

Accepting God's Standard

Text : **Amos 7: 4-9 , Colossians 1: 9-12**

S#1.
S#2.

A. Are you a good person ?

1. Most people say yes, but how do you know you're a good person ?
 - a. I want to be and I just feel that I am. I try to do what's right.
 - b. Other people like me ... and some tell me I'm a good person.
2. People appeal to a variety of standards to prove they are good people.
 - a. They have a clear conscience ... appealing to a personal standard.
 - b. I am looked up to by my peers ... cultural standard.
 - c. I obey the laws and try to do right ... civil standard.

B. Jesus taught us that social standards are not the standard we should use. **S#3.**

1. Summarize : **Matt. 19:16-26 .. *He was the epitome of a good person, but lost.*** **S#4.**
2. This young man was highly approved by personal, cultural, and civil standards.
3. The disciples were very surprised when Jesus indicated that he didn't measure up.
 - a. **Matt. 19: 25 – When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, “Then who can be saved?”**
 - b. The rich young man had been measured by the wrong standard.

C. God has one standard by which He measures all men. **S#5.**

1. His standard is consistent and universal.
2. It's never altered and not affected by culture or time.
3. Cannot be appealed or amended by man. (*God is sovereign, not rule by consent.*)

I. Standards are essential to the orderly conduct and functioning of society. **S#6.**

A. The Romans set international standards of weights and measures. **S#7.**

1. Each country's measures were different depending on the size of their king.
 - a. Cubit = distance from elbow to tip of finger
 - b. Yard = distance from nose to end of thumb (*girth of man, king*)
 - c. Span = distance between end of thumb and end of little finger
2. As Rome conquered they imposed their standard on those who were conquered.
 - a. Much like the Americans, the Romans were eager to promote international trade.
 - b. A common standard is essential to trade, coinage and to the gathering of taxes.

B. Our system of weights and measures is a combination of many standards. S#8.

1. The Hindus gave us the "Binary" system :
 - a. A system where things are divided into halves, quarters, eighth, etc. (2,4,6,8,..)
 - b. Computers run on a binary system.
2. The Chinese and Egyptians gave us the "Decimal" system :
 - a. Decimal systems are based upon dividing things into units of ten.
 - b. The metric system is a decimal system.
3. The Romans gave us the "Duodecimal" system :
 - a. Measurements are made in units of twelve.
 - b. 12 inch = 1 foot, 12 units = dozen, 12 hours = day, 12 month = year
4. The Babylonians gave us the "Sexagesimal" system :
 - a. This is a base 60 system of math. (*long used in trigonometry*)
 - b. We measure time with this system .. 60 seconds = minute, 60 min. = hour

S#9.**C. The whole world now agrees on an official standard of weights and measures.**

1. Weights are calculated from a cylinder made of platinum-iridium alloy. **1 kilo = 2.2 lb**
 - a. Stored in Sevres, France (sevr)
 - b. Kept at exact temperature in an oxygen free environment
2. Length is now calculated from the distance light travels in $1/299,792,458^{\text{th}}$ second.
 - a. Measured in a vacuum
 - b. Orange-red light emitted from krypton-86 lamp
3. Since 1967 time has no longer been measured by the rotation of the earth and sun.
 - a. Time is now measured by the vibration of radiation from the cesium atom.
 - b. 1 sec = 9,192,631,770 times the period of vibration of the cesium atom

S#10.**D. The point is that we live in an environment that is totally regulated by standards.**

1. Contracts include meticulous detail to standards of materials and performance.
2. All sports are regulated by precise standards. (*amount of air in football*)
3. Driving on the highway is highly regulated. (*for both car and driver, wt of trk, etc*)
4. The way you can build your own house. (*inspected to meet building codes*)
5. Standard for interpersonal relations. (*abuse spouse, hate speech, even spray water*)

* **There is virtually no area of one's life that is not regulated by standards.**

S#11.**E. Our question is : Why do so many people think there is no standard in religion?**

1. Living in such a highly regulated society one should anticipate God will regulate us.
2. Historically, God has always regulated His people. (*Read the O.T.*)
3. People commonly believe that religious matters are all about what they feel.
4. Even in this world, ignoring the standard brings negative results. (*Driving, Taxes*)

II. Prior to our text Amos reveals God holding the nations to HIS standard.**S#12.****A. God judged nations with which He had no covenant relationship.****S#13.**

1. Damascus ... slaughter of Gilead
2. Gaza ... deported a whole population to Edom
3. Tyre ... broke a treaty and delivered a population to Edom
4. Edom ... perused his brother with a sword (middle east conflict 750 BC)
5. Ammon ... ripped open pregnant women of Gilead (*God judges even the ignorant*)
6. Moab ... burned the bones of the king of Edom (*His standard is for ALL men.*)

S#14.**B. God judged His own people more harshly because they broke their covenant.**

1. **Judah** ... rejected the law of the Lord and did not keep God's statutes
 - a. God had rescued them from Egypt.
 - b. God had destroyed their enemies.
 - c. God had given them an abundant land. (*made a conscience decision to rebel*)
2. **Israel** ... they sell the righteous for money ... they were very prosperous
 - a. They had left the worship of God. (*Worshipping idols in convenient places*)
 - b. God sent prophets to them, but Israel rejected them.
 - c. They profaned the righteous ones. (*Caused Nazarites to drink wine*)
 - d. God sent natural disasters to cause them to turn to Him, but they refused.
 - e. God sent enemies upon them, but they did not turn to Him for help.

C. Amos warned them that God was measuring them with a "plumb line."**S#15.**

1. The plumb line was a standard. **S#16.**
2. The plumb line hangs independent of what is measured and is not altered.
3. God's judgment destroyed them as a people, as a nation.

