

The Plumb Line of God

Amos 7:1-9

12/07/03

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Amos was born in the southern kingdom of Israel, called Judah, but was called by God to speak to the northern kingdom of Israel a short time after Joel.

He was a shepherd who also tended sycamore trees. During this time Israel was adrift spiritually and God used Amos to sound a powerful alarm in order to get their attention.

They did not stop worshipping God altogether, but instead they added cultic worship, idols, and sacrificing to false gods in the “high places.” So their spiritual life was a mixture of that which was true and false together.

In **Amos 7, God uses the picture of a plumb line to show them how far they had strayed from God.**

A plumb line is used in the process of building a stone wall to keep the wall “true.”

Stone walls built with little or no mortar or on a weak foundation will shift and settle until they are out of plumb.

Such walls were in were danger of falling and must be straightened. If they could not be straightened, they must be come down. They must come down so they could be built again “true.”

When Israel was built, it was built “true” because God used the plumb line of His Word to build it. But they began to move away from God and so they lives were no longer “true.”

These, then, are the principles of the Plumb line of God

I. God is patient with “living stones”

A. He is building a spiritual house

- Jesus was called the first “living stone,” the cornerstone.
- We, also as “living stones” are bring built into a spiritual house.

I Peter 2:4-5, “And coming to Him as a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

B. God is slow to anger

- This is one of the character qualities of God we should greatly appreciate.

Joel 2:13, “Now return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness...”

- Through the intercession of Amos, God is patient with Israel.

Amos 7:1-6

C. But God has no place for heartless worship

- Their spiritual life had lost its power, because they had lost their heart.

Amos 5:21-24 – especially vs 24

- **Sincere worship pours out like water into the other areas of our lives.**

II. God's Plumb Line Tests for "True"

- A. God wants our lives "true to plumb"

Vs 7-9

- It's interesting that even in modern construction; if a wall is straight it's called "true."
- **The plumb line God uses is the Word of God.**
- **If the Word of God is placed next to our lives, will our lives show that our lives need to be straightened, or that they are "true to plumb"?**

- B. The truth is to be lived

- If someone lives falsely we say he/she is "living a lie;" in the same way, then, we are to "live the truth."

Illus – the pastor who visited a popular church in another city. "Why were my bones crying out within me?" he would later write.

- **The Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of Truth"**

- The truth is not just something to know, but rather something to have... if we have the Spirit of Truth, **then we are to become true** because of the Word of God in our lives!

- C. Our lives become true when we listen to God

Illus - God asked them to remove the "high places" where false gods were honored; they wouldn't listen to Him, so He will remove the high places with the Assyrian army.

Vs 10-17

- Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, thought that by removing the prophet, he wouldn't have to listen to God.
- **This is God's great desire for all of us, that we would have "ears to hear."**
- **To four of the New Testament churches He says the same thing...**

Revelation 2:29, "He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

- God is directing us with His Word.

Psalms 32:8-9, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check..."

III. Jesus is Absolutely True

A. God's plumb line and Jesus' life are the same

- Jesus was perfect in righteousness.
- **Righteousness has two parts;**
 - avoiding sin
 - being obedient to God's Word

Philippians 2:8, "He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

B. God gave Jesus' righteousness to us

- This is the greatest truth known to man.
- When Jesus died in the cross He took our sin upon Him and gave us His righteousness.

II Corinthians 5:21, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

- Now when God sets the plumb line next to our lives, He measures according to the righteousness of Jesus.

C. Let the old wall come down

- If any man is in Christ, He is a new creation.
- **Now that we have the righteousness of Jesus, we are to walk in newness of life.**

- **He tears down the old wall and builds a new one in Jesus Christ.**

Ephesians 4: 17- 5:2 – Put on the new self...

Conclusion

A plumb line is used because we cannot see it "true" with the eye alone. We must have the Word of God.

Illus – we must use a level because our own eyes cannot see true level.