

Just Religion
July 27, 2008
Amos 4:1-5
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Synopsis:

Last week we talked about Amos and his Tee-Shirt: justice and righteousness (front and back). It is a just and righteous God who judges us; this is a good thing. God judges in order to kill sin before it kills us.

Today we talk about worshipping God who is just and righteous. Worship is recognizing and meeting the God of justice and righteousness *in here*, in order to recognize and meet him *out there*.

I.

Preparing to Meet God

Amos 4:3 “Come to Bethel—and transgress!”

What are we doing when we come to worship?

- Think about it
- Why are you here, and what do you expect will happen?
 - Music
 - Lights
 - Friends
 - Coffee
 - Sermon
 - Prayers
 - Singing

What's worship all about?

Last week's wedding: Dan and Angel Wilcut
Music, Lights, Friends, All Elements!

*But the whole thing was about a special *meeting!*

Worship is a special meeting: Meeting God
If this doesn't happen, nothing else matters

II.

Preparing Not to Meet God

Amos 4:1 "Honey, bring me an Margarita!" (JIV)

What was worship like in Amos's time?

- Amos 8th cen, went north
- Text this morning is among three sermons "Hear this word"
3:1 4:1 5:1
- Explain some terms to you:
 - Cows of *Bashan* = northern fertile area
 - Mount Samaria = Capitol Hill in Israel
 - Bethel and Gilgal = major worship sites
(Jacob/Joshua)
 - Items in worship = sacrifice, tithe, thank offering,
freewill offering

What's the problem?

- All the elements of worship, but miss meeting God
- Worship became all about them (ladies and others)
- *What they liked and disliked, but they avoided meeting God

What's worship like in our time?

- Traditional: liturgy, music (organ), prayers, beadle, candles
- Contemporary: band, screen, videos, lights, eyes shut
- Emergent: create experiences at separate stations
- *What do you like and dislike about worship?
 - Control, comfort, relevance, expectations
 - Worship becomes all about us

III.

Meeting a God We're Not Prepared to Meet

Amos 4:12 "Prepare to meet your God, O Israel"

What is worship if it is not about us?

- English word: worship = *worth-ship*
- It's about the *worthiness* of God
- Worship is meeting a *worthy* God in here in order to *walk worthy* of God out there

Flow of the "Hear This" sermon:

Their worship (1-5) to true worship (12-13)

- From meeting *ourselves* to meeting *God*
- Notice the hymn at the end: Here's whom you meet

Example: CS Lewis story about cops and robbers in attic

- *Was that a real robber?
- What if God showed up?
- What if it isn't about me, but about God showing up?
- What happens when God shows up?

IV.

Meeting a Just and Righteous God

Amos 4:2 "The Lord God has sworn by his holiness"

What is worship?

- it is meeting a holy (separate) J&R God
- seeing God with his T-shirt (J&R) = est right relationships
- meeting God in here so we can meet God out there
- God's character rubs off on us in here to send us out there
- E.g. Imprinting: Imitation is the strongest learning
 - Greece: Watching other people Med anchor
 - Watched and then did it: fouled an anchor on Sorios
 - But I did it

What is biblical Worship? Listen:

Isaiah 1:10-17

Micah 6:8

James 1:26-27 (religion = worship *threskia*)

Luke 4:16-21

If worship is meeting a J&R God, what should we do?

-We praise, adore, confess, listen, and respond in here

-We do the same out there

*What we do in here, we do out there