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| **SERIES** | **Finding Jesus** |
| **BIBLE** | **Hosea 1-3** |
| **TITLE/TOPIC** | **God’s Love** |
| **OVERVIEW** | Love can be quite a generic term when we describe who God is. Love to some can mean that He is forgiven. Love to some can