

Amos – Sermon 7 – Hide and Seek – Amos 5:1-17

Intro:

1) Kids game – Hide and Seek

- a. Rules are simple – one kid counts, others hide
- b. Then search comes
 - i. Sometimes it takes just seconds
 - ii. Other times you search high and low and are left wondering – Where are they?

2) Sometimes – Christians treat their relationship with God in the same manner

- a. Talk as if God's will is something completely hidden
- b. Act as if God's presence is hidden
- c. Worship like God's blessings are hidden
- d. Live like God's standards are hidden

3) Scripture paints a completely different picture

- a. God is not the One hiding
- b. From Genesis to Revelation – whenever fellowship with God is broken, it is not because God walked away 1st
 - i. Adam hid from God in the garden due to his sin
 - ii. Israel wandered into idolatry and away from God
 - iii. Prodigal son left the father's house

4) James tells us – “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you..” (4:8)

- a. The invitation is open
- b. Tragically – sinful people often act as though God is difficult to find
 - i. Reality – we are the ones who wander from Him
 - ii. Isa. 53:6 – “All we like sheep have gone astray...”

5) This is exactly where we find Israel in Amos 5

- a. Amos' 3rd sermon addressing Israel's coming judgment
- b. Nation is spiritually bankrupt
- c. They have religion, but they do not possess closeness with God
 - i. Have festivals, sacrifices, altars – but they have abandoned the One those things were intended to point to

6) Yet – in the midst of these messages of coming judgment – we read God extending an invitation of grace to repent

- a. Chastisement and judgment was meant to draw them back to God
- b. Chapter 5 – V4 “Seek ye me, and ye shall live.”
- c. Notice God doesn't say – “try to figure out where I've gone”
 - i. He says – seek
 - ii. IOW – God is not withholding His blessings, He told them exactly where to look

- 7) As we begin to walk through chapter 5 – we'll discover that God tells Israel exactly what to be seeking if they are to experience revival and life**
- a. Sermon – Hide and Seek
 - b. Text: 5:1-17

Seek the Word – V1-3

- 1) **Q – Why is Israel in such the mess that they are in?**
 - a. One main reason – they ceased from listening to and obeying the Word of God
- 2) **Notice – for the 3rd time, Amos issues the command “Hear”**
 - a. An imperative aimed at grabbing their attention so they would listen
- 3) **It’s clear by the content of the previous messages, as well as this repeated refrain, Israel has grown calloused to the Word of God**
 - a. They lived in active disobedience to God’s Word – 2:6
 - b. They offered sacrifices in direct contrast to God’s Word – 4:5 “leaven”
 - c. They continually failed to acknowledge the clearly revealed chastening of the Lord – 4:6-11
 - d. You could not get a clearer statement on their purposeful ignoring and departure of God Word than – 2:11,12
- 4) **I want to point out what the outcome was of this continued disobedience and neglect of God’s Word**
 - a. V1 – it led to their death
 - b. The picture Amos gives in these opening verses is that of Israel’s own funeral
 - i. Lamentation – a song of mourning, root – a chant of lament
 1. Denotes a short, poetic song sung in lament at a funeral
 - a. 2 Sam. 1:17 – David sang lament over Saul and Jonathan’s death
 - b. 2 Chron. 35:25 – Jeremiah sang lament over Josiah’s death
 - c. Ez. 26:17,18 – song of lament at the destruction of a city
 - ii. Amos was singing a song that grieved the death of Israel
 1. Irony – Israel was still alive as a nation at this point
 - a. Imagine how shocked you would be to open a paper and read your obituary while you’re still alive
 - iii. Why would this be so scandalous?
 1. From Israel’s perspective – they are at the height of life
 - a. Military superiority, economic prosperity, religious activity
 - iv. What Amos was pointing out was – all they boasted in was cosmetic
 1. Ill. – mortuary cosmetologist – makeup on a corpse
 2. Amos was calling out Israel – they had makeup on a corpse

5) What was the content of the song of lament?

