God Inspired" with today's installment of God's just love. For those of you who have not been exposed to the first two week's message in Hosea, let me review for you just a bit. We chose the book of Hosea to study because Hosea has a powerful message about God's love towards his unfaithful people. Knowing God's love more and more as we begin to understand all of the nuances compels us to be a people of love and to fulfill our annual theme in God's second commandment: love our neighbors. Two weeks ago I presented from this pulpit God's surprising love from Hosea chapter 1. Hosea 1 contains the seemingly bizarre story of Hosea, prophet of God, marrying a prostitute and God commanding him to do so. The surprising element in that story is that Hosea's marriage represents God's love for an unfaithful people. God chose us.

Last week, Pastor Green talked about God's restoring love to his unfaithful people would go astray but he would also begin to restore them as well. And God's faithful restoring love would turn around every aspect, every last aspect of the discipline and judgment that he would bring upon his people. Now for more in depth study of Hosea we naturally cannot go through the whole entire book of Hosea in a detailed way in five weeks, that's the length of this series, but for more in depth study, and you can go as deep as you want, there is a Bible study series that I have written and is posted online at <http://faithlafayette.org/hosea>. You can go as far as you want and I promise you it gets pretty deep, some of those lessons will take you a while but it is there for you to continue your study. Today we will not read all three chapters of Hosea 4-6 which is our content today I'm going to read certain portions of that and then from that distill what we will see. Today we're going to see three provisions of God's just love. We've talked about his surprising love, we've talked about his restoring love and now were talking about his just love in Hosea 4-6. Three provisions of God's just love that renders all of us without an excuse for our departure from him and renders us without an excuse for not turning back to him when we depart from him. We will see that God is not the provoking employer. We will see that God is not the unfair instructor. We will see that he is the fair and just employer and the just instructor that communicates clearly to us. Our expectations are his expectations and then also when we fail to meet them, provides a way to meet them as well.

With that in mind look at Hosea 4, we'll start with verses 1-3, "Listen to the word of the Lord, O Israel," and Faith Church. "For the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land." Please notice that there is no bizarre marriage here, no bizarre children's names here. The Lord drops all of the living parable that he manifested in Hosea and Gomer. There is no more symbolism here; he is talking directly and forthrightly to his people. "There is no faithfulness or kindness in the lands or knowledge of God in the land. There is only swearing, deception, murder, stealing and adultery. They employ violence so that bloodshed follows bloodshed therefore the land mourns. And everyone who lives in it languishes along with beasts of the fields and the birds of the sky and also the fish of the sea disappear." With that in mind, the first provision of God's just love that renders his people without excuse is this: access to knowledge of him and his ways. You might say,

"Brent, I don't understand where you got that." Let me explain, please notice something about the text of Hosea 4:1-3, God begins with a charge against his people; the Lord has a case, a charge against his people. The questions arises then naturally, Is there ample reason to believe that his people had clear expectations on which God could bring a charge? Did his people know? Is God like the provoking employer? The unfair professor? The answer is no. Does the list of failures that God mentions here ring a bell? Is it familiar to you? If not, let me kind of walk you through it so it becomes really familiar to you because I think you'll recognize it after I walk you through it. The first one may not be as much, when he says, "There is no faithfulness," that is a term in the Hebrew that means covenant loyalty to God alone. Worship God alone, no other god. No faithfulness means that the people have been prostituting themselves after other gods. That's a violation of the very first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Listen to this, the list goes on, There is only cursing, as in, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain." There is only lying, as in, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." There is only murder, as in, "Thou shalt not," you fill in the blank, "kill." There is only adultery, as in, "Thou shalt not commit," you fill in the blank, "adultery." There is only stealing, as in, "Thou shalt not," where is this from, my friends, where is this from? This is from those of you who know the text of scripture and those who know scripture and even if you're relatively new to scripture one of the very first things you learn probably in Exodus is the Ten Commandments.

