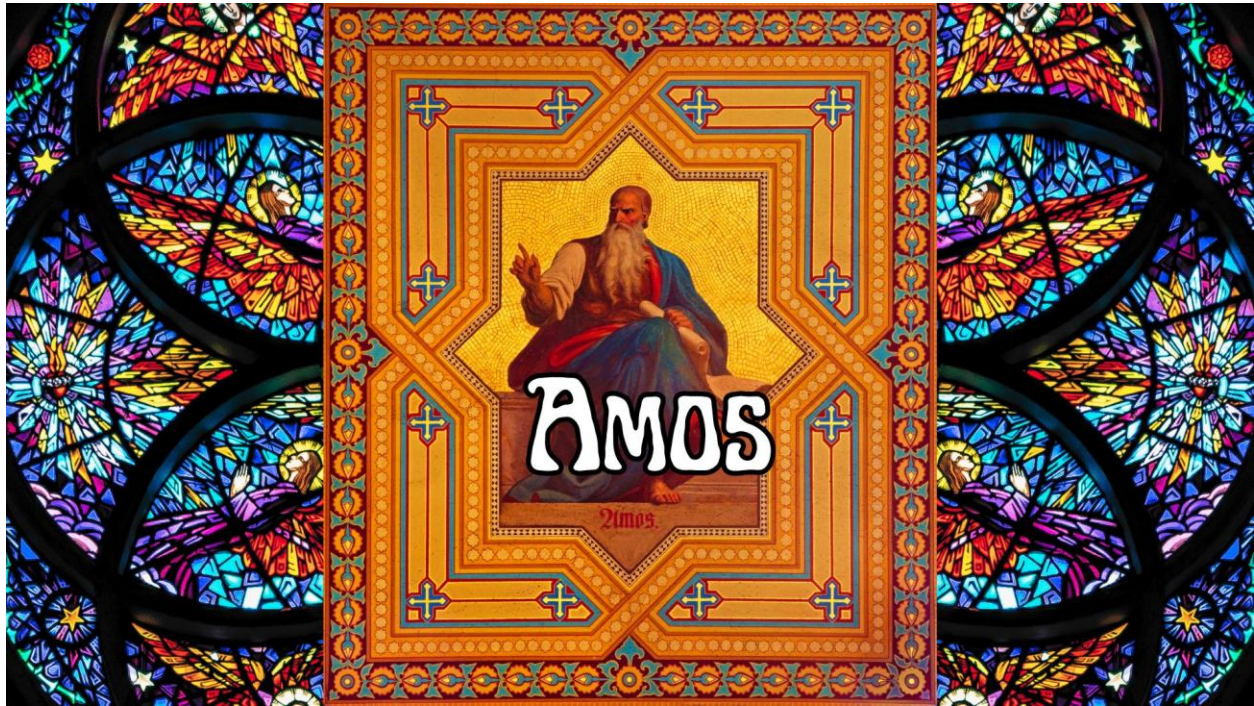


Small Group Guide: The Book of Amos (Chapters 5-9)



Opening Prayer

Begin your time together in prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds to His truth and to help the group apply His Word to their lives.

Introduction

This week's study covers the final chapters of Amos, where God pronounces judgment on Israel while simultaneously offering hope and restoration. Amos, a simple farmer called by God, delivers difficult messages about justice, false worship, and coming judgment—but ultimately points to God's faithfulness and future restoration.

Key Themes

1. **God's Call to Seek Him** - "Seek me and live" (Amos 5:4)
2. **The Corruption of Justice** - Turning righteousness into bitterness
3. **Religious Activity vs. Heart Transformation**
4. **God's Patient Mercy** - Multiple opportunities to repent
5. **The Promise of Restoration** - Hope beyond judgment

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. What stood out to you most from this passage in Amos? Why?
2. Amos repeatedly says "Seek me and live." What does it mean to truly seek God rather than just going through religious motions?
3. In Amos 5:13, it says "the prudent keep silent at that time, for it is an evil time." How does this relate to our current culture? When should we speak up, and when should we remain silent?

Personal Reflection

4. Amos was a simple farmer who didn't want the spotlight but answered God's call anyway. Can you relate to feeling inadequate or reluctant about what God is calling you to do? Share your experience.
5. God rejected Israel's sacrifices and religious festivals because their hearts weren't right (Amos 5:21-23). What are some "religious activities" we might do today that could become empty rituals without heart transformation?
6. The passage mentions how Israel "turned justice to wormwood" (bitterness). Where do you see justice being corrupted in our world today? How should Christians respond?