- a. V2 – virgin Israel has fallen and left to rot
- b. Virgin – denotes an unmarried daughter who is still under the protection of her father
 - i. Translated virgin because it is assumed that's what she would be as she followed God's Word
 - ii. Carries the idea of a young, youthful, blossoming, vibrant girl – full of life and having a full life ahead of her
- c. Notice – she is fallen to rise no more
 - i. Fallen – used in a funeral song, often denotes fallen by the sword
 - 1. Man. 2:21, 2 Sam. 1:19,25
 - ii. Forsaken – to reject, to leave, to allow
- d. Picture – a tragedy
 - i. What should be a young, blessed, lively, individual with a full life ahead of them – now has been slain and left to rot alone in her own land
- e. Comparing this to Israel - God's judgment will befall Israel, who had the opportunity to be vibrant, blessed, and a full and fruitful life ahead of the nation – slain and defeated with no deliverance available from God
 - i. They are going to experience the consequence of their continued disobedience as outlined in Deut. 28:15-68

6) V3 outlines the process of how this will happen

- a. Israel will be decimated by some opposition on their own doorstep (V2 upon her land)
- b. Experience great defeat
 - i. City who sends out 1,000 will lose 90% of its soldiers
 - ii. A squad of 100 will lose 90% of its fighters
 - iii. "Only a handful of ragged, war-weary men will be left of Israel's proud army" – McComisky

7) Why is this proclamation of judgment so astounding?

- a. Israel possessed a great army
- b. Israel prided themselves on their victories in battle
- c. Now – they will be defeated, life cut short

8) Don't miss the point – it's because they have failed to seek God's Word

- a. Their continued rejection and disobedience to God's Word has led them to this path
- b. Amos' edification – HEAR YE THIS WORD

Application

1) We have more access to God's Word than any generation, yet we have less appetite

- a. The tragedy of American Christianity is not the lack of Bibles, it's the lack of Bible readers
 - i. We have Scripture in our homes, phones, radio, TV, and podcasts, yet many Christians remain spiritually malnourished
- b. American Bible Society
 - i. 2026 – 41% of American qualify as “Bible users” – meaning they read their Bibles, outside of church, as little as 3x's a year
 - ii. Among weekly church attenders, 43% do not consistently engage with Scripture in a way that shapes their daily decisions and relationships
- c. Deut. 8:3
 - i. Israel is presented here as a fruitful life cut short from flourishing because they didn't “hear” God's Word

2) A neglectful Bible produces a neglectful heart

- a. Israel judgment didn't begin because they lacked God's Word – it began because they ignored God's Word

3) Quickest way to experience person and corporate revival – seek the Word

- a. Ps. 119:25,50,93

Seek the Lord – V4-13

1) Amos has given Israel a glimpse of her death, not he gives them a glimpse of the path of life

- a. V4 – Seek ye me, and ye shall live
- b. Important to note – this is an individual invitation – God already issued the national fate
 - i. Even though the nation is heading into destruction – God still gives opportunity for the people to experience deliverance

2) Amos issues a command for personal revival

- a. Seek – imperative – command
 - i. Pronominal suffix – there’s an object to their seeking, it is not an anchorless search
 - 1. IOW – he’s clearly telling them where to find deliverance
 - ii. Denotes a persistent, regular, earnest inquiring of God’s Will
- b. It’s interesting that Amos has to issue a command for them to seek the Lord
 - i. What does that tell us? – they weren’t seeking
 - ii. Even though – they had established places of worship, a bunch of religious activity, sacrifices, offerings, and tithes – they were not seeking God

3) V5 reveals where they have been “seeking” and that in their ungodly pursuits, they find nothing

- a. These places all carry significant religious emphasis
- b. Notice the word play
 - i. Bethel – house of God, but due to their sinful and disobedient life – it is the house of nothing
 - ii. Gilgal – the place they entered into the Promised Land and camped; the place where they came after captivity
 - 1. Now has brought them into captivity

4) V6 – Amos warns that fire will break out on Bethel

- a. This is significant because in the current – this was the place of the palace of the King
 - i. 7:13
- b. The place where the king’s palace is being on fire is a sign of utter defeat
- c. Reason Bethel will be consumed in fire – it played a key role in leading the people in their ungodliness
 - i. Kings palace and place of worship
 - ii. 7:10-13 shows the kings priests wouldn’t allow criticism of the king
 - 1. Therefore they were not really God’s priests, they were the kings priests

