



Guess Who? Who are you - Amos
Sermon Discussion Questions – July 16, 2023

Scripture Passages:

Amos:1–2 (NLT) This message was given to Amos, a shepherd from the town of Tekoa in Judah. ²This is what he saw and heard: “The Lord’s voice will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem! The lush pastures of the shepherds will dry up; the grass on Mount Carmel will wither and die.”

Amos 2:4–7 (NLT) ⁴This is what the Lord says: “The people of Judah have sinned again and again, and I will not let them go unpunished! They have rejected the instruction of the Lord, refusing to obey his decrees. They have been led astray by the same lies that deceived their ancestors. ⁵So I will send down fire on Judah, and all the fortresses of Jerusalem will be destroyed.” ⁶This is what the Lord says: “The people of Israel have sinned again and again, and I will not let them go unpunished! They sell honorable people for silver band poor people for a pair of sandals. ⁷They trample helpless people in the dust and shove the oppressed out of the way.

Genesis 1:27 (NLT) ²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Amos 7:7–8 (NLT) ⁷ Then he showed me another vision. I saw the Lord standing beside a wall that had been built using a plumb line. He was using a plumb line to see if it was still straight. ⁸And the Lord said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” I answered, “A plumb line.” And the Lord replied, “I will test my people with this plumb line. I will no longer ignore all their sins.

Amos 5:21–24 (NLT) ²¹ “I hate all your show and pretense— the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. ²²I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings. I

won't even notice all your choice peace offerings. ²³ Away with your noisy hymns of praise! I will not listen to the music of your harps. ²⁴ Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice, an endless river of righteous living.

Amos 5:4 (NLT) ⁴ Now this is what the Lord says to the family of Israel: "Come back to me and live!

Amos 5:15 (NLT) ¹⁵ Hate evil and love what is good; turn your courts into true halls of justice. Perhaps even yet the Lord God of Heaven's Armies will have mercy on the remnant of his people.

Romans 3:23 (NLT) ²³ For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

Warm Up:

In his message today Pastor Tom talks about his memories of playing basketball growing up and how he had a lot of people that he played the game with. What is one of your favorite memories from growing up where you had people around you?

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom opened up his message by introducing Amos to us – not a polished preacher, but a shepherd that received a word from God that placed him on a national stage. Why do you think God used a nobody like Amos to deliver his message? How does that help you relate when you read the story of Amos? How do you Amos foreshadowed the coming of Jesus?
2. Read Amos 2:4-7. What do we learn about the people of Israel in that day? What do we learn about God's justice in this passage?
3. Pastor Tom made this point this Sunday – "You can't have justice without truth." What does this phrase mean to you? What does justice without truth look like? Why do we need truth with justice?
4. Excerpt from Pastor Tom's message:
The reality is this, if there is no God no lives matter. Now that may sound harsh but a universe void of a moral entity at its helm does not care about you or how you feel or any sense of right and wrong. It is all built on synapses firing in your brain and there is no holy personality or force or purpose, behind it all. And all we are to each other is potential rivals or assets to our own survival. The reason culture is struggling with figuring this out is because we are divorcing justice from Jesus.
What would a culture that pairs Jesus and justice together look like? Why is it important to build culture on the foundation where Jesus and justice go hand-in-hand?
5. Pastor Tom used a quote from Rebecca McLaughlin's book, The Secular Creed. In her book, she said:

When a poor man from a historically oppressed racial and religious group claimed to be God in human flesh, commanded love for society's most vulnerable and died a slave's death on a Roman cross, he made the poor, oppressed, and victimized forever central to God's moral plan.

What do we learn about the person of Jesus in this book excerpt? Why is this important to us?

6. Pastor Tom brought a plumb line to demonstrate what God was saying in Amos 7:7-8. Why do you think we get misaligned from God? What are things we can do when our plumb line is leaning to get back in alignment?
7. Read Amos 5:4 and Amos 5:15. What can we learn about God's justice in these verses? What can we learn about God's grace in these verses? Why do you think it's important for God to be a God of both justice and grace?

Next Steps:

Pastor Tom ended his message saying this:

The standard is perfection and we all fall short, that is bad news. But fortunately, it is not the only news. If we die tonight and find ourselves before Jesus and he asks why should we be admitted to heaven, what would you say? If we answer it in the first person, we have immediately gone wrong. Because I believe, because I have faith, because I read my bible. The measure is not what you are able to do. Jesus measured up for me and I belong to him. Jesus united justice and mercy on a cross and out of that wedding a thing called grace was born. Grace is wide and deep and powerful, keeping sin, Satan and death at bay.

What does this mean to you? How does God's grace impact your life? How does that impact the way you interact with those around you?