

Hosea & Gomer (the book of Hosea)

Summary

Hosea is an old testament prophet. God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute, Gomer. He obeys, has children with her, and loves her. Gomer eventually leaves Hosea, in order to go back to her old life of prostitution. There comes a point where she is probably being sold as a slave, since no man wants her anymore. At that point, God tells Hosea to go get his wife back. Hosea obeys, and he ends up having to buy his wife back. He takes her home, and from what we gather from the text, he continues to love her as his own.

The rest of the book of Hosea is an explanation as to why God told Hosea to do such a crazy thing. He used Hosea and Gomer as a representation of Him and his people. The Israelites, God's chosen people, had turned their backs on God, turning to false gods and their lustful desires. This is also true of us. (Romans 3:23) We have all chosen to turn from God at some point in our lives, thinking we know better than God. It's at this point, we can feel the effects of our own sin choices. God allows the Israelites to feel the guilt and pain of their sin. Because of their turning away from Him, God also removes some of his blessings from their lives. Yet through this, we see that God still longs for his people. He longs for us.

The part in the story where Gomer goes out to look for his wife - This is a representation of Jesus coming down to earth, in order to seek us out. Finally, we see that Gomer buys back his own wife, something that was already his to begin with. Gomer was actually worth very little in the eyes of the one who sold her. In contrast, the price Jesus paid for us cost much more – it cost his own life.

As much as we don't want to admit it, we are Gomer in this story. We are worth very little apart from being God's child. To God, though, he displayed his true initiating love for us, similar to Hosea. Hosea didn't wait for Gomer to stop sinning and come back to him, begging for his forgiveness before he bought her back. And neither did God. Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

When we hear this story, we think Gomer would be an absolute idiot to not fall on her knees in repentance and thankfulness to Hosea. How will you respond to the one who saved and redeemed you?

Questions for Discussion

1. If you had to define the word "love," what would you say?
2. Do you feel this story changes your perspective on what true love is? Why/Why not?
3. Can you think of a time in your life where you decided to go against what you knew was right?
 - a. What were some of the consequences of that choice? Did it affect anyone else?
4. In what ways are we like Gomer?
5. In what ways have you seen God seek after you? (this could be general, like "Jesus dying for me" or specifically in their own lives)
6. What has your response been to Christ's initiating love for you? What SHOULD your response be? If they are different, WHY do you think they're different?
7. This isn't just a fictional story. This is part of Hosea's life story. Do you think Hosea knew why God was asking him give up everything for an unfaithful woman? Do you think what God told Hosea to do made sense to Hosea? (probably not)
 - a. Why do you think Hosea obeyed God?
 - b. How does this relate to our own lives?