5) V7 – reveals the problem wasn’t just with the king – but the people as well

- a. They turn the sweetness of justice into bitterness (wormwood, a bitter herb)
- b. Rather than experience the blessings of a nation that worships God, adheres to His Word, and experiences His goodness – they have rejected Him and will face a bitter end

6) In contrast – V8,9 is a reminder of the Good Creator of all whom they should be seeking

- a. V8,9 give confidence to the listeners that, if they seek the One True God, their needs will be met, their darkness turned to light, and His deliverance experienced
- b. IOW – The Sovereign God is still able to deliver you – Turn to Him

7) Unfortunately – V10-13 present the reality that they did not

- a. These verses outline 3 activities Israel participated in which God despised
 - i. They neglects justice – V10
 - 1. The elders would settle legal disputes at the gate
 - 2. They were to hear both sides and speak what is true
 - 3. Abhor him that speaks uprightly – talking about those who witness to the truth
 - 4. They people hated it
 - ii. They neglected the poor and needy, exploited them and took from them
 - 1. V11-13
 - 2. God knew they continued to sin, afflict the just, take bribes
 - 3. The prudent doesn't even speak out given how evil the days are
 - a. They discouraged real justice and truth

Application

1) Q – What does it mean to “Seek the Lord”?

- a. Ans – Isa. 55:6,7 – live a sanctified and repentant life
- b. 1st – change your thinking and abandon the vain thoughts of sinfulness and foolishness
 - i. It could be argued that a major aspect of their disobedience was their wrong thinking about God
 - 1. Twice now – God addressed who He really is
 - a. 4:13 & 5:8
 - ii. To seek the Lord is to know the Lord you seek – a right, Biblical understanding of who God is
 - 1. A major struggle in the church today is a wrong understanding as to who God is
- c. 2nd – change of direction
 - i. Repent – a turning from and to
 - ii. Live a life aimed and actioned in the right direction
 - iii. Forsaking sin and embracing holiness

Seek the Good – V14-15

1) Interpret – live it out

- a. The people were boasting that God was with them
 - i. After all – the nation was experiencing such blessings
- b. Problem – the people loved the blessings, but they didn't hate the evil
 - i. Hate – to be unloving, to alienate, to show a negative preference to, to reject
 - ii. How can they claim to love what is good if they are loving what is evil as well?
 - iii. Ps. 97:10 – “Ye that live the LORD, hate evil:”

2) What Amos is calling for here is for the people to accept and adore what is good, and reject what is evil, not being ashamed to take a stand against it

- a. In the OT – the pairing of “hate” and “love” signaled a choice that needed to be made
 - i. Here, those who will experience deliverance amidst national destruction are those who take the stand and make the choice to seek good

Application

1) Don't just enjoy God's blessings, embrace God's holiness

- a. Israel assumed God was with them because life was prosperous
 - i. Yet they tolerated and embraced the sin God hated
- b. The mark of a follower of God is not just gratitude for God's good gifts, it's a growing hatred from what grieves God's heart
- c. Sentence – you cannot claim to love the God of goodness while making peace with the evil He condemns
 - i. Rom. 12:9

2) Pursuing good is not a neutral act – it is a deliberate choice, made in the grace of God, to love the things that God loves and act accordingly

- a. Goodness is not accidental – it's a daily choice
- b. Seek good and hate evil are commands – imperatives
- c. Every day you will choose to drift with the culture or deliberately pursue what honors God

Closing**1) If this repentance doesn't occur – If Israel continues to love sin and hate good – the V16,17 are what they are to expect**

- a. Their funeral will be felt
- b. From the city street to the rural field – the land will be filled with mourners
 - i. There would be such devastation that there will not be enough professional mourners to attend to the need – farmers will be called in to fill the need
- c. They will meet their God

2) Encouragement:

- a. We may not experience national or state revival – although we will try
- b. We may not experience county-wide revival – although we will try
- c. We may not experience congregational revival – although we will try
- d. But we can experience personal revival
 - i. Seek the Word, Seek the Lord, Seek the Good