



**Sunday, October 11, 2009: Appeals and Apologetics**

**Scripture: Amos 3:1-4:3**

**Speaker: Joe Boot**

**Sermon Notes:**

1. The concept of covenant is basic to all of the Bible.
2. God sovereignly establishes a special relationship with His people, promising them benefits and requiring obedience.
3. Marriage is a covenant also, but it is made between equals.
4. If a covenant is to be meaningful, there must be a penalty for breaking it.
5. As God freed Israel, so He saves us from slavery to sin.
6. Amos 3:2. Because of God's covenant promises, the severity of Israel's punishment was increased.
7. A faithful, covenant-keeping God must bring justice upon covenant breakers.
8. God warns His people, giving them an opportunity to repent.
9. Amos 3:3-8. God provides an opportunity to escape judgment, yet He personally brings justice to His people.
10. God has absolute sovereignty over the affairs of men.
11. God governs history and His Word is absolutely certain.
12. The gospel of Jesus is something we are to obey, not merely something we receive or believe. Cf. Hebrews 12:22-26.
13. Today the Western Church has little repentance and holiness, despite the pietism of our prayer meetings.
14. Amos 3:9-15. Oracles against Samaria – this passage is a covenant lawsuit, where God calls gentile nations to witness as evidence of Israel's guilt before God's law.
15. The blessings and judgments of God are real, and still apply to us today.
16. Amos 3:10-15. Charges of oppression, tumults, and idolatry.
17. Today the state removes wealth from families to enrich itself.
18. Care for the poor should be a family- and church-oriented responsibility, as it was until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.
19. Israel was guilty of idolatry and syncretism: they merged pagan, foreign practices with God's covenant requirements.
20. When God's word is distorted, truth and obedience are replaced with ritualistic worship which actually offends God.

**Application Questions:**

1. What is a covenant? How does a marriage covenant differ from God's covenant with His people?
2. How can understanding God's holiness help us to realize the severity of God's anger over sin and covenant breaking?
3. How do the images in Amos 3:3-6 emphasize the sovereignty of God's covenant judgments?
4. Jesus said the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). How should this affect our view of how all of Scripture applies to us?
5. God provided time and opportunity for Israel to renew the covenant and repent. Do you give people an opportunity to repent and seek forgiveness when they offend you?
6. Is our community open to the accusation of being hypocrites? What about me personally?
7. How is it possible that God's people can be His enemy? See Isaiah 63:10.
8. Has the church neglected the orphan and widow? How can we alleviate real injustice and violations of God's Law when only 2% of Christians tithe?
9. Will we walk together with God? Will we be faithful to His covenant word? What blessings can we seek from God as we renew our lives in faithfulness to His word?