Application

7. God says to "hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate" (Amos 5:15). What does it look like practically to establish justice in your sphere of influence—at work, in your neighborhood, or in your community?
8. Amos prayed for Israel even though they rejected God's message. Who in your life needs you to intercede for them, even if they're far from God?
9. The sermon mentioned that when we're "running from goodness...the truth hurts because it cuts deeply." Is there an area of your life where you've been avoiding God's truth? How can this group support you in facing it?
10. Despite the harsh judgment, God promises restoration (Amos 9:11-15). How does remembering God's ultimate faithfulness help you face difficult seasons in your life?

Key Takeaways

- **God desires our hearts, not just our religious activities.** Empty rituals without genuine devotion are meaningless to Him.
- **Justice matters to God.** We're called to stand for truth and righteousness, even when it's unpopular or costly.
- **God is patient and merciful.** Even in judgment, He repeatedly offers opportunities to return to Him.
- **Ordinary people can be used powerfully by God.** Amos was just a farmer, but he faithfully delivered God's message.
- **God keeps His promises.** No matter how dark the judgment, God's plan includes restoration for those who belong to Him.

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. **Seek God First** - Before checking your phone, social media, or news each morning, spend 10 minutes seeking God through prayer and Scripture reading.
 2. **Stand for Justice** - Identify one specific way you can "establish justice" in your sphere of influence. This could be speaking up about something wrong, helping someone being treated unfairly, or supporting an organization that fights injustice.
 3. **Heart Check** - Evaluate your spiritual practices (church attendance, prayer, Bible reading, etc.). Are they genuine expressions of seeking God, or have they become empty routines? Make one specific change to engage more authentically.
 4. **Intercessory Prayer** - Commit to praying daily for someone who has rejected God or is far from Him. Don't give up—be like Amos who interceded for Israel.
 5. **Prophetic Courage** - Like Amos, speak truth in a situation where you've been silent out of fear. Ask God for wisdom about when and how to do this.
-

Reflection Questions for the Week

- How am I actively seeking God, not just going through religious motions?
 - Where is God calling me to speak truth, even when it's uncomfortable?
 - Am I more concerned with fitting into the culture or standing out for righteousness?
 - How can I show God's heart for justice in practical ways?
-

Scripture Memory

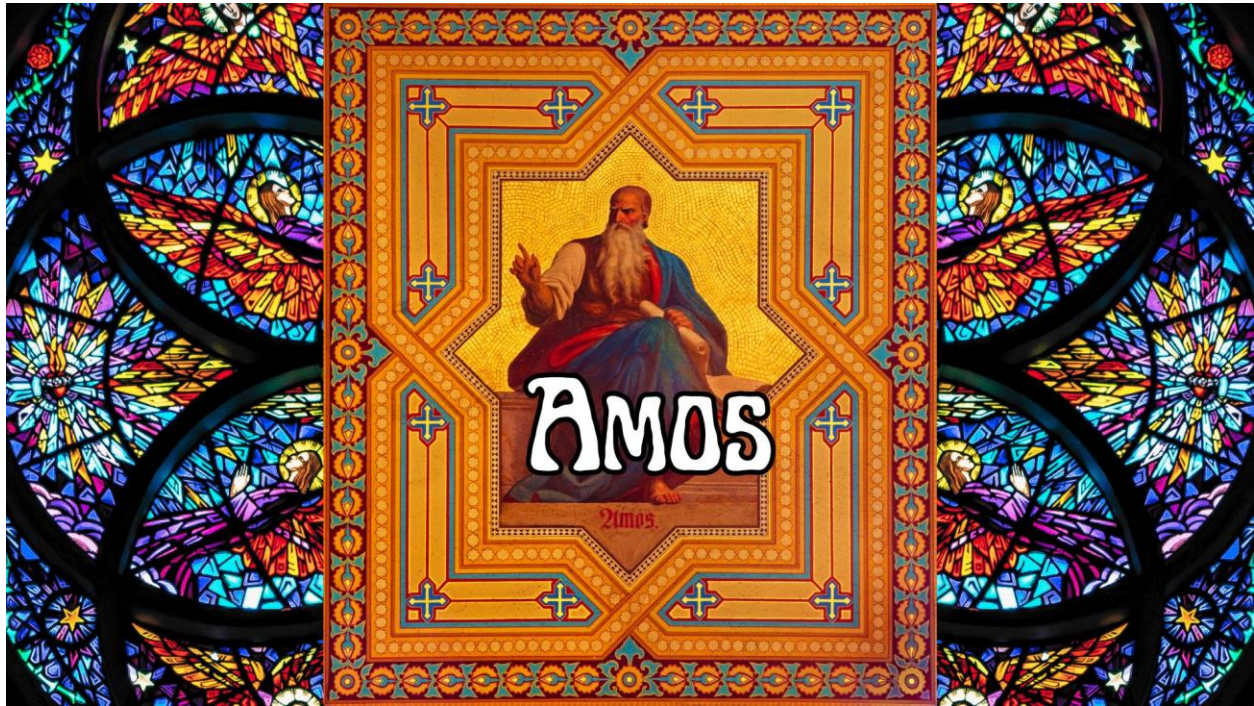
Amos 5:24 - "But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