God brings a charge against his people based upon the Ten Commandments. The list of charges there is precisely from Exodus 20. Exodus 20 was the covenant, the agreement, the contract, the job description, if you will, that God wrote in stone seven hundred years ago from this time, from the time of Hosea. Were the expectations clear? Were the expectations unchanging? I suppose if they were written in stone what is that supposed to mean? Right? That was God's job description for his people written in stone as permanent. His words testify specifically to his righteous standards that are unchanging. God's just love has ensured that he communicates clearly what he desires his people to do; he is not the provoking employer. But you may say, "Okay Brent, not everyone knew about God's Ten Commandments, I'm just learning about them recently because I'm a new believer alright?" Well, yes and no on some of that. You may say, "God is unfair." Well, look at verse 3 for just a moment, "Therefore the land mourns and everyone who lives in it languishes, along with the beasts of the fields, the birds of the sky and also the fish of the sea they all disappear." The land, the earth, the beasts of the fields, the birds of the sky, the fish of the sea. Where have you heard this terminology before? Is there any clue? Birds of the sky, fish of the sea, beasts of the land. Have you heard this terminology before ever? Wheres this from? It goes back to Genesis chapter 1, the creation chapter. This time however it is not creation exploding in glorious majesty and everything being arranged in glorious harmonious order into a beautiful creation, this time Hosea paints a picture of God undoing creation. The land mourns instead of being prosperous; mankind mourns instead of being blessed; the creatures disappear instead of being fruitful and multiplying.

What is Hosea trying to communicate here? Remember last week Pastor Green showed us from Hosea chapter 2 that Israel chased after other gods, namely a god called Baal. She was in a place where she was enjoying all of the material prosperity that she had. At this stage in the history of Israel, she was relatively prosperous, she was a wealthy nation. She attributed her wealth to Baal, her lover, other than Yahweh the Creator. That's what she was doing, worshiping that and worshiping the material prosperity and going back to what she thought was going to give her more and more. So God here in this text is planning to show Israel by the imposition of famine and destruction that even though Israel cried out to her lover Baal, Baal had no power whatsoever to give her blessing. It is only the Creator God Yahweh who has the power to create and to uncreate, if you will. God's handiwork in making creation testifies to knowledge of who he is. That's what I think Hosea is communicating. His creation, power to create and even to withhold the blessings of creation provides general knowledge about him as well. Romans 1, if we look in the New Testament Paul picks up on this theme. Romans 1:18-21 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppressed the truth." What is the truth? "That which is known about God is evidence." It is evidence. It is written somewhere. "It is evident within them," within inside of them, "for God made it evident to them. Since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes, his eternal power and divine nature." What that means is this: creation around you shows you two things, number one, that there is a God and he is able to do things, there is a God and he is able to do things being clearly, "being clearly understood, through what has been made so that they are without excuse." Let me attempt to put all of this in a simple and direct way: creation screams something, it screams this, there is a powerful boss out there. You're not him and you need to seek his job description.

Folks, God's just love ensures knowledge of him is available. He is not the scolding parent holding his children accountable for something of which they did not know, that would be unjust. Parents, if you're doing that, that is unjust. He is not the provoking boss firing the employee for an unknown expectation. If you're doing that, employer, that is unjust. He is not the unfair professor who intentionally set you up to fail an exam, that is not just. His creation shows that he is there and that he is wanting you to seek his job description. Now let me give you the metaphor if we are talking about employers and job descriptions here is what in metaphoric terms its like: you go and sit in your office and on your bulletin board there is a message that screams or that is written, "Your boss is in his office waiting to give you your job description," and then you sit down at your desk and there is a computer screen with the message as the screen saver, "Your boss is in his office waiting to give you your job description," and then you go to drink your coffee and inscribed in your cappuccino is a little message, "Your boss is in his office and he is waiting to give you your job description." And you say, "What cup of coffee?" You say, "What bulletin board? What computer? I don't have a boss," in fact, even if I do acknowledge something like that then I say, "Well, all that happened by random chance. That's a message there that happened by random chance. I am not accountable for that." That is willful suppression of the truth. That's what we do.

