

The Year of Discipleship in 3-D

(Further Developing Devoted Followers of Christ)



Welcome! Growing into more fully-devoted followers of Christ, may this time help all: **Grow Upward** into a more mature personal relationship and commitment to Christ Jesus faithful to God's Word!

Grow Outward to neighbor and world around, learning how to love well and to lead in what matters to God - guided by God's Word, by Jesus Himself, and by the Holy Spirit!

And, **Grow Inward** to discover a more contemplative faith, enhanced by both silence and prayer!

The Scripture for Sunday, November 14, 2021

[STUDY LESSON 10]

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING:

Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24

{1} The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah of Judah and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

{2} And he said:

The LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem;
the pastures of the shepherds wither, and the top of Carmel dries up.

{5:14} Seek good and not evil, that you may live;

and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, just as you have said.

{15} Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate;

it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts,

will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

{21} I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

{22} Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them;

and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

{23} Take away from me the noise of your songs;

I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

{24} But let justice roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

DISCUSSION GUIDANCE AND QUESTIONS:

For an overview of Amos consider watching: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/amos/>

For an overview of "Justice" theme consider watching: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/justice/>

1. Open (*or have someone in the group open*) with a prayer inviting the work of the Holy Spirit to open up the hearts and lives of any and all to shape believers into more fully devoted following of Christ.
2. Read (*or have one or more persons read*) the passage printed above (*or from a bible*).

3. **NOTES:** Amos, counted among the Minor Prophets of the Old Testament though only described as such relative to length (Major Prophets being considerably longer). The time period is that of the Divided Kingdom (Israel in the north and Judah in the south). Though hailing from the Judah in the south, Amos was called to prophesy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Plenty of his prophetic material addresses the excesses in Israel, their immorality, smug piety, and elitism. Amos, in contrast, calls forth “justice” and “righteousness” upholding the merits of equality and concern for the disadvantaged among the people of Israel in the north. Certainly the Southern Kingdom, from which Amos hails, is not exempt from any of this nor are neighboring nations, as God’s sovereignty is universal. Verse 2 in chapter 1 echoes this as the Lord roars from Jerusalem (south) to Mt. Carmel (north).
4. What words or phrases caught your attention as you heard this passage read? Take note within what sort of feelings arise from within you.
5. When considering what goes on inside of you while gathered in worship on a Sunday morning, where do you tend to draw inspiration and is your spirit lifted?
 - a. The singing of songs of praise, hymns, or meditating on the messages therein
 - b. The prayers prayed or times for contemplation, reflection, or even silence
 - c. The participation in Holy Communion, the meal of great grace
 - d. The scripture reading and the hearing of God’s word
 - e. The preaching moments and the exploration of the text and the Good News proclaimed
 - f. The sense of community as shared with other sisters and brothers in Christ
 - g. Some other aspect...
6. How do you react when hearing the prophet speak of God’s rejection of festivals, solemn assemblies, offerings, and even songs? Consider what might be grounds for such a response on God’s part.
7. Were hypocrisy at issue among the people of God, or the incongruity of their worship life and the love/justice life, would you agree with the Lord’s apparent disgust?
8. What sort of righteousness and justice ought to rise up out of corporate worship? In what ways have you been able to translate what happens in worship to how you faith shows up in the “living of these days?”
9. What might be some of the implications for the prophet declaring: “Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate?” (*Amos 5:15a*) Where does your holy imagination take you when pondering the establishment of “justice in the gate?”
10. Following (or discipleship) seems to imply the accompanying activity of justice (*rolling down like waters*) and righteousness (*like an every-flowing stream*). Reflect/converse on how you can “break up the logjam” and help those mandates roll/flow in daily life.
11. Spend some time talking or reflecting upon what “justice” and “righteousness” look like with “flesh on it” as opposed to their counterparts of injustice and unrighteousness.
12. What is your main discipleship “takeaway” from this text? And, can you identify any particular ways your Christian faith and following might be inspired to change in light of this text from Amos?
13. (*Optional*) Read the passage once more. Then, take some time to close (or have someone close) with a prayer.