



## SERIES OVERVIEW: New Wine

*"Social Justice Spirituality"*

Preacher: Pastor Walt Quick

February 10, 2019

[Series Sermon Recordings](#)

[Discipleship Resources](#)

## SUGGESTED SUPPLIES

Note cards (or paper) and pens.

## QUESTIONS?

Email Abby

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HOW TO USE: *The three sections below (opening, sermon content questions, and application) represent the three connections we emphasize at Highrock: connecting to **God's People**, connecting to **God Personally** and connecting to **God's Purposes**. Select at least one question from each section or create questions that are more specific to your group.*

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## WEEKLY CHECK IN

Use a few minutes at the beginning of your time to follow up on any action items shared from last week. Was there a **next step or application** challenge that they took on this past week? What did they learn about themselves and following Jesus?

## CONNECTION QUESTIONS

Choose ONE of these that fits your group, or modify it so that it will fit your group better. These can make great **opening questions** or **ending questions**. If you have had a really in-depth conversation, ending on a light note can help transition to concluding your time Together on a less intense question.

1. When you come to the Social Justice Tradition, what are presumptions you bring from your background?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"Many of us are passionate about social justice. But today others of us are a bit suspicious about this tradition. We might feel that it overemphasizes physical needs at the expense of spiritual needs."*

## SERMON QUESTIONS

Use a **couple of the questions** below or make up your own. You can always begin with: "Do you have any questions about what you heard in the sermon this week?" Or, "What stood out to you from the Pastor's sermon?"

1. So before we look at the Scripture passage, describe how our contentious environment has impacted your understanding of the topic?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"A group of evangelical leaders published a document called **'The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel,'** which was really a statement about how social justice is NOT part of the Gospel. This in turn prompted a host of statements and articles by other evangelicals claiming how wrong and regressive this statement was. It became painfully obvious that this tradition is hugely contentious among Christians today. At various times in history, all of the traditions we are looking at have been the cause of debate and division. And in our current moment, the battle ground is around social justice. Christians, and especially Evangelicals, are talking past one another. And perhaps what has made this tradition so divisive is that members of each side of the debate are occupying increasingly unhealthy extremes of the spectrum."*
2. With your friends who are outside the faith, how do justice issues impact your conversations about Jesus?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"We have developed a pattern of abdicating justice issues to future generations, and so instead of being a prophetic voice of justice and reconciliation in our culture and leading the way like we used to do, now we're constantly behind and playing catch up. We've gone from leaders to laggards, and our witness to the character of God and the power of the Gospel is diminished as a result."*
3. What similarity do you see between the religious culture in Amos' time and our current Christian culture here?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"The key issue that Amos honed in on was their complacency towards injustice and their complicity in exploiting the poor. The problem wasn't that Israelites weren't putting a dollar in the cup of a beggar or volunteering at the soup kitchen enough. It was that their whole culture had been built up around systems and practices that took advantage of those who were vulnerable and in need."*
4. How do these descriptions of Israel's injustice fit our contemporary church? And how are we implicitly condoning these same systemic injustices?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"Counter to what God had instructed, Israel created systems of economic gain around slavery and exploitation. Instead of advocating for the needs of the poor and oppressed, they were privileging the rights of the wealthy and comfortable. People in power were using it to take advantage of women sexually, not unlike our pornography industry today. And this pattern of injustice had permeated their religious life as well. Those in struggling financial circumstances would give their clothes and jackets as a pledge for a debt. But instead of acknowledging that the poor would need these on cold nights, the wealthy kept the garments for themselves and added to their own comfort. Justices would extract exorbitant fines for minor infractions, and then with their cut they would buy wine and get drunk together in the temple."*
5. What social justice issues most affect your life? Or to which one(s) are you drawn to engage?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"They are constantly jarring us out of our complacency and narrow, self-oriented view of the Christian life. They awaken us to the ways that we are not living consistently with the character of God. And this is hard! It's not easy for them, it's not easy for the rest of the church. It is a painful work to dive into issues of racism and sexism, to consider how our financial decisions are impacting those in poor parts of the world, and to see how power is not being used to bless people and lift them up, but to preserve the comfort and egos of those who have it."*
6. How does placing social justice inside the story of God prevent both inactivity and burnout?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"The spirituality of the Social Justice tradition calls us to a work that will never be completed in our time. The world won't be free of injustice until Jesus comes again. Some people ignore that reality and are run*

*into the ground. Others get so overwhelmed by it that they don't get in the game in the first place. But this call is such a gift to the church because it properly locates us in the story of God. We have confidence that God is against injustice and that he will overcome it, and so we live like we know this to be true."*

7. If you are frustrated with the progress in your social justice endeavors, what would it look like to invite Jesus into your struggle and your emotions and your priorities?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"If you have issues that you are passionate about but you are veering towards burnout, depression, and bitterness, I want to encourage you that you are not in this alone. That the Lord is with you, and that he sees you and the issues of injustice that are weighing on you, even the injustices that you yourself may be enduring. Let him hold that pain for you, and let him remind you of his love for you, and his promise that he will put this to rights one day. It might not be today or tomorrow, but it is inevitable."*

## APPLICATION/S

1. As you consider this spiritual tradition and God's Word, how might Jesus be inviting you to live more fully into his vision for justice in your circles of influence?
  - a. **Sermon Reference:** *"If we love the things that Jesus loves, then we will love his vision for justice, and seek to live into it as he leads. If you're unsure what this looks like for you, then I encourage you to take this question before God. Ask him what he would have you do."*

## CLOSING

Summarize the key points of your discussion and encourage people to **share one action step** they could take during the next week based on what they have shared. **Take time to pray together.** Write those down and start next week by checking in with how it went, or better yet, check in during the week!

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## RESOURCES

### SERMON SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

**Amos 2:6-8 & 5:21-24**

This is what the Lord says:

"For three sins of Israel,  
even for four, I will not relent.  
They sell the innocent for silver,  
and the needy for a pair of sandals.  
They trample on the heads of the poor  
as on the dust of the ground  
and deny justice to the oppressed.  
Father and son use the same girl  
and so profane my holy name.  
They lie down beside every altar  
on garments taken in pledge.  
In the house of their god  
they drink wine taken as fines.

"I hate, I despise your religious festivals;  
your assemblies are a stench to me.  
Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them.  
Though you bring choice fellowship offerings,  
I will have no regard for them.  
Away with the noise of your songs!  
I will not listen to the music of your harps.  
But let justice roll on like a river,  
righteousness like a never-failing stream!

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## SCRIPTURE STUDY: 5Cs

If you are interested in studying the scripture more deeply, one way to study scripture is through using the 5 Cs. Read through the passage and move through each C. The goal is not to move through them quickly but to really consider each section. If you wanted to study the passage together, you, as the leader should take some time beforehand to complete the Cs and it can be helpful to have group members come prepared with the first 3 already considered. Then, as a group you can briefly talk over some of the points and then have a longer conversation about curiosities and conclusions. This study tool will be posted within all of the discussion questions.

- **Context:** What is the literary context of the passage? What comes before? After? Context within whole book? Relation to main idea of section, book, testament, whole Bible?
- **Christ:** How is Jesus revealed here? If in OT, prefiguration, typology, prophesy, implications for Christ's person and work? How is he needed, anticipated, fulfilled?
- **Crux:** What is the main idea? Try and find a section of the text that states it and have reasons for why that is the main idea? How do the other points support it?
- **Curiosities:** What is surprising about this text? Controversial? Mysterious? Shocking?
- **Conclusions:** What are the implications for our lives? Application? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?