Closing Prayer

Pray together as a group:

- Thank God for His patience and mercy
- Ask for courage to seek Him genuinely and speak truth boldly
- Pray for hearts that care about justice and righteousness
- Request grace to answer God's call, even when it's uncomfortable
- Thank Him for the promise of restoration and hope

5-Day Devotional: Seeking God in Times of Judgment



Day 1: The Call to Seek God

Reading: Amos 5:4-6

Devotional: In the midst of Israel's impending judgment, God's message remains consistent: "Seek me and live." This isn't a complicated formula or religious ritual—it's a heartfelt invitation to relationship. God doesn't delight in judgment; He desires our hearts turned toward Him. Even when we've wandered far, when our culture has embraced darkness, when justice has been perverted, the door remains open. Today, consider what you're truly seeking. Are you pursuing comfort, success, or acceptance? Or are you seeking the One who created the stars and calls the waters? The God who judges is also the God who invites. His mercy extends even to those who don't deserve it—which is all of us.

Reflection Question: What areas of your life need to shift from seeking worldly approval to seeking God?

Day 2: Standing for Truth in Evil Times

Reading: Amos 5:10-15

Devotional: "The prudent keep silent at this time, for it is an evil time." These words echo painfully in our modern world. How often do we remain silent about truth because we fear

consequences—losing our jobs, being canceled, facing ridicule? Yet God calls us to "hate evil, love good, establish justice." We're not called merely to know truth privately but to be light in darkness. This doesn't mean being harsh or unloving, but it does mean having courage. Amos was just a farmer, uncomfortable with his calling, yet he spoke God's word faithfully. You don't need credentials or eloquence—just willingness. God uses ordinary people who refuse to stay silent when truth matters.

Reflection Question: Where has fear kept you silent when God is calling you to speak truth?

Day 3: The Heart Behind Religious Actions

Reading: Amos 5:21-24

Devotional: God's shocking words—"I hate your feast days"—remind us that religious activity without genuine heart transformation is worthless. Israel performed all the right rituals while oppressing the poor and perverting justice. They checked religious boxes while their hearts remained far from God. This challenges us today: attending church, reading Scripture, even serving can become empty if our hearts aren't aligned with God's character. He desires justice rolling down like waters, righteousness like a mighty stream. God sees past our religious performance to our motivations. Are we serving to appear righteous, or because we genuinely love Him and others? The sacrifices God truly wants are humble hearts that pursue His justice and mercy.

Reflection Question: Are your spiritual practices drawing you closer to God's heart or simply maintaining appearances?

Day 4: Responding to God's Call with Humility

Reading: Amos 7:10-17

Devotional: Amos's response to opposition is remarkable: "I was no prophet, nor a son of a prophet, but I was a sheep breeder." He didn't claim special qualifications or defend his credentials. He simply said, "God told me to come." When we're called to difficult tasks, we often feel inadequate—and we are. But God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called. Amos didn't want the spotlight. He was content with his simple life. Yet when God spoke, he obeyed. His humility and obedience made him effective. Today, God may be calling you to something uncomfortable, something beyond your natural abilities. Don't let inadequacy stop you. Like Amos, simply respond: God sent me.

Reflection Question: What has God been calling you to do that you've resisted because you feel unqualified?

Day 5: Hope Beyond Judgment

Reading: Amos 9:11-15

Devotional: After chapters of judgment, God ends with breathtaking promise: restoration, abundance, permanence. "I will plant them in their land and no longer shall they be pulled up." This is the heart of our God—even His judgment serves His redemptive purposes. The millennial kingdom, Christ's reign, awaits. Mountains will drip with sweet wine; the harvest will be so abundant you'll reap while still planting. This isn't just for ethnic Israel—it's for "all the Gentiles who are called by my name." That's us. No matter how dark the judgment, how severe the consequences of sin, God's final word is always restoration for those who belong to Him. Hold onto this hope. Our God is faithful to complete what He's promised.

Reflection Question: How does the promise of ultimate restoration change how you face current difficulties?

Closing Prayer: Lord, help us to seek You above all else, to stand for truth courageously, to worship You with genuine hearts, to respond to Your call with humility, and to hold fast to the hope of restoration You've promised. Like Amos, may we be faithful messengers of Your word, pointing others to Your mercy and justice. In Jesus' name, Amen.