

WTF LIFE MAJOR LESSONS | from the MINOR PROPHETS



LESSON 3 – HOSEA (PART 2)

FACILITATOR'S

Note

This lesson is part two of our exploration into the preaching and prophesy of Hosea. As we saw in part one, Hosea does not throw any punches. He addresses the spiritual adultery of God's people by the example of his own family. However, Hosea is a great message of God's love for His people and His deep longing for them to repent, return, and intimately know Him. This lesson will conclude our study of Hosea by examining chapters 4-14 and Hosea's (God's) attack on the Israelites involvement in spiritual adultery in idolatrous religions. As chapter 3 focused on God's redemption of His people, chapter 14 also brings the prophesy to a close by focusing on God's redemptive grace.

Through this lesson we hope to provide material that will provide knowledge (HEAD); then ask questions that will bring us understanding (HEART); and then motivate participants to go and live the Word in the world and demonstrate Godly wisdom (HANDS).

HEAD  → HEART  → HANDS 

We hope that by this study your class participants will not only hear, know, and understand the Word, but that they will also be driven to become the "Living Word" to the world around us. Your role in this process as a class facilitator is very important. Go beyond these lessons to demonstrate how what the Minor Prophets teach us can and should be lived daily. Use your life and the lives of others as examples of this "Living Word" concept.

*As always, we would encourage you to begin preparing for this lesson by digging into the Word and reading through the book of **Hosea**. We also encourage you to read/scan through **1 Kings 14-17** and **2 Chronicles 26-29** as a background to the book. As you move through **Hosea**, jot down any thoughts that come to you and particular passages that stand out and speak to you. We assure you that these will come into play as you facilitate this discussion. It is then that you should approach this lesson plan and use it (and others) only as a guide for the weeks to come. Your group is different than all the rest and so your lessons should be adapted accordingly.*

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PRAYER



Begin your time with a prayer asking God for the guidance of His Holy Spirit as you and your class seek to encounter Him through His Holy Word.

FOCUS

- Overview of the text of Hosea 4-14.
- Come to understand how the Israelites (and we) commit “spiritual adultery”.
- Understand God’s desire for us to “know Him”.
- Realize that God longs for all to return and repent so that He can shower His love upon His wife/children.
- For those who do not heed the call of repentance, God’s judgment and wrath will be carried out.

DISCUSSION STARTERS (OPTIONAL)

- Are the problems in our society due to people not taking responsibility for themselves OR due to the government not taking responsibility for the people? How would Hosea respond?
- What about a church? When a church heads in the wrong direction, is it due to the leadership not fulfilling their responsibilities OR the individual members not fulfilling their spiritual responsibilities? Explain.
- The answer for these questions is BOTH! But in what ways?

KNOWLEDGE HEAD

From God’s Word through Hosea

- THE TEXT
 - **4:1-19** – NO Faithfulness, Steadfast Love, or Knowledge of God
 - Chapter 4 focuses on God’s accusations toward His people. In the first verse, He tells them that they have no faithfulness, steadfast love, or knowledge of Him. This is evidenced in their swearing, lying, murder, stealing, committing adultery, and breaking all bounds that God has set for them.
 - **ASK:**
 - How do our actions confirm or deny our love for God?

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- **4:4-11** – Where are the priests in all of this?
 - In Leviticus the priests were charged to: “You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them by Moses.” (Leviticus 10:10-11 ESV)
 - In Ezekiel 22:26 it shares how well the priests did with this command: “Her priests have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things. They have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.” (Ezekiel 22:26 ESV)
 - Take a closer look at Hosea 4:6. What were the priests doing?
 - Read through 4:7-11
 - **ASK:**
 - The priests were given their portions from the people according to God’s command. But, how were the priests using this?
 - Can our “priests” (ministers, elders, etc.) fall into the same trap today?
- **4:12-19** – How had the people’s worship of God deteriorated?
 - **ASK:**
 - What are modern-day forms of idolatry that we worship?
 - Verse 16 describes the people as stubborn. In what ways are we stubborn before God and His people?
- **5:1-7:16** – An Unrepentant and Insincere People
 - In this section, God speaks to their lack of repentance and insincere faith/love.
 - Read, “Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. For the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not the LORD.” (Hosea 5:4 ESV)
 - But the Israelites say, “Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.” (Hosea 6:1-3 ESV)
 - God addresses this insincere faith/love of the Israelites by saying, “What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes early away.” (Hosea 6:4 ESV)

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- See also: 6: 7; 7:2, 7, 13-14
 - **ASK:** What should God do with this people?
 - God tells them, "I will return again to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me." (Hosea 5:15 ESV)
 - See also: 7:10
 - **ASK:** What does God want from His people?
 - God tells them, "***For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.***" (Hosea 6:6 ESV)
 - What does God require of us?
 - How can we keep from becoming self-focused (or simply going through the motions in order to check a box as the Israelites were doing) in our worship?
- **8:1-10:15** – You Reap What You Sow
 - In chapter 8, God deals with the delusion the Israelites were under. It appears they continued in the worship of God and believed that by it they "knew" Him.
 - Read 8:2-6, 13-14 and key in on verse 2 and 13a
 - **ASK:** Can we be caught up in self-delusion (*thinking that because we go to church and worship that we "know" God*) in our walk with God? Explain.
 - Chapters 9 and 10 focuses on God's punishment of His children as they reap what they have sown. The scary thing is that God's greatest punishment for His people is the removal of His presence. When we want to be our own god, God will oblige and remove Himself from us. That's scary! However, God wants for us to sow righteousness, reap steadfast love, and seek Him so that He may come down and rain righteousness on us (10:12).
 - Read 9:1, 4, 7-9, 12, 15-17; 10:2-4, 10, 12-14 and key in on 9:12a, 15-17 and 10:12-13
 - **ASK:** Do we struggle still today with the desire to be our own god and go our own way (10:13b)? Why? What can turn the tide for us in our walk with God? See 10:12.
- **11:1-11** – God Still Loves His People
 - Read 11:1-11
 - Chapter 11 conveys God's love for His people. In the midst of the sinful, adulterous ways, He still loves them. This time He describes His love for them as His children rather than His wife.
 - In verse one we are given a glimpse of God's love as a father and speaks to Israel as His son. In Matthew 2:15 this verse is quoted to demonstrate the fulfillment of

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God's ultimate plan brought about by Jesus as the heir of David who fully embodies the relationship between Israel and God.