In his just love, he has written the job description for you and has made it available. Do you know this job description.? Pastor Folden has been exhorting you to be prepared for

fall readiness, the first one is "Follow Christ." Do you know what it even means to follow Christ? When we unleash our, unleash that's a strong term, sounds too epic, when we unfold, give out, our fall brochure to you that describes all of the FCI classes, do you understand that there are tons of classes in there in which you can know your God and his job description better, your purpose in life? I looked at the classes and I do not know of another church that has all of the available resources that God has given us here. It is as if he is screaming "Know me, I have written my job description and there are all these people here who are trying to help you know me as well and what your purpose and your job description is." If you need to know God, there are theology classes. If you need to know how to be a better husband, there are marriage classes. We are also starting up our men's ministry again, so our men's ministry, men of faith, will be coming back. Men you need to be there so fall readiness. Do you know your God and his job description? He has not been silent. And your neighbor out there is suppressing the truth and righteousness as well. Will you help to uncover his eyes to the things inscribed on his bulletin board, on his computer screen in creation and introduce your neighbor to the God who has a purpose for him? God has not left himself without a witness. In his just love, he has provided us access to knowledge of him and his ways.

The second provision that God has made for us is this: accountability for the knowledge of him and his ways. Not just access but accountability. Access and accountability. If you will, please turn to Hosea 4:4, we finished up in verse 3. Verse 4 says this, "Yet let no one find fault and let none offer proof." Hosea is saying, "Wait a minute, before you start pointing fingers, I need to give you whose most accountable first. So before you start pointing fingers let me explain." And the very next phrase is very difficult, the Hebrew in it is very difficult, translators struggled to translate this. Your version says this, "Your people are like those who contend with the priests." I don't think that's the best translation, here is what I think it means, "For with you is my contention, O priest." Why does God start with the priests? We'll talk about that in just a moment, but just so that you know, I am not making this up, I am not just kind of playing loose and fast with the text of scripture. Hold your place there and go to Hosea 5:1, "Here this, O priests." There it is clear. Notice the priest. "Give heed, O house of Israel. Listen, O house of kings," those in authoritative positions, "the judgment applies to you first, you have been a snare, you have been like a trap set out for the people." That begins to support my conclusion about the translation of the second part of verse 4.

Now lets go back to verse 5 in chapter 4, lets continue reading. "So you," the priest, "stumble by day. And the prophet also will stumble with you by night." Basically day and night my people are stumbling. You're departing from the Lord all the time. "I will destroy your mother," which is the priestly institution and, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Not because they didn't have knowledge but the next phrase but, "because you," the priests, "have rejected knowledge." And therefore God says, "I'm also going to reject you from being my priest and you have forgotten the job description and, "I will also forget your children, the people of the land. The more the priest multiply the more they sinned against me. I will change the glory on the earth," exalted position, "into shame," a lower position. They," the priests, "feed on the sin of my people and direct

their desire toward their iniquity and they will be like people," like priests, "I will punish them for their ways and repay them for their debts."

What's happening here? I know this is hard, prophetic literature sometimes is hard because it's so poetic and we're not. Who likes poetry in English Lit class? I didn't. You did, you really loved it. I'm learning to love it as the Old Testament professor around here and it is rich. It is hard to understand, though but here is what is happening: after seven hundred years when Moses wrote in stone the job description, and after two hundred years where the people of the northern kingdom set a golden calf at Bethel in the south, Dan in the north, after two hundred years of God tolerating that, he is holding his people accountable. How would you like to be with your employer two hundred years and here's what God is doing after two hundred years of patiently waiting: holding his people accountable and that stems from his authority as the law giver.

Theologians refer to this section of Hosea as a covenant lawsuit. God was the author of the job description. Israel had persisted in breaking the job description for two hundred years; you probably should have been fired on day two. God is now bringing a charge against the people. God made the laws, God holds people accountable to the laws. God is not only your Creator, he is the law maker, therefore God has the accountability to hold you, he has the authority to hold you accountable and pronounce judgment. Here's my question, Do you have a place in your daily reflection that you will give an account to your Maker? Do you ever think about that? Do we go off and live our life as if we are unaccountable?

