

Amos Part 6 5:18-27 "Is your heart confused?"

Community Group Questions

1. What do you not understand about where you stand before Christ?
2. Where do you see yourself when it comes to worship? (Ritualism, Consumerism or liberalism)
3. What is important to you and how does it sometimes come before the Lord?

In the beginning of chapter 5 we saw this lament about the spiritual state of God's people and I stated 2 weeks ago that they were breaking the heart of God. Now this week we will take a look at the later half of chapter 5 and see that God's people must have been confused...they were confused about where they stood before God, they were confused about what God's desire was for their worship and they were confused about who should be first in their lives.

So going along with our big idea "Where is your heart?" the question we will ask ourselves is...**"Is my heart confused?"**

### **About my standing in Christ? Vrs 18-20**

Israel was waiting for the "Day of the Lord". In the OT we see that the day of the Lord is a day of reckoning in which the enemies of God's people would be brought down and those who were unjust would be brought to justice. The prophet is saying those of you who are looking forward to that day because you think it is going to be the end of your enemies...think again, because it is going to be the end of you. Why? Because you are not acting like God's people and you're actions are actually showing your rejection of God.

How about you? Are you confused about your standing in Christ? Maybe you think you are a Christian but you are not really trusting in Jesus for your salvation GOSPEL. Are trusting in your good works or are you trusting the fact that you come to church. Or maybe you are trusting in Jesus but you are unaware of your standing in Christ, maybe you feel you can do something or commit some sin that will make you lose your salvation or lose that standing.

Let me assure you of your standing in Christ so you are not confused.

The Scriptures tell us you are Loved by Jesus, adopted by Jesus, made righteous by Jesus, justified by Jesus, sins are paid for by Jesus, forgiven by Jesus, changed by Jesus, given new life in Jesus, given eternal life in Jesus, and that life will never be taken from Jesus.

Maybe you are not confused about your standing in Christ but you are confused about...

### **About how I worship? Vrs 21-25**

Israel's was lip service, it was eye service, and hypocritical they treated people unjust and then brought sacrifices to worship as if they did nothing wrong.

What about you?

There are three sides to this worship issue...the first is what Israel was..."**worship legalists**" legalistic about the way they worship and it becomes rote, ritualistic and eventually meaningless. You may have a problem with this. Maybe your faith is a Sunday thing in which case it is not faith at all it becomes superstition. I used to say two prayers every night of my life from early childhood until I trusted in Jesus. Our Father and Act of Contrition...for me it was superstition

The worship legalist has a confused heart because they think that they only worship when there are rituals involved.

The second is what I am going to call "**worship consumers**"

This is when people shop around and see "what best fits their liking". This is the tough one because it sneaks in. The "worship consumer" looks at the worship service through a critical eye of what they don't like, what could have been better, what they do like that was missing, how it made them feel.

Let me just tell you I am blessed to be a part of this church for many reasons but one thing I am really happy about is that we as church don't give people what they want...we offer them what they need.

Let me put it this way...when you drive in your car what happens when your gas tank hits "E"? You get gas and sure you may "shop around" but there will be some point in which you are on "E" and there is gas station and regardless of how much gas is per gallon, how nice the station is or if the attendant looks like they may kill you...you stop...Why? Because you need it.

We have access to something that every human needs, like a car needs fuel...sure we can package it and try to "sell" it to people and use gimmicks to try to attract people and it may work but we want to reach out to people because they have a need...their spiritual tank is on empty and Jesus wants to fill it up and it needs to be filled.

So what does the Scriptures say is necessary in a worship service? Prayer, Scripture reading, the preached Word, worship in song and communion. More will happen because of those things but that is what the Scriptures dictate we do.

If we start to become "worship consumers" here is what we inevitably do...well I would bring my friend out but...the music may not be good that week...Pastor Mike is in the OT and its kind of raw and dry at times...oh its communion Sunday and that may freak them out. We start to think "this needs to be a good sale to my friends or they wont come" Don't think that way we had a person some years ago come into the evening service and get saved during a message about church discipline.

No one will admit to being a "worship consumer" but here is how you know you are falling into the trap...

What do you think about while you are in a worship service?  
 Are you thinking about the greatness of God? Are you thinking about your need to respond to His Word? Are you thinking about how this can fill your tank for the week? Are you thankful that you are able to be here and have a church that is free to proclaim the Good News?

What do you say after you leave church? “There was nothing funny in the sermon today” “The sermon is usually like 35 min he went 38” “That greeting time is annoying the guy next to me had clammy hands” “I wish they would do more songs I like” “That song didn’t sound that good” “the prayer was too long” “The prayer was too short” etc..

The third is what I am going to call...**“worship liberalist”** says “I don’t need the church to worship I can worship anywhere I want, in the forest” etc

Illustration: Young guy that came up to me at BBQ...

Basically saying “I worship at home and have no need for the church” Others fall into this trap by saying...I can listen to way better sermons and sing with way better music online then I can at any church in the area

But maybe your heart is not confused about how you worship is it is confused ...

### **About what I worship (instead of Jesus)? Vrs 26-28**

Israel was guilty of Idol Worship and obviously that stood in the way of their relationship with the Lord.

This may not be a common problem for us, although some of you may take a little bit of each religion and morph it into your own brand of what you think is Christianity but really its idol worship.

But a very common problem for us is what we are putting before the Lord and in many senses they are things that we worship, not in the traditional sense but in the sense that these things become more important than the Lord.

*Paul Tripp "Human beings by their very nature are worshipers. Worship is not something we do; it defines who we are. You cannot divide human beings into those who worship and those who don't. Everybody worships; it's just a matter of what, or whom, we serve."*

So what are some common things we worship (idols) for us in 2014?

- money or possessions
- status or title
- relationships
- a cause
- a hobby

These are not bad things and in some cases they are very good things and your heart is confused because these things are important but they are starting to take the time, attention and dedication away from the Lord.

How do you know if you are "worshiping" people or things before the Lord?

- What do you think about the most?
- What do you talk about the most?
- What do you spend most of your free time on?
- What will you sacrifice the most for?

If you can't honestly figure this out ask someone close to you. "By how I act what do you think is the most important to me?"

*Don't let your heart be confused about your standing in Christ, how you worship and what you worship.*