

Amos

Outline

- 1:1-2
 - Introduction and declaration of God's judgment
- 1:3-2:3
 - God convicts the nations
- 2:4-5
 - God convicts Judah
- 2:6-9:10
 - God convicts Israel
- 9:11-15
 - Promised Restoration

Sermon Outline **Passage chapter 5**

What does it mean to love and follow God, not as our personal private God but as the God of the Universe? It means that loving God and loving people is inseparably connected we cannot be loving and following God fully if we ignore the suffering and injustice committed against others or worse even become the tools of suffering and injustice. On the other hand we are called to love and follow God, not opinions and preferences of others we cannot mistake avoiding discomfort or turning a blind eye to sin for loving our neighbor.

- Introduction
 - Today we continue our series on the “Not So Minor Prophets” and we come to Amos. One thing we will notice as we go through this series is that there are many common themes among the prophets. There is always the conviction of sin and a call to repentance and the promise of restoration. But within each of the prophets there are things that they focus on about God and about humans relationship with God that is proclaimed in a unique way and is vitally important for us today. And Amos’ message about what it means to love and follow God not as our private personal God but as the God of the universe is vitally important for us as individual followers of Christ, the church, and the world.

No in order to understand how Amos lays out his message we are going to have to read a lot of text and skim through chapters 1-5 now we aren't going to read all of 1-5 but we will be moving through those chapters so I invite you right now to take out your phones or open your Bibles and get ready.

So lets pray and then dive into the text.

- Setting

- Read Amos 1:1
- Brief introduction gives us much of our context for Amos
- Amos prophesied around 760BC about 40 years before the Assyrians in 720BC destroyed Jerusalem. This is the same time as Isaiah and Hosea
 - From the southern kingdom of Judah but prophesied to the northern tribe of Israel
 - Unique: Shepherder from Tekoa
 - Solomon 930BC (Picture)
 - Temple 959BC
 - Son raboum
 - Lower taxes
 - End conscribed labour
 - No
 - Civil war
 - Jaraboam
 - Became king of the northern kingdom
 - Rahaboum
 - Became king in the south
 - Jaraboam
 - Alters to golden calves in Dan and Bethel
- Israel gained wealth as a result of other nations being wrapped up in wars
 - Prosperity increased so did their idolatry and their evil

Transition: So this is the world that Amos the Shepherder is called by God to prophecy in and he begins His prophecy in kind of an unusual way.

Amos 1:3-2:3

- I am going to be reading from 1:3-2:3 and we aren't taking a deep dive into all these verses but rather focusing on the big picture of what Amos is being used by God to communicate. Because he is laying the foundation for the rest of his message.
- Read Amos 1:3-2:3
- What do you notice about this list of nations God is convicting?
 - Foreign nations
- Most people of the time would read this and think "what right does the God of the Jews have to convict us of sin?"
 - God is not just the God of Israel or Judah but the God of the Universe
 - He has the right to judge because He is the God of all whether they recognize Him or not.
 - Easy for us to over look
 - Important for the rest of His message
 - Important for our lives now

Transition: So Amos spends one chapter convicting the foreign nations and then spends and then spends basically the whole rest of the book convicting Israel of their sins and calling them to repentance. So what are Israel's sins? Amos talks

about it throughout but the best list is in Amos 4:1-5 and he begins by addressing the elite women of Israel in not so flattering terms.

Amos 4:1-5

- 4:1
 - Play on words
 - Samaria the center of elitism and power in Israel
 - Eating drinking and being merry while they oppress and abuse the poor
 - God of the universe
 - Their God and they are His people
 - God is the God of the universe and humans are created in His image.
 - People can say they love God but often times the greatest reflection of how deeply you love God is found in how actively you love those who bear His image.
- 4:2-3
 - Foreshadowing the Assyrians would lead captives away but putting large hooks in their mouths and dragging them along
- 4:4-5
 - Remember the map Bethel
 - Not only did they oppress the poor but they made a mockery of God
 - They love the feast and celebrations that God declared
 - They love the outward expressions of devotion but remember in Hosea they didn't worship God they worshiped their selfish desire and physical pleasure and used God as a vehicle to having those desires and pleasures satisfied.

Transition: Amos convicts Israel of two things. They way that have mistreated and abused other people and especially the poor and the way they have forgotten God and made a mockery of worshipping Him. As we continue in Amos one of the things you will notice is that Amos uses pretty harsh language. This is not uncommon for the prophets to use but Amos especially is sarcastic and biting at times. But its important to remember that this is not the first time God has called Israel to repent. And in the rest of chapter 4 God is going to remind them of the many methods getting more and more extreme to turn the people away from their sins.

Amos 4:6-13

- Read Amos 4:6-13
- Why not win them over with blessings
- This is not coming out of no where
 - Blessed them with a home land
 - Prophets
 - Nazirites

- Victory over invaders
- Financial security
- The covenant with God
 - Festivals
 - Directions on how to live
- Used their prosperity to oppress the poor
- Perverted the worship and festivals of God to make a mockery of Him
- The natural state of humanity is not security and blessing
 - Its struggle, suffering, pain, and death
- So if they will not recognize God when His presence and blessing is present perhaps they will long for God in His absence

Transition: After everything God has done. After the blessings and the security, and after removing His blessings little by little Israel has still refused to confess their sins and turn to God. Their injustices against each other are worsening and their mockery of God is worsening and so in chapter 5 Amos declares God's judgment upon Israel.

Amos 5:1-24

- Read Amos 5:1-24

Conclusion

So what does Amos have to say to us about what it means to love and follow God not as a private personal God but as the God of the Universe?

- Amos teaches us that loving God and loving people is inseparably connected we cannot be loving and following God fully if we ignore the suffering and injustice committed against others or worse even become the tools of suffering and injustice.
- This disconnection between loving God and loving those who bear His image is something that people have turned a blind eye to for a long time.
 - The books
 - William Laud 1573-1645
 - Virigina laws
 - 1619 kill and mutilate slaves
 - shortly after enacted laws for Sunday
- On the other hand people have gone too far the other way made a mockery of the worship of God with the justification that it shows love to others.
 - Glasgow Scotland in 2017 influx of immigrants from primarily Muslim countries and there had been tensions between the Christian residents and the Muslim residents
 - An Scottish Episcopal church read the Quran instead of the Bible

- Passage denied the divinity of Christ and said he should not be worshiped

Amos teaches us that the following after God is its not an either or thing we cannot say we love God but hate those who bear His image and we cannot corrupt the who God is because we think it is more loving.

Now I am fully aware that sometimes the language of justice and oppression has become political and that's a tragic thing because Amos is not saying support this policy or vote for this person. You are going to have to rely on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to make those decisions and I am not commenting on any of that. But the call to us as individuals and as a church to love and know God and to reflect His love by the way we serve others is unavoidable. That's what it means to love and follow the God of the Universe. Worship, love and follow God for who he truly is and serve and love other people because they bear His image and they have eternal value in His kingdom.

So the challenge for us in our own lives and our own families is to prayerfully ask ourselves have I gone too far one way or the other?

The challenge for us as we move ahead as a church is to examine our ministries, where we put our energy and where we spend our money and say are we worshipping God for who He is and not compromising the truth of the Gospel and are we also caring for the people He has placed around us and treating them like people who bear the image of God and recognizing the high price that Christ paid for them all.

Lets pray.