Loving the Unlovable
Hosea 1:2-3, 3:1-3; 1 John 4:16

Sermon Outline

1. An Impossible Love (Hosea 1:2-3):

1. Lord - The Lord who has all authority, especially in the case of a prophet.
   a) All of this pictured Israel’s unfaithfulness to the Lord. The nation was married to the Lord (Ex. 34:14–16; Deut. 32:16; Isa. 62:5; Jer. 3:14) and should have remained faithful to Him.\(^1\)

2. Speaking – God spoke directly to Hosea with no intent to stop saying to him what he is expecting him to act on. God’s message had a set purpose with the expectation of a specific result.

3. Said – What God was saying to Hosea God was not going to change one word.

4. Go – God commands Hosea to move in a direction that would become a way of life.
   a) Hosea is in the will of God in the midst of a bad marriage.
   b) This lifestyle that God is commanding to become involved in includes taking care of two of the children that would not be his. He has to care for these children after she leaves for a lifestyle of whoredom. This is a lifestyle that he is going to be in the rest of his life. This is not taking place in a large metropolis like Houston. This is a lot smaller city.

5. Take to yourself – God commands Hosea in a lifestyle direction that will become his permanent lifestyle.

6. Commits flagrant harlotry – The nature of his wife is a person who he knows will live the life of a harlot.
   a) The expression “adulterous wife” (lit., “wife of adultery”) does not describe her condition at the time of marriage, but anticipates what she proved to be, a wife characterized by unfaithfulness. Any knowledge of Gomer’s status at the time of marriage is thereby precluded.\(^2\)
   b) Gomer - Not mentioned outside this book.
We cannot leave these chapters without pointing out that spiritual adultery can be a sin of NT Christians as well as the OT Jew (1 John 2:15–17; Rev. 2:1–7; James 4:1–10). Christians who love the world and live for sin are false to their Savior and break His heart. Paul warned the Corinthians against this (2 Cor. 11:1–3).[3]

7. So he went – Hosea’s response to God is incredible because it is immediate with no questions asked. Hosea accepts the direction God gave as a lifestyle that demonstrates righteous and upright behavior.

8. Took – Hosea endlessly sought to fulfill God’s command by following the cultural proceedings to make Gomer his wife.

9. Conceived:

a) Him - The omission of this word in vv. 6,9 may indicate that Hosea was not the father of Gomer’s next two children.

10. Bear – Hosea consummated the marriage and God opened Gomer’s womb and provided them a child.[4]

a) Jehu had carried out God’s judgment (2 Kgs. 9:7) by putting the last of Omri’s dynasty to the sword at Jezreel (2 Kgs. 9:24–10:11), for which God commended him (2 Kgs. 10:30). Hosea’s first child, Jezreel, was a message that Jehu’s dynasty, which had been just as wicked as Omri’s, likewise would suffer annihilation at Jezreel (a better understanding of the Hebrew of 1:4 than the NIV translation). Zechariah, Jehu’s last royal descendant, was assassinated by Shallum in 752 B.C., probably at Ibleam in Jezreel (2 Kgs. 15:10).

b) Hosea’s second child, a daughter, would carry the pathetic name meaning “Not Loved” because by her continual unfaithfulness Israel had forfeited God’s love. Israel’s hope, however, would be in the assurance that “I will certainly forgive them” (1:6; wrongly translated in NIV).[5]

1. **The True Measure of Love (Hosea 3:1-3):**

1. **Lord** - The Lord who has all authority, especially in the case of a prophet, who is his master, demands obedience.

2. **Said** – What God was saying to Hosea he was going to keep saying with no intent on ever stopping until the task is complete.
3. Go – God commands Hosea to move in a direction that would become a way of life.

4. Love a woman - To love ‘a woman’ is to love her after a life of harlotry.

5. Love a woman - A tender affectionate and a strong emotional attachment with sexual connotations to the very woman who is an adulteress. “It is often used to describe the unspeakable love and tender mercies of God in the covenant relationship with His people.” This is based on a determined mindset that is driven by strong feelings to faithfully complete the task.

6. Love by a husband – Hosea was expected to have relations with his wife just like any man who would have a strong emotional attachment similar to having relations to a faithful wife. This again is based on a determined mindset that is driven by strong feelings to faithfully complete the task.

   a) Popular culture often describes love in terms of passion, sexuality, or blind devotion. By this measure, love is little more than an uncontrollable attraction toward another person that ebbs and flows unconsciously. This sort of “love” looks only for its own gain and can walk away if its demands and needs go unmet or unsatisfied. By contrast, God called Hosea to pursue a radically different kind of love, one based on a conscious choice to be committed to someone else for her benefit, regardless of her response to that gift (Hos. 3:1–3). That was how God was committed to Israel. Hosea’s marriage was an illustration of God’s marriage to the spiritually adulterous nation of Israel.[6]

7. So I bought her for myself – Hosea obeyed God immediately and with no intent of stopping until the Gomer was bought back and returned home.

8. I bought her for myself – Again, Hosea’s obedience to God is immediate demonstrating incredible surrender to the will of God.

   a) Hosea had to buy her back which means she had become the property of another man. The value of the silver and barley that Hosea paid was approximately equal to the 30 shekels required for a female slave (Ex. 21:32). The point at least is that there was a price (for she was redeemed), and after the price was paid she belonged to Hosea—ransomed, restored, and forgiven, but not yet healed.

9. Said – What God was saying to Hosea he was going to keep saying with no intent on ever stopping until the task was complete.

10. Stay – Hosea stated to Gomer that she would remain with him permanently.

    a) Virtue has to be forced upon her because there was no virtue in her heart.
11. **Shalt not, to be** - Hosea expected Gomer to endlessly remain focused on completely God’s will.

12. **Shalt not, to be** - Hosea’s measure of love is his faithful obedience to God.

1. **Love from God Overcomes all Obstacles (1 John 4:16):**

   1. **Knows** – This is to be in a set condition of having a complete understanding of what is being taught because of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believers life.
   2. **Believed** - This is to have complete confidence in Christ love with a deep unreserved commitment to trust Him.
   3. **The love which God has** – God deliberately exercises his divine will towards us in an unselfish compassionate manner. It is not something we have earned. He faithfully cares for us compassionately.
   4. **God is love** – God is the direct object of the nature of love (Matthew 22:37-40). This is an unearned free extension of God’s care for believers.

   a) The Old Testament also recognized that God’s people learned how to treat others from God’s gracious treatment of them (Ex 13:8; 22:21; Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19), although the ultimate expression of the principle is the example of Christ (1 Jn 4:10; cf. Jn 13:34).[7]

   5. **Who abides in love** - This a believer who continuously and habitually is steadfast, no matter the distractions or obstacles they experience, to remain faithful in exercising God’s divine will towards another believers. This unselfish compassionate obedience to God is a demonstration of God’s divine love in the life of the believer.
   6. **Abides in God** – The believer who makes it a habit to remain in God’s love is one who remains steadfast in their obedience to God (1 John 2:6).
   7. **God abides in him** - The believer who makes it a habit to remain steadfast in their obedience to God, God, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit empowers them daily so that live according to His Word overcoming all obstacles.


lit. literal, literally
Christ. The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term for “Messiah.” Some Gentile readers, unfamiliar with the Jewish sense of the term, may have taken it merely as Jesus’ surname, a usage that became more common over time.