- Key in on verses 3-4, 8-9
 - **ASK:**
 - What emotions do you sense from God as you read these verses?
 - Do you relate to God's emotions from a parental perspective? Explain.
 - How is this like the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24?
 - Are you affected by God's emotions here? How?
- **11:12-13:16** – God's Wrath
 - If you saw two tornadoes in the distance on a collision course, would you run to stand in between them? For some reason, Israel thought this was a good idea and tried playing both sides with the two superpowers of the time: Assyria and Egypt. Hosea calls this idiocy "feeds on the wind" (12:1). The east wind was the more terrifying Assyria while the west wind was Egypt.
 - Instead of trust in God and relying on Him, Israel wanted control her future by using foreign policy. Sadly, Israel was ultimately destroyed by one more terrifying wind Assyria, the east wind, the wind that God sends toward Israel (13:15) for their guilt.
 - **ASK:**
 - How does God demonstrate the idiocy of Israel?
 - See verses 12:8; 13:2, 6, 9-11, 13
 - Read 13:14
 - **ASK:**
 - What is significant about this verse?
 - This verse is a promise from God that He will not rescue them from death, the punishment of their guilt, and will hide His compassion.
 - Where else have you heard this verse and how is it used differently where it is quoted?
 - Read 1 Corinthians 15:55
 - Read this powerful quote from Douglas Stuart:

Israel got what it deserved as the wage of its sin: death (Rom 6:23). But v 14 of this very passage is excerpted by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:55 to remind the believer that God's free gift (Rom 6:23b) has reversed the usual pattern. A wording that heralded the onset of punishment for the offenders in Hos 13 is reused to remind followers of Christ that although the old covenant (νόμος [nomos] – "law") guaranteed death

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to the rebel (1 Cor. 15:56) the new covenant in Christ provides victory over death. Christ has met once for all the full force of the covenant curses and by his own satisfaction of the law through payment of its penalty has rendered the power of the plagues of the old covenant ineffective against the Christian. The reward of resurrection of the believers to live eternally with God will replace in the new covenant the punishment of death and destruction which applied to Israel in the old covenant. For this all who are in Christ can say with Paul, "Thanks be to God" (1 Cor. 15:57).¹

- How might the way God has saved us from our past impact the way we approach the present and the future?
- **14:1-9** – God’s Grace
 - Have you ever had someone tell you that they have just sinned too much? That God couldn’t really love them and they are too far-gone? Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever felt that your sins are too big for God to handle?
 - After reading Hosea, it is very reasonable to say that Israel was just too far-gone to receive God’s love, forgiveness, and grace. But in chapter 14 we see a God who, in spite of all that Israel had done, loves His children and rain down His incredible grace upon them.
 - Read 14:1-9
 - **ASK:**
 - What does Israel need to do in order to receive God’s forgiveness according to verses 1-3?
 - What great promises does God give to a repentant people in verses 4-7 (key in on verse 4)?
 - What must we do to receive God’s forgiveness? What promises does He give to us if we repent and seek Him?
 - What does verse 9 teach us?

UNDERSTANDING ♥ HEART

- The “knowledge of God” described in Hosea is not individual; it is communal. Jesus prayed for His people to be one/united in John 17. He said eternal life is that we “know” God and His Son whom He sent (John 17:3). He prayed that His disciples be one so that the world may believe (John 17:21). Perhaps the world doesn’t believe often because they see a people who are not

¹ Douglas Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, vol. 31, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 209–210.

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one/united, but instead a people who focus on their self-god even within their own church walls and in their “worship”.

- Is this true/possible? Explain.
- How can our family at FXCC demonstrate “knowing” God through our actions?
- To what extent does God’s grace go?
 - Is there a limit to God’s grace?
 - Are we ever too far-gone to receive it?

WISDOM HANDS

- How did sharing God’s message with someone this past week go? Discuss together as a group.
- Who do you need to talk to this week and tell about the depth of God’s grace? Think specifically.
- Commit to each other that you will all have the courage to share the message. Pray NOW and then pray for each other through the week to have the boldness to share.

PRAYER



End your time together with a prayer. Ask God to help you share and live His grace to those around you. Ask Him to open the eyes of our hearts through this study so that we may know Him more and develop an intimate relationship with Him.

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SEMESTER OUTLINE (SPRING 2016)

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE MINOR PROPHETS – Why Study This? (January 3)
2. HOSEA – PART 1 (January 10)
3. HOSEA – PART 2 (January 17)
4. JOEL (January 24)
5. AMOS (January 31)
6. OBADIAH & NAHUM (February 7)
7. JONAH (February 14)
8. MICAH (February 21)
9. HABAKKUK (February 28)
10. ZEPHANIAH (March 6)
11. HAGGAI (March 13)
12. ZECHARIAH – PART 1 (April 3)
13. ZECHARIAH – PART 2 (April 10)
14. MALACHI (April 17)
15. CONCLUSION TO THE MINOR PROPHETS (April 24)