

Discussion Questions

Date: October 4, 2026

Preacher: Josh Ratliff

Sermon Outline

Talking Points

God Directs and Forms His People ***1 Thessalonians 3:11-13***

God must direct the church's participation in His mission (3:11)

- The church's path is dependent on God's direction.
- The church's mission is carried out through God's presence with His people.
- **Question:** Are we seeking God's direction for our participation in His mission?

God's love must knit the church together in holy unity (3:12-13)

- God's love is the source of the church's communal and mutual love and service.
- God's love guides us into holiness as preparation for Christ's return.
- **Question:** How are you arranging your life to receive more of God's love and to be wholly committed to Him?

Bottom Line: A faithful church follows God's direction, abounds in love, and grows in holiness.

* Do you make the plan for your life or do you look to God for direction?

* How could your answer to the above question affect how easily you follow God's direction as a member of the church?

* Name some ways that you are dependent on God's presence and guidance with you.

* How can your group grow in dependence of God's direction and presence?

* If you can, share with the group how you have grown in your ability to receive God's love for you. What has receiving that love changed?

* What practices have made space for the people in your group to receive God's love?

* Together, can you pick a way of receiving God's love and practice it throughout the week?

* Pray for one another that the love of God would cause you to grow in holiness.

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.

- Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
- Question: What was God's desire for them?

2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.

- Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
- Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?

3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.

- Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
- Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
- If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.

4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")

- Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
- Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests

