

07

HOSEA 1:2-9; 3:1-5

AN UNFAITHFUL BRIDE



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Relationships with other people are difficult. None of us are perfect, and even though we expect people to make mistakes—and expect to make mistakes ourselves—this doesn't lessen the pain and frustration when it happens. The more personal the offense, the deeper the hurt. The deeper the hurt, the more difficult it is to forgive. Because we make our own mistakes and still have such a hard time forgiving people, we might worry that there are some things a holy God can't or won't forgive. However, our God is always ready to forgive us when we return to Him. God offers us grace when we are unfaithful to Him, no matter how serious our offense might be.



CENTRAL **truth**

God offers us grace even when we are unfaithful to Him.



EXPLORE

scripture

HOSEA 1:2-9; 3:1-5

HOSEA 1:2-5

2 When the LORD first spoke to Hosea, he said this to him: Go and marry a woman of promiscuity, and have children of promiscuity, for the land is committing blatant acts of promiscuity by abandoning the LORD. **3** So he went and married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she

conceived and bore him a son. **4** Then the LORD said to him: Name him Jezreel, for in a little while I will bring the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu and put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. **5** On that day I will break the bow of Israel in Jezreel Valley.

HOSEA 1:6-9

6 She conceived again and gave birth to a daughter, and the LORD said to him: Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel. I will certainly take them away. **7** But I will have compassion on the house of Judah, and I will deliver them by the LORD their God. I

will not deliver them by bow, sword, or war, or by horses and cavalry. **8** After Gomer had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son. **9** Then the LORD said: Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not my people, and I will not be your God.

HOSEA 3:1-5

1 Then the LORD said to me, "Go again; show love to a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the Israelites though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes." **2** So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and nine bushels of barley. **3** I said to her, "You are to live with me many days. You must not be promiscuous or belong

to any man, and I will act the same way toward you." **4** For the Israelites must live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols. **5** Afterward, the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the last days.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE HOSEA 2:23

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

HOSEA 1:1-3

DWELL

← What might God have wanted the Israelites to learn from Hosea's marriage to Gomer?

↑ Why is faithfulness such a big deal to God? What does faithfulness to God look like in your own life?

One quality most of us look for in a friendship or relationship is loyalty. We want to know that the people we're closest to will be reliable and faithful and won't break their promises to us. Faithfulness is important to God, too, and that's why the book of Hosea is so shocking. At the very beginning of the prophet Hosea's ministry, God instructed him to intentionally marry and start a family with a woman who was known for unfaithfulness. Why would God want Hosea to marry someone who lived an immoral life? Because God wanted to use Hosea's life to show how Israel's unfaithfulness affected their relationship with Him, their God.

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read Hosea 2:23 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Pray that God would draw you closer to Him if you begin to place other priorities or desires ahead of Him in your life.

day 2

HOSEA

1:4-10

DWELL

God used the names of Gomer's children to send a message to Israel. The first was a son, and He instructed Hosea to name him "Jezreel," which was where God planned to judge Israel for worshiping Baal instead of God. The second was a daughter whose name translated to "No Mercy" and the third was another son whose name translated to "Not My People." Gomer had a reputation for being unfaithful, and so did Israel. God was declaring that He would not show mercy to them anymore. Since they had abandoned Him, He would abandon them in return.



Even though Hosea's message seemed hopeless, there was still hope for Israel. What was it?



What kind of message about God are you sending to the people around you based on the way you act? Is this the message you want to send? Why or why not?

MEMORIZE

Write Hosea 2:23 on a sticky note and place it on your bathroom mirror. Read it to yourself each time you brush your teeth or wash your hands.

PRAY

Pray that God would show you any ways you may be are giving the wrong message about Him. Ask for His help to change these actions or attitudes.

day 3

HOSEA

2:8-18

DWELL

The Israelites thought they had everything they needed. The problem was, even though these good gifts were from God, they worshiped as though the gifts were from Baal! So God was going to take back the gifts He had given them and devastate the land. But He wouldn't be angry forever! Eventually, He would "speak tenderly" (v. 14) to His people, and they would return to Him. How did He know? Our God knows everything! He knew that the time would come when Israel would remember their covenant and how He had loved them with "justice, love, and compassion" (v. 19).



How did God use the metaphor of a marriage that was broken then restored to describe His relationship with His people?



What are some gifts that God has given you? How can you show appreciation to Him for these gifts?

MEMORIZE

Pick a song you enjoy and read or sing Hosea 2:23 aloud to the beat of that song. Read the verse this way throughout the week, trying to recite more of it from memory each time.

PRAY

Thank God for the blessings He has given you in life. Ask Him to forgive you for the times you gave someone or something else the credit.

day 4

HOSEA

3:1–4:3

DWELL

Eventually, Gomer abandoned Hosea. But God told Hosea to bring her back, promising to love her and be faithful to her. Hosea was to instruct his wife to do the same, repenting of her sin toward him. In the same way, God would restore the people of Israel and love them as He had before. But they would need to repent of their sinful ways. It wasn't just that Israel had forgotten God's name; they had completely forgotten how to live as God's people. It would be easy to judge them, but we can behave like this, too. We ignore God's commands and instead do the things we want. Let's return to Him today and accept His generous, unfailing love.

↓ What sins were God's people guilty of?
Why did they think they could act this way?

→ How can we practice repentance as the church today? Do you think God's people today follow Him faithfully? Why or why not?

MEMORIZE

Write Hosea 2:23 on the center of a sheet of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the verse. Hang it somewhere you will see it every day.

PRAY

Pray that when God calls you or your community to repent, you would hear and respond with holy grief and a genuine desire to right your wrongs and turn back to Him.

day 5

HEBREWS

10:26–29, 35–39

DWELL

God is “compassionate and gracious” and “slow to anger” (Ps. 103:8). He's not like us humans, who lose our tempers quickly. God is patient, and gives His people plenty of opportunities to return to Him when we get distracted by idols. He also sent Jesus to pay for our sins once and for all. The penalty for sin was death (v. 28), but if we follow Jesus, God has forgiven all our sin forever. This doesn't mean we can just sin on purpose once we begin to follow Jesus, though. God still expects us to follow His commands, worship Him sincerely, and turn back to Him over and over again when we fall back into our old sinful ways.

↑ Why is repentance so important, even after we start to follow Jesus and receive forgiveness for our sin?

→ How can you find confidence, encouragement, and endurance when you struggle with sin?

MEMORIZE

Write each word of Hosea 2:23 on a separate note card. Shuffle the cards and try to put them in the correct order. Do this throughout the week until you can do it without checking the answer.

PRAY

Thank God that our relationship with Him can be made whole when we follow Jesus.