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## AMOS

### LESSON 3 - "LIVE CHOSEN"

*"Hear this word, people of Israel, the word the LORD has spoken against you—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt: 2 "You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins." Amos 3:1-2 (NIV)*

#### IDENTITY

Your identity begins with **GOD**.

- There are **privileges** of identity, but there are also **perils** of identity.

In Amos, you have seen the perils of getting identity all wrong through Israel's misplaced devotion and priorities. Israel's identity began with a big letter "I."

- Israel's chosen identity became their **possession**.
- Israel's identity must have become a source of **pride** because they let their choosiness insulate them from responsibility rather than initiate responsibility.
- When you think you own your **identity**. It is an easy peril to get tripped up on.
- When your identity starts with I, your identity feeds your **flesh** instead of freeing up God's Spirit in you. Your Identity should not start with "I" – it should start with God.

You are God's possession, you don't belong to yourself nor does your identity belong to you.

*"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession." Deuteronomy 7:6 (NIV)*

- Your identity, like Israel's, belongs to God. That means you are a steward of your **identity**, not an **owner**.

When you shift your mindset from an owner to a steward, then your identities will operate as God intended.

Paul also reminds us that we do not belong to ourselves, but we were bought at a price.

*“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup>you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)*

**You saw a glimpse of what a steward looks like in Amo’s life.**

*“Amos answered Amaziah, “I was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. <sup>15</sup>But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’” Amos 7:14-15 (NIV)*

Amos knew his identity. He said he wasn’t a prophet or the son of one. He was a fig farmer and sheep herder! But then ... God called him.

Amos was saying: “My identity doesn’t begin with “I”. It begins with God. He called me from the sheep and told me to go to Israel.”

- Your Identity can’t begin with “I” either or it will always be about you. And you will never have the influence God intended.

### **THREE TRUTHS ABOUT IDENTITY**

#### **1. Identity impacts influence.**

Back in 930 B.C., when Israel split into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Israel’s identity as God’s chosen, set apart people was challenged. King Jeroboam set up the shiny calf at Bethel and ushered in a mixture of worshipping Jehovah and idols. God’s chosen people- who had been commanded to have no other gods before Him – went right along with it.

*“You shall have no other gods before me. <sup>4</sup>“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.” Exodus 20:3-5 (NIV)*

- A. If Israel’s identity as God’s chosen people truly started with and belonged to God, they would not have compromised. Their identity would have impacted their actions, and thus, their influence.
- B. Israel compromised, which led to complacency, and it ended up in confusion.

*Amos 3:10 (NIV) “They do not know how to do right,” declares the LORD, “who store up in their fortresses what they have plundered and looted.”*

If your identity begins with “I”, your influence will end with you. Yet, when your identity begins with God, you will have Godly influence.

#### **2. Your identity demands integrity.**

- A. Amos was a chosen prophet. His identity impacted his influence, so his identity demanded integrity.

Amos 3:8 reveals his integrity.

*“The lion has roared—who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken—who can but prophesy?” Amos 3:8 (NIV)*

Amos was saying, “I don’t own my identity, I am God’s possession, He prompts, so I speak.

B. Your identity should not begin with “I”, but it should demand integrity, for you to follow God, because He gave you your identity, so that you can express His life through your identity.

You must be so God-centered in your identity so that you are convicted to avoid a lack of integrity.

### **3. Your identity should initiate action.**

Your identity will always evoke and initiate Godly action.

- Blessed people bless others.
- Rescued people rescue others.
- Forgiven people forgive others.

*“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” Amos 3:3 (NIV)*

In Amos 3:3 you see that “two can’t walk together unless they are agreed.” So, to agree with your identity -to steward it- you are to have the same mindset as “Christ Jesus, who, though He was fully God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped” or exploited.

*“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.” Philippians 2:5-6 (NIV)*

If you don’t constantly let your identity, be right-sized by identification with Christ, you will find your position in God something to be grasped and you will exploit, it, much like Israel did. You will let the “I” identity get big, and instead of your identity initiating Godly action, it will invite entitlement.

You are a chosen priesthood, so you must follow your High Priest, Jesus, because it’s His Name you wear.

*“But you are a **chosen people**, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)*

For your identity to be secure and grounded so that it initiates the proper action, you must completely identify with Christ Jesus.