



RECALL

ASK THIS:

Describe a time in your life when another person wronged you. What were the circumstances surrounding the situation? What emotions do you remember experiencing? What did you ultimately do with those emotions?

READ ALOUD: SERMON RECAP

Our sin affects God more than anyone; it wounds Him more deeply than a man's sorrow whose wife slept around with other men. Sin breaks not only God's law, but His heart as well. Israel tried to please God with their half-hearted attempts. God's heart was breaking because of their willful and callous infidelity. He is wounded and outraged.

REVEAL

Take a few moments and ask God to help you discern, understand and apply the spiritual truth(s) of this week's lesson.

READ TOGETHER:

Hosea 5:4-5

Their actions do not allow them to return to their God, for a spirit of promiscuity is among them, and they do not know the LORD. Israel's arrogance testifies against them. Both Israel and Ephraim stumble because of their wickedness; even Judah will stumble with them.

Hosea 6:6

For I desire loyalty and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

REFLECT

READ ALOUD:

Some Information About Hosea¹:

- 1) According to Hosea, Israel sinned in four ways. (Rejecting God's knowledge, idolatry, trusting in human devices, engaging in injustice and violence)
- 2) Through Hosea the Lord told the people of Israel to stop their promiscuity, idolatry, and iniquity and to return to Him in humility and faithfulness toward the law of the covenant.
- 3) Hosea informed Israel that their present distress was because the Lord had abandoned them and that further discipline would come. This discipline would include foreign domination, exile, destruction, desolation, and death.

¹ HCSB Study Bible, Introduction to Hosea. P.1463

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- 4) Hosea reminded Israel of the Lord's grace and love in making them a people, and in blessing them in the past with His attentive and patient care and His abundant provision. He was their only hope, and His ways were right. The Lord also assured them that in response to their repentance and faith He would again have compassion on them and redeem them; He would remove unrighteousness and restore the covenant, bringing righteousness and the knowledge of God; and He would rebuild and beautify Israel.

RECOGNIZE

READ THIS:

Recall Pastor Russ' Main Points from the message:

1. We are Gomer. We were before He chose us and still are. In Hosea 1:2 God commands Hosea to marry a promiscuous wife. This sounds strange right? But God chooses us despite our adulterous activity. It is divine love in action. This is where we extol the craziness of God choosing a lost and unfaithful person such as ourselves. God looked beyond our fault and saw our need.
2. Our relationship and infidelity causes God pain. In Hosea 1:3-10 we learn that Hosea marries Gomer and they have 3 children. Jezreel, No Compassion, and Not My People. To us, this sounds vindictive and harsh but in reality it shows the pain he was enduring because Israel was not faithful to Him. This is God's righteous jealousy.
3. Despite the pain and adultery, there is hope in the person of Jesus and His promise of restoration.

RESPOND

DISCUSS:

- 1) In the opening chapter (1:1-2) of Hosea the LORD gave instructions to Hosea to marry a promiscuous woman. This instruction draws a parallel between spiritual and marital unfaithfulness.
 - Have you ever considered your decision to seek approval or pleasure from something other than God as serious as you cheating on a spouse?
 - How does this alter your understanding of God's attitude towards our daily allegiance to Him?
- 2) In Hosea 1:6 we read that Gomer's second child is named No Compassion because the LORD "will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel." On the surface, this seems quite harsh, but read the study notes for 1:6 in the HCSB Study Bible below:

Hosea's second child, a daughter, was given the pathetic Hebrew name Lo-ruhama, meaning No Compassion, symbolic of the fact that by her continual unfaithfulness Israel had forfeited God's love.²

Notice it was Israel's continued disobedience that forfeited the love of God. When we choose to seek pleasure or approval in something other than God we crush His heart and separate ourselves from Him.

- Describe a time in your life when you willingly decided to abandon what God provided for you and tried to seek pleasure or approval in your own way?
 - Did it work?
 - When did you realize your way worked/didn't work?
 - How does understanding God's jealousy change the way you view total devotion to God?
- 3) Beginning in 1:10 we have God's reaction to Israel's unfaithfulness shockingly switch from heartbroken jealousy to loving-kindness. Read below the study notes from the HCSB Study Bible (*regarding verse 10-11*):

² HCSB Study Bible, study notes to Hosea p.1463

*Allusion to the Abrahamic covenant in the phrase 'like the sand of the sea' (cp. Gn 22:17) indicates that God's "divorce" of Israel was not final but applied only to that generation-the nation of leadership of that time. Eternal promise is placed profoundly beside final judgment, reconcilable only because the living God could bring life out of death.*³

Through Jesus Christ we can be forgiven for seeking approval and satisfaction in other things. God is extremely jealous and yearns for our complete devotion to Him.

- 4) Does it surprise you to know that no matter how far from God we stray, He always provides a way back to Himself? If not, skip to question 6.
- 5) Based on what you've learned through the story of Hosea, do you believe a person can sin too many times that God will not forgive them? Why?
- 6) As you examine your life what areas do you need to confess to God? What actions do you need to take so that you are completely devoted to the Lord? How can your life group hold you accountable in taking these steps?
- 7) 7) Imagine this scenario: You invited a friend to church and while they did show up and enjoy the experience this past Sunday, they didn't understand the message on God's jealousy from the story of Hosea. Your friend turns to you and asks if you could explain the story to them. In your own words how would you explain the story of Hosea to your friend?

REMEMBER: When we seek approval or pleasure from something or someone else, it constitutes spiritual adultery and it breaks the heart of God. Our actions separate us from God's love and acceptance. However, despite the pain and spiritual adultery, there is hope in the person of Jesus and His promise of restoration (v.11)

³ HCSB Study Bible, study notes to Hosea p. 1463