III. All men must line up their lives with God's standard.**S#17.****A. There has never been a time when God did not have a will for His creation. S#18.**

1. Man was given an assignment in the garden. *Dress & keep it ... Don't eat one*

2. Mankind exists to worship and to serve God.

S#19.

- a. **Eccl. 12: 13-14** The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.
14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

b. **THUS :** every act will be compared to God's standard.

3. God is always the same so HIS standard does not change.

B. God's standard does not change as cultures change.**S#20.**

1. Man's culture is always in a state of change.

- a. Technology fosters change. (*printing press, steam engine, cars, electronics*)
 b. Economic fluctuations foster change. (*depression, prosperity*) styles, customs

2. God does not change. (**Jas. 1: 17, Heb. 13: 8**)

- a. He has no need of the agents of change. (*Eternal, all powerful, all knowing*)
 b. If God changed, man would have to worry about His standard changing.

***3. Sovereignty : Man must conform to God, not God become what man wants. S#21.**

- a. God is the source of all power; He is NOT dependent upon anything for His power.
 b. God being sovereign means He has absolute authority.
 1) **He is NOT answerable to anyone.**
 2) **He cannot be overridden by anyone.** He doesn't rule by consent of the governed.

C. Man is responsible for learning God's standard. (Ill. – *student handbook*) S#22.

1. "Ignorance of the law does not excuse anyone" is at the core of jurisprudence.

- a. (*above*) This is an actual quote from Roman law.
 b. Also, found in the writing of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle.

2. No one get out of a speeding ticket by saying, "I didn't know this was a 25 zone."

3. The psalmist taught us : (cf- **Psa. 37: 31**)

S#23.

Psa. 119: 11 – I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

D. Relationship with God is dependent upon conformity to His standard.**S#24.**

John 15: 14 – You are My friends **if** you do what I command you.

IV. God's standard is revealed in His word.**S#25.****A. God revealed His standard in the scriptures to prepare us to serve Him. S#26.**

1. **II Pet. 1: 2-3** – Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³ seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. **S#27.**

- a. Grace and peace are acquired in the knowledge of God.
- b. Knowledge of His revealed word gives us complete instructions for a godly life.

2. **II Tim. 3: 15** – ... from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. **S#28.**

- a. Children can learn from the sacred writing. **Teach, teach, teach from youth up**
- b. It takes time to gain spiritual wisdom ... not reading through one time.
- c. Knowledge is required to produce the faith that saves. (*salvation linked to standard*)

3. **II Tim. 3: 16** – All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **S#29.**

- a. All of the bible is inspired and profitable ... not just New Testament or red letters.
- b. “**For teaching**” (*didaskalia*) is the source of “that which is taught, doctrine”
- c. “**For reproof**” (*elegmos*) is to rebuke, to refute error (*point out mistakes*)
- d. “**For correction**” (*epanorthosis*) is to restoration to an upright or right state
- e. “**For training in righteousness**” (*paideia*) correcting mistakes and curbing passions

4. **II Tim. 3: 17** – that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. **S#30.**

- a. This verse reinforces **II Pet. 1: 3**
- b. The scriptures give one EVERYTHING he needs to lead a life pleasing to God.
- c. All of God's standard is revealed and NOTHING else is needed.

B. God's standard is only of benefit if it is taken into one's heart and applied. S#31.

1. **James 1: 21** – Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. **S#32.**

- a. One must “**put aside**” the works that conform to a standard other than God's.
- b. One must receive God standard submissively ... eager to conform to it.
- c. One must take the standard into his heart and let it take root there ... grow.
- d. As the standard grows in one's heart it produces fruit ... **salvation**.

2. **James 1: 22** – **But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.** S#33.

- a. When the standard is implanted, one is motivated to live the standard in daily.
- b. Those who think knowledge benefits them apart from application are delusional.

C. Receiving God's standard into one's heart has eternal consequences. S#34.

1. **Col. 1: 9** – **For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,** S#35.

- a. The Apostle knew it was important for Christians to know God's will .. standard.
- b. It is likewise important that one come to understand it and learn to apply it.

2. **Col. 1: 10** – **so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;** S#36.

- a. Knowledge with wisdom and understanding enables one to walk worthy.
- b. Those who walk worthily please God. (*no one is sinless*)
- c. Knowledge and wisdom causes one to produce fruit and do good works.
- d. Spiritual wisdom creates a hunger for increased knowledge. **1 Pet. 2: 1-2**

3. **Col. 1: 11** – **strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously** S#37.

- a. Increase spiritual wisdom and knowledge produces spiritual strength.
- b. Internalizing and applying God's standard gives one spiritual stability. S#34.

Cf.– **Eph. 4: 14** – **we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, and ...**

4. **Col. 1: 12** – **joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.** S#38.

- a. Conforming to God's standard causes God to accept the surrendered heart.
- b. The result is a life characterized by joy, peace and grace.

CONCLUSION :

A. There are many standards in this world, S#39.
but only those who accept God's standard are accepted by God.

B. By what standard are you living your life ? S#40.

C. Will you surrender your life to God now ? S#41.

Lesson Text :**Amos 7: 4-9**

4 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend *with them* by fire, and it consumed the great deep and began to consume the farm land. **5** Then I said, "Lord GOD, please stop! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" **6** The LORD changed His mind about this. "This too shall not be," said the Lord GOD. **7** Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall with a plumb line in His hand. **8** The LORD said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Behold I am about to put a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. **9** The high places of Isaac will be desolated and the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

Colossians 1: 9-12

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of *it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.