

Bible Study
Proper 11, Year C
July 17, 2016

[RCL] Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52; Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

Amos 8:1-12

In this section of Amos we hear an account of judgement as well as human nature. We are reminded there will be times when being held accountable for our choices may feel like punishment or disapproval from God. We are also asked to recall God is ever present and observant of our actions, even though the presence of God may not be felt. We are broken in our humanness and therefore will make decisions which are displeasing to God however being judged does not necessarily equal losing God's grace and mercy. As Christians we are asked to participate in a broken world with a willingness to share God's message of love and grace despite judgment, conflict and despair. This is part of our journey in the Jesus Movement.

- Why do we judge?
- Who has the right to judge?
- Where does God's mercy reside in existence?
- Where does God's mercy reside in judgement?
- Do you feel your love of God will cause you to be judged by non-believers?

Psalm 52

How strong is your faith in God? Take a moment to think how much trust and faith you have in God. In this psalm, we are encouraged not to boast of what we do whether it is negative or positive. We are asked to build up others and ourselves without asking for recognition. We are reminded to seek and see the good in all, not merely a few. The olive tree represents the growth and strength of God in our lives. We are reminded when we nurture God's presence in our lives God's mercy will be everlasting and rooted in good not destruction.

- Do you have a strong faith in God?
- How might you place your profession or accomplishments ahead of God?
- What role does God have in our success?
- Where is God in your relationship with yourself and others?

Colossians 1:15-28

So often we give thanks and praise to God without acknowledging God's gift of Christ and our ability to share and exhibit his teachings. Like Paul we are commissioned to share the fullness of God's word as part of the Jesus Movement. We are called to acknowledge Christ existence in ourselves and others. Yet we often fall short of reaching outside of ourselves and immediate circumstance to see and be Christ like with ourselves and others.

- How is the fullness of God experienced in the world?
- What qualities of Christ do you also witness in yourself and others?
- How often do you take the opportunity to spread God's teachings and word?
- Can God's word be experienced through action and not words? If so, how?

Luke 10:38-42

We live in a time where most people succumb to multiple distractions. There is always a need to complete work and tasks, even to the point of multi-tasking one's way from fully experiencing anything were doing. Being busy doesn't necessarily make an individual more successful however our accomplishments and self-worth are often perceived by how busy we are.

The gospel reading invites us to stop being busy long enough to be present with ourselves and with God. The passage also invites us to recall or notice where we seek and find God in our lives.

Notice how we define ourselves by what they do (profession, tasks, etc.) or by who they are (presence, caring, insight) and which one allows them to experience God's presence more.

- Do you define yourself by what your profession is or tasks you complete? If so, why or why not?
- Where do you experience God's presence?
- When do you experience God's absence?
- When do you find yourself closest to God?

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