

Amos Part 4 4:1-13

Community Group Questions

1. Do you feel that you can be self absorbed at times? Give an example.
2. Do you find that sometimes you do good things so that others see?
3. Do you thank God for the blessings in your life?
4. How do you handle the bad things in your life?
5. Have you ever had an issue or a problem that you could not handle so you turned to God?

As we move along in the book of Amos and our Big Idea **“Where is your heart?”** we find ourselves in chapter 4 and the sin of Israel that is challenged is being **“self-centered”** and some of you may remember that the first sermon in chapter one started with being selfish. So what is the difference?

Selfish- Lack of consideration for others

Self-centered-preoccupied with oneself and ones own affairs

Today in Amos 4 we are going to take the self-centered test and find out if...“Our hearts are self-centered” Most of us would not admit to being self-centered but maybe the answers to these 4 questions may help us to realize a sin in our lives that other people are aware of but we are not. **The sin of a self-centered heart. “Is my heart self-centered?”**

Vrs 1 **Am I absorbed with myself?**

“cows of Bashan” The plains of Bashan were very fertile and between the wheat crops, the plentiful rain and quality livestock that they were able to raise there. So Amos was not commenting on the women’s weight but He was calling out their privileged life of wealth and prosperity, today Amos might say “you Diva’s”

Some of you may remember Beyonce in the 2013 Superbowl halftime show, well reports from behind the scenes were that she was by far the most difficult performer they ever had to work with. Her requests to name a few was her then infant daughters 22k crib to be shipped to the hotel and her husband JayZ needed 6k in fine cigars and top shelf liquor. When these demands were balked at JayZ was noted as

saying that “she felt like a regular ticket holder, not the single most important person in the event”

Similarly these women that Amos was rebuking wanted what they wanted and it did not matter the cost or who was being run over. They were absorbed with themselves.

Now I know most of you would say yeah these things are ridiculous that’s not me. But is it?

Think about what you talk about...Is it always about you and what you are doing?

Think about your day...Is it always about accomplishing your tasks and your agenda?

Think about when things don’t go as you planned...How do you take those things, what is your response?

Think about what you do in your free time...Is it always things that benefit you or does it benefit others?

Maybe you get away with this kind of behavior because you are in charge, or the boss, or just so out of tune with what others see in you, and your oblivious to the fact that you are self absorbed.

So if you are guilty of be absorbed with yourself what do you do?

Phil 2:3-4 answers that. *MLK Said “Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?’”* That’s a goal and if you are NOT striving toward that there will be consequences, like there were for the women of Samaria **Vrs 2-3**

Maybe your are not self absorbed...Our next question to see if we are self-centered is...

Am I promoting my good works? Vrs 4-5

The next rebuke of self-centeredness was that their religious worship was self-serving and done for show. Maybe you were brought up

thinking that you should do good to look good. Or you were not brought up that way but you sensed at a very early age people praise you when you do good.

Now you are in the self-centered rut of doing good because it makes you look good and you think if you look good and people notice you will feel good.

Interestingly enough Amos is saying if your motivation in doing good is that you look good you are multiplying your sins.

Then he says in Vrs 5 you “publish them” this is too close to home for some people as far as social media goes, Look at me and how many good things I do for others.

I am concerned with this younger generation, they function as a bunch of PR agents for themselves. They are learning to show people the good and edit out the bad or average.

Ill; Zane on Insta...”I don’t want my friends who did not make it to feel bad about themselves”I am not saying its wrong to post certain things but I am saying, consider the feelings of others that have maybe tried their best for something and was not good enough. Maybe your post just made them feel that much worse about themselves, maybe your victory reminds people of their defeat, maybe your accomplishment reminds people of their lack of accomplishment. Maybe your post is just self-centered

What do we do if we are guilty promoting our own good works?

1. Do I think my good works save me? Ephesians 2:8-9 GOSPEL

2. *Eph 2:10 Remember* the good works are a work from God prepared for you by Him.

3. If there is going to be acknowledgement or promotion of your good works let it come from others. *Proverbs 27:2*

4. When people notice...give glory to God 1 Cor. 10:31

Our third question to see if we are self-centered is...

Do I ignore the work/warnings of God?

There are two primary ways God gets our attention, good things happening to us, and bad things happening to us. The self-centered person ignores them both.

1. **Good things**- For Israel, out of slavery, into the land, prosperity and military victory. God did these things to get their attention so that they would turn toward Him and give Him glory. But what did they do? They ignored that blessings were from God and were self-centered and thought that they were accomplishing these things and there was something overly special about them.

What are some of the blessings you are currently experiencing. Are you giving yourself the credit and taking the glory or are you giving the glory to God?

Well like Israel if we don't turn to God when He is bringing the good things in our lives he may just allow the bad things to creep in to get your attention

2. **Bad things**-vrs 6-11 record the bad things that Israel will go through. vrs 6 Famine, Vrs 7-8 Drought, Vrs 9 inflicted their crops so the famine would last, Vrs 10a inflicted them with disease, Vrs 10b Opposition from enemies, Vrs 11 Destruction.

Even after all those things they did not look to The Lord, why?

Because they were self centered, rather than looking to the Lord for help, for deliverance, for comfort, they looked to themselves.

How about you...have bad things happened to you? When they do, do you turn to The Lord? If you don't what are you turning to, for comfort, for answers or help? People? Substances? Finances?

What do we do if we are self-centered in this area?

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Spend time learning more about Him, praying to Him, asking Him questions.

Which brings us to our final question to see if we are self-centered...

Am I reliant on myself?

Amos closes this chapter off reminding Israel...ok...I have allowed all these things to come into your lives so that you learn to look to Me...but it has not worked, you are relying on yourself which shows me you are self centered.

Let me just remind of who is in charge **Vrs 12-13**

Self-centeredness manifests itself in self-reliance and the more we rely on ourselves the more self-centered we become, this is a struggle for men but not just limited to men.

Most men were taught from the time they were boys to "be a man" men should be self sufficient, but the key that is left out in that line of thing is who every man and women will answer to...The Lord. If we answer to The Lord then we must rely on Him and if we do not we are self-centered.

So what do we do if we are self-reliant?

Remember

Psalm 62:5-12- Vrs 5-7 where our salvation comes from, vrs 8 what we should do...trust him. Vrs 9 what humans really are. Vrs 10 what

humans are capable of amounts to nothing vrs 11-12 God is the powerful loving judge.

God's desire for you is that your heart is not self-centered but centered on Him.