

Search for Justice

Amos 5:14-15

Sermon Outline

A. Seek Good (Vs. 14):

1. Seek – We are commanded to inquire of God like a person seeking vengeance.
 - a) Amos's closing sermon called the nation to repentance and restated the outcome of the nation's moral and religious apostasy. The emphasis was a call to seek the Lord (5:4, 6, 14). The past tense ("Fallen," 5:2) indicates that the fall of Israel was so certain that it could be viewed as already having taken place.
 - b) Seek good – "Seek me" (vs. 4); see Isa. 1:16-17 and note on Isa. 1:17 – "*wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.*"
2. Good – We must seek what is practically beneficial, whether it is making things pleasant or economically advantageous, for the common good of those around us (1 Cor. 4:6-7).
 - a) "In Amos' theological vocabulary, 'good' is the middle term between Yahweh and justice ... the gradient in the sequence runs from *Yahweh* through *good* to *justice*... One cannot speak of morality versus religion or ethics versus faith as though they were alternatives." To seek Yahweh is to do good. That is what was required for Israel to live again.¹
3. Seek good – To seek good is effort; something that a person has to decisively apply themselves to. But 'NOT EVIL', unfortunately, is a preventive effort; something to restrain oneself from.
 - a) Seeking good is the best way to not seek evil – 2 Tim. 2:19-22 – Paul reiterates the same thing with Timothy.
4. Not evil; distress – We are instructed not to seek anything that violate the standards of God and is therefore unethical or immoral.
5. Not evil; distress – Being evil is to have a negative attitude toward the standards of the Lord.
6. You may live – The purpose of seeking good and forsaking evil is for us to experience God's preservation, security, and blessings so that we enjoy our lives. This means that we are fully surrendered to obey the Word of God for a genuine relationship with the Lord.

¹ Stuart, D. (1987). *Hosea-Jonah* (Vol. 31, p. 349). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

7. May the Lord of Host – The Lord God of host means that He is the One who has all authority and power and is creator, supreme over all, a mighty warrior, all-powerful King ready to intervene for His people as He reigns over the universe.
 - a) The ‘Lord God of host’ signifies that the Lord will fight for them. To do evil means that God no longer fights for them, and to assume that because they are Jews God would fight for them is a wrong assumption.
8. Be with you – When there is so much that can go wrong and so many people that can come against us, it is imperative that the mighty warrior who is powerful over all is engaged to continually fight for us.
9. Just as you have said! – The hope is that whatever they were communicating was completely what was going to take place without any changes.
 - a) “Just as He said” – God always keeps His Word (Heb. 6:18).

B. Hate Evil (vs. 15):

1. Perhaps – Emphasizes the danger of presuming on God’s grace. Even a widespread change of attitude would need the test of time to prove its genuineness. (NASU Bible Notes).
2. Hate evil – To not seek evil is to have an attitude that intensely opposes any person or thing that is evil. The intensity of this hatred is no different from how Joseph’s brothers treated him.
3. Evil – Evil is behavior that demonstrates a negative attitude toward God’s standards being lived out in an individual’s life. It leads to this individual living an unethical and immoral life.
4. Love good – We are told to passionately hate evil while being commanded to obey God’s Word actively and fervently. We are to seek after whatever the Word allows us to do that provides practical and economic benefit to those around us.
 - a) If Israel were to seek good, they must love good, almost an equivalent expression. To love (*’āhab*) something means to choose it and to delight in it. And to delight in seeing good prevail, one must hate (*śānē*) evil. That is, one must abhor behavior that displeases God, as the wicked spurn and despise righteousness (v. 10). Amos was exhorting his audience to pursue and embrace justice passionately and to hound and crush injustice just as passionately.²

² Smith, B. K., & Page, F. S. (1995). *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah* (Vol. 19B, p. 106). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

5. Love good – We must passionately desire the church community, the city we live in, the state we live in or the country we reside in to do what is prescribed by God’s Word that benefits the common good of all those who are involved.
6. Establish – We are commanded to place someone or principles in place (these principles are directed by God’s Word as we seek good while hating evil) that everyone can clearly see represent justice for all.
7. Establish justice – We must put laws in place that can create legal processes which cause everyone to be treated fairly as the Word of God directs.
8. Establish justice – We must firmly put laws in place that ensure everyone is treated equal with no bias or partiality.
9. May the Lord of Host – The Lord God of host is the One who has all authority and power and is creator, supreme over all, a mighty warrior, all-powerful King who willingly intervenes for His people as He reigns over the universe.
10. Be gracious – Because we need the Lord God of host’s power and protection to survive, we must continuously seek kindness and generosity as we navigate all the unjust and evil acts we can experience daily.
11. Justice – On the issue of justice, God turns to graciousness; He will re-establish His presence with them and He protects the nation.
12. The remnant – While executing justice on those who choose to do evil, the Lord God of host will not forsake those who turn from evil and seek good by submitting to His Word. He protects them and provides them the ability to enjoy their lives.
 - a) The doctrine of the remnant (i.e., that there will be a saved and purified faithful few, in whom much of the Old Testament prophecy will be fulfilled) is prominent in the prophets (Isa. 11:11; Mic. 2:12; 4:7).³
 - b) The “people who remain” (5:15) referred to the faithful of Israel with whom the Old Testament prophecies would be fulfilled (cf. Isa. 6:13; 11:11; Mic. 2:12; 4:7).⁴

³ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament* (Am 5:15). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁴ Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary* (p. 337). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.