

## Sermon for Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C, 13 July 2025

**Texts:** Amos 7: 7-17 Psalm 82 Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10: 25-37

### Title: "Chosen, Redeemed, and Sent in Christ"

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In today's first reading, we meet **Amos**, a simple farmer—an ordinary man called by God to carry an extraordinary burden. His name literally means "*burden-bearer*". Amos was not from a line of prophets. He wasn't trained, powerful, or special by the world's standards. But God called him anyway—to speak truth to a prosperous and complacent people.

Amos lived in a time not unlike ours: a world of relative wealth and comfort for some, while others lived in deep need and poverty. His mission was to remind God's people that being chosen by God brings responsibility: *to live justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God* (see Micah 6:8). In other words, our relationship with God must be seen in how we treat the poor and vulnerable.

This same mission carries forward to the New Testament, to the apostle Paul, and to us—**the Church today**. In **Colossians in chapter 1, verse 2**, Paul urges us to "*give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light... The Father who has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into His marvellous light*"

We can see the same grateful heart when from prison in Ephesus, Paul doesn't complain. Instead, he bursts into **gratitude** again: "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing...*" (Ephesians 1:3)

And you see, the heart of the Christian proclamation is simple but profound:

**We are loved. Unconditionally. Freely. Totally. Recklessly. Purely.**

Not because we are good—but because **God is good**.

In Christ, we are **chosen** before the world began.

In Christ, we are **redeemed** (*literally means 'bought back'*)—liberated from the power of sin and darkness.

In Christ, we are **transferred** into a new kingdom—the kingdom of light, where grace reigns.

And Paul reminds us: this gift is not just for a few, but for all—for Jews, Gentiles, and us here today.

We are not accidents. We are not here by chance.

All of us are **intentionally loved, forgiven, and destined for eternal life**.

But with this gift comes a calling.

Like Amos, like Paul—we are sent.

The people Christ could not touch with his earthly hands, **He now depends on us to reach**. We are sent to those '*who are beaten, robbed and left half dead on the road of life*' as we heard in today's parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 15.

I was deeply moved by the Gospel passage after we reflected on it during our *Lectio Divina* on Wednesday afternoon, which urged me to pay closer attention to the poor and vulnerable in our community. And guess what happened? The very next day, as I arrived for Evening Prayer with Sophie, we met a man on the verandah who was setting up for the night because he was experiencing homelessness. I didn't walk past. We stopped, greeted him, and asked if he needed anything. With a hint of guilt in his voice, he quietly asked, "Can my partner and I sleep here tonight? We have nowhere else to go."

I said yes, and we went inside to pray. But I kept thinking about him the whole time. On our way out, I spoke to him again and asked if we could get him anything, but he declined. I remembered that one of the hardest things for people sleeping rough is access to a hot shower. So I told him I would leave the toilet open, and that there were showers he and his partner could use in the morning before they left. I simply asked them to leave it tidy.

The next morning, I went to check and found that they had used the facilities and left everything in immaculate condition. I couldn't offer them a room, but at least I didn't ignore them. I stopped, I looked at him, I shook his hand, and I spoke to him as one human being to another—recognising his dignity.

In Jesus' parable today, the priest and the Levite crossed to the other side of the road—perhaps they had their reasons; who are we to judge? But Jesus' point is clear: often those we expect to show mercy do not, while compassion comes from unexpected places. Love is costly. It is risky. It demands sacrifice. It must extend beyond those who share our race, language, politics, or social standing. Love reaches out to anyone in need—because my neighbour is anyone in need, no matter who they are. *Who is that person in your life who needs you to stop today?*

That is our **baptismal vocation**: to be **priests, prophets, and kings** in a hurting world. To speak love. To act justly. To live with Christ at the centre.

And yes, it can feel like a burden—but Jesus says, "*My yoke is easy, and my burden is light*" (see Matthew 11:28-30)

Because He carries it with us.

So today, let us:

- Give thanks for the gift of salvation.
- Rejoice in the redemption we have in Christ.
- Trust in the Lordship and loving plan of Jesus.
- And take up our mission of mercy and compassion with courage, humility, and hope.

Because in Christ, we are not just called—we are **chosen, redeemed, and sent** to be missionary disciples of the Good News of God's love for all people. Amen.

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