

Small Group Notes

Sermon: 21 April 2024

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SCRIPTURE

Amos 7 - 8

OVERVIEW

What do you see?

In chapters 7 and 8 of Amos, God asks Amos the same question twice: Amos, what do you see? Throughout these two chapters, God shows him the judgment that is coming on the people of God because they have strayed from His commands. These chapters invite us to consider how we see God, how we see ourselves and how we see Jesus.

1. How we see God

God shows Amos visions of His impending judgment on His people. They have strayed from His commandments and He is calling them

to return to Him. He shows Amos visions of a locust invasion and a ravaging fire. Both times, Amos cries out to God to relent and the Lord relents and spares His people.

He also shows him a picture of a plumb line, a tool used by builders to build straight walls. Through this, God demonstrates to Amos that His people have strayed from His purposes for them. They are a crumbling wall that will be destroyed. He also shows Him a vision of a bowl of ripe fruit that will not be spared. In these images, Amos does not ask God to relent because he sees what God sees: a people in need of God's intervention.

These visions challenge us to consider whether we see God as a harsh God or whether we see Him as a loving Father who is showing them these visions to give them a chance to repent and return to Him. These visions show the people of God that the sins they have embraced have set them on a path to destruction and God the Father is calling them away from that path and into His arms.

2. How we see ourselves

In Amos 7 v 10-17, Amaziah the priest orders Amos to stop prophesying in Israel and he reports him to the king. Amos reminds him that God took him from his humble life and sent him to prophecy God's words to the people of Israel. Amos then prophesies judgment on Amaziah and his family. Amos goes on to challenge the people of Israel about the way they treat the poor and needy.

This interaction challenges us to consider

whether we see ourselves as deserving of God's judgment or not. It highlights how we view sin and the severity and consequences of sin.

3. How we see Jesus

In the final part of this passage, we looked at Amos 8 v 9-10 which points us to Jesus. God who is just and loving in equal measures, found a way to deal with his hatred of sin and his love for people. He chose His only Son and poured his wrath on him. Jesus was willing to come and be one of us and take His loving Father's judgment because He loved His Father and He loved us, the sinners, the objects of God's wrath.

We are called to run the race marked out for us (Hebrews 12v1-3) fixing our eyes on Jesus, throwing off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us.

QUESTIONS

1. This passage highlights that God hates sin and loves people. God is holy AND loving. Which aspect of God's character are you most aware of, His love or His holiness?
2. God feels about sin the way we feel about cancer. Discuss how we can live with a better understanding of the seriousness of sin and its consequences. What rhythms of repentance and accountability can we adopt to make sure we are taking sin seriously?
3. Read Amos 8v4-6. How can we ensure that we are not acting in the same way?

4. God's judgment was always intended to draw His people back to Him; His arms are always open wide, ready to welcome us back when we return to Him. How aware are you of God's mercy and grace when you sin? What scriptures can you turn to in order to grow in your understanding of His mercy?

5. Hebrews 12 v1-3 encourages us to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and to fix our eyes on Jesus. Are there things in your life that God has previously challenged or is now challenging you to throw off?

Pray for one another!