Secondly, God's accountability, his provision of accountability starts with the most culpable. Why did he start with the priests? It was the priests who were to be the disseminators of God's job description. Okay? Look at this verse right here, Deuteronomy 31:9, "So Moses wrote down this law," this job description, "and gave it to the priests," the sons of Levi, "who carried the Ark of the LORD's covenant, and to the leaders of Israel." God starts with the most accountable, those in position of authority. James 3:1, this continues this concept of holding those in the position of authority accountable first extends to the New Testament, "Let not many of you become teachers," that applies to me and your pastor's here, "my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment." Hebrews 13:17, "Obey your leaders and submit to them for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief for this would be unprofitable for you." Do you understand? Do we understand that Pastor Viars as the head shepherd, as the lead pastor of this church, God will hold him accountable for your souls in one sense. Now yes, you are responsible for your own choices, but right here it says that those who watch over your souls, your pastor, bears a great load. Are you praying for him in this who is held accountable by God to watch over our souls?

Now positions of authority being held accountable, stricter accountability. Husbands, I hope you're thinking about this, you have a position of authority, husbands. Employers, you have a position of authority. Parents, mom and father, you have a position of

authority. Instructors, you do too. Do you have a place in your daily routine for thinking, "I will give an account for how I use my authority?"

But not only those in positions of authority at will, God's accountability will extend to all of his people. Don't look there, or you're welcome to look there if you desire but Hosea 4:1, "The Lord has a charge against all of the inhabitants of the land not just the priests." Chapter 4:3, "Everyone languishes." Chapter 4:6, "My people are destroyed." Chapter 4:9, "Like people, like priests." Extends to all people. All have sinned. We are God's creation therefore we will be held accountable.

Maybe I'm going to state the obvious here, but do you also understand, do we understand that we wouldn't even be having this conversation if God did not permit his people to depart? You, in God's just love, you in God's just love meaning that he is not making you chose him, that would be injustice but in God's just love he has given you the freedom to depart from his ways. You have that freedom, you have the choice to depart from your Creator, and we all have taken that choice, by nature we have taken that choice. So while you have the freedom and that's why we're even having this because people have chosen to go against his covenant, his job description, so maybe this is obvious that you have the freedom to chose to depart. But while you have the freedom to chose to depart, you do not have another freedom. You may chose your own path but you cannot chose what lies at the end of that path. You can chose your path but you cannot chose what? You can chose you path but you cannot chose what? Consequences or what lies at the end of that path. He does not permit the freedom. As the just law giver, as the just lover, he does not permit freedom to chose the end destination of that path. As an example, you go I-65 south, I-65 south always goes where from here? Where does it always go? "But I wanna go to Chicago." I can't get to Chicago going south from here. You do not choose the end destination, you choose your path. You choose to go south on I-65, you're going to Indianapolis regardless of where you think you might be going. You have the freedom to choose your path but you do not have the freedom to choose the end destination.

So please look now what Israel was about to experience at the end, going south on I-65, well maybe she was going to Chicago, that's a little more destructive. Chicago, look at what was on the end of her path. Look at Hosea chapter 5:14, here's what lay I-65 north for Israel, "I will be like a lion to Ephraim and like a young lion to the house of Judah, I will tear her to pieces and then I will go away. I will carry away and there will be none to deliver, not her Baals, not her anything, I will go away and return to my place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face. In their affliction they will earnestly seek me." What lay at the end of I-65 north for Israel because she had chosen a way that was not the Lord's way was destruction, a lion. Fascinatingly enough, the symbol for Assyria, the nation of Assyria that was going to wipe out Israel, the northern kingdom in 722 was a lion. I know it. I was in the British museum in June and there I saw all the artifacts, great grand statues that had been captured when Britain had its empire and all over the entire world. I don't know why Britain gets to get all of the world's artifacts but they had the Assyrian empire artifacts there and one was a grand statue of a lion. Go on my facebook and you can see my son likes sticking his head in the lion's mouth, being devoured by the lion. This is the imagery that lie at the end of the path.

Now folks, God's just love provides accountability. Let me connect that to every day life. Very practically. Our own choosing to live outside of earthly accountability relationships most likely reflects the lack of belief, suppressing of the truth that I will be held accountable by God someday. Do you seek out earthly structures of accountability to help you fulfill the job description knowing that you're living in light of the heavenly accountability that you will render at the judgment seat of Christ? Do you have a place in your mind, men, I'll start with you? Do you live your life as if you have no accountability? Do you seek other males who will say, "Brent, you're departing from the job description. Let me help you?" Men, are you helping your family get plugged into a church, the first structure of accountability is church membership? A church where you're placing yourself underneath pastoral oversight or accountability by which you say, "I believe God will hold me accountable someday. I want earthly accountability. I want to be involved with God's people under the oversight of God's shepherds and striving to be working by grace God's job description for me."

Well, what happens when we fail to meet God's job description? Unlike some bosses that may fire you when they didn't tell you anything, unlike some professors that may have never told you, failed you on an exam, doesn't give you a chance to make it up, our God and his just love is not like that. The third provision is this: God's just love also provides a remedy for falling short of his job description. None of us measure up to God's job description but our God provides a remedy for our failure in his just love. Look back at the verse we just read about the lion, the lion we just read about in chapter 5:14, "I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a young lion to the house of Judah, I even I will tear them to pieces. I will carry them away there be none to deliver them. I will go away and return to my place until they acknowledge guilt." If there is a lawgiver and a law covenant, guilt means I have broken something until they acknowledge that God was right, you were right and I was wrong, and they seek my face and in their affliction they earnestly seek me.

Now there is probably a poor chapter division break here but lets continue reading in chapter 6:1. This is Israel's response, what we're about to read is after God has charged them with a covenant lawsuit and said, "You're guilty, you're guilty Israel. You have broken my covenant lawsuit. You broke my covenant. What is your response?" Here is their response in verses 1-3, and you tell me, look at it real quick and as we read it, you tell me if this is a good response or not. Chapter 6 verse 1, "Come let us return to the Lord, he has torn us," like a lion, this is the lion imagery again, "he has torn us like a lion, but he will heal us. He has wounded us but he will bandage us, he will revive us after two days, three days he will raise us again," sounds like a pretty quick, really quick, God is gonna take care of us and immediately so, "that we may live before him so let us know, let us press on to know the Lord, his going forth is as certain as the dawn. He will come to us like rain," like spring rain, "watering the earth." Very subtly here, what's missing? Is there anything missing? Is there anything missing here or is this a very, very good response? Jake, you're smiling. Don't know where I'm leading you. Follow me on this path because I won't be a lion at the end of it, I promise. There is something missing here, until they acknowledge their guilt is what God said in chapter 5:15 until they

acknowledge their guilt. Do you see any guilt here? You don't, you don't see any acknowledgment of guilt here. By the time we get to Hosea chapter 14, you will see that God will give them the words to say and he says, "Confess your guilt." Read Hosea 14. He has to give them the words to say even, Pastor Viars will be preaching on that. This is an attempt to appease their Creator without acknowledgment of guilt. "Here's a sacrifice, God, for you. Maybe you won't be so hard on us. We don't deserve all this. Here's a sacrifice." Throughout Hosea, God scolds them for continuing to sacrifice their sacrifices but never acknowledging their guilt.

You say, "Brent, I'm not so sure about this. Your interpretation seems right but look at God's response in the very next verse." Look at the very next verse, verse 4, "Ephraim, what shall I do with you? Judah, what shall I do with you? Your loyalty is like the passing clouds." It's just nothing. What is missing from Israel's response is their acknowledgment of guilt, confessing God is right and I am wrong and we have such a hard time with that. We have such a hard time acknowledging our guilt of breaking God's law. Why is that? Here's why it is: the acknowledgment of our guilt is inherently contrary to our inclination to exalt ourselves. We love to look good. We simply do, and the moment that I say I'm wrong, I don't look good anymore. And that's the problem.

Here's two false substitutes for acknowledging guilt. These are not on your notes but two false substitutes for acknowledging guilt: trying to appease God and others. I'll just say a few quick words to get me out of the mess I'm in. I'm not really acknowledging my guilt, I'm just trying to say a few quick words and maybe it'll kinda smooth things over. And folks, even at Faith Church, we have been well taught in the concept of asking, "Will you forgive me?" I have heard those words and those are one of the first words that I heard when I came to this place twenty years ago. Instead of just saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry," I was taught to say, "Will you forgive me?" And I was also taught to say, "because I was wrong." However, don't we quickly and so easily get into the place where we just say, "Will you forgive me? Will you forgive me? Will you forgive me?" in order to try to appease, smooth over the consequences and not really deal with true repentance. Those words, "Will you forgive me?" without and acknowledgment of my guilt are an attempt to appease and assuage, smooth over things without true acknowledgment of guilt. Like sacrifices, Israel was offering to God but they were not, they were not truly acknowledging that God was right and they were wrong.

Secondly, minimization. Minimization. "Ah, God will revive me in two days. It won't be that bad. What I did was not that bad. God will be back in two days or three days. He's gonna raise me up again." I think that reflects Israel's minimization of what they had done. And again we are a well taught congregation, we know progressive sanctification that we are all supposed to be growing. But in my confession when I say to you this, "Will you forgive me? You know, I'm just growing. I've got a long ways to go." That tends to kind of minimize everything and we're all just growing, indicating that you have your issues too. Acknowledgment of guilt means I understand that there is a lawgiver and I have fallen so far short and I say I was wrong. If there is any vestige of me attempting to exalt myself, I still don't want all of these consequences," by including everyone else in my guilt, that is not true acknowledgment of guilt. That was what Israel was

attempting to do. A person who does not acknowledge that God is right and they are wrong, does not have an inherent belief in their own guilt. Without guilt they do not understand what judgment they deserve, therefore, they have no concept of what true mercy they need is. Therefore, they don't have an understanding of what a true Savior will do for them. Without a true sense of guilt there can be no authentic appeal to a merciful lawgiver who has a solution.

So therefore, as we acknowledge our guilt and then turn to our lawgiver of whom we broke his law, we seek his face, "What remedy do you have, God, for my guilt? Because I cannot minimize it, I can not appease you. What remedy you have?" Seek my face and this is where, folks, we need to pivot to the New Testament. All of this was pointing to the need for a guilt bearer, a righteousness fulfiller, a job description fulfiller as well, somebody who would fulfill the job description on our behalf and then who would bear the guilt on our behalf. So, accepting God's guilt bearer and righteousness fulfiller in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came on the scene and said, "I am here to fulfill the job description, to fulfill the law," Matthew 5:17. John 1:14-18, in Christ we see what righteousness looks like, fleshed out. Christ is the living manifestation of the law of God. If you want to know what God's righteousness is all about, you look at Christ. He is the fulfiller of all of the law in the Old Testament. He fulfilled the job description. And the great thing is he fulfilled all of the guilt, the punishment for our guilt as well.

However, we also need to be mindful of this, because we don't just have a bunch of regulations in the Old Testament anymore, there were 613 regulations in the Old Testament law. We have now Christ manifested in the flesh who filled out all of the law and we can see him in the scriptures. We have the full bodied righteousness, God's standard displayed in scripture. Therefore that has increase our culpability now this side of the cross. We incur greater accountability and guilt in light of the fullness and righteousness of Christ being displayed to us in Jesus. We have greater accountability now. Acknowledging our guilt, and this is why we need to acknowledge our guilt, "I was wrong, I am not like the full embodiment of the righteousness of Christ in any way and excepting his righteousness on my behalf by faith." And that allows your boss, your divine boss to see you through the lens of his job description in Christ if you by faith have trusted Christ as your Savior. And now as children of God growing in our understanding of what it means to be a child of the great King and how that should include a regular confession, "I fall so far short of my Savior's righteousness," appealing to him, if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and teach us more how to walk according to his job description.

So folks, God's just love provides access to knowledge of him and his ways, provides accountability for the knowledge of him and his ways and praise the Lord provides a remedy for falling short of him and his ways. If you do not turn to him, there is no excuse, if you do not return to him, there is no excuse. What more could your God have done?

Lets pray.

Father God, thank you for this lesson in Hosea. Thank you, Father, for reminding us of your great just love. Today, let us be mindful of these truths, let them sink deep into our hearts so that we throw ourselves on your mercies in Christ and learn to walk in the righteousness of Christ as your people. In Christ's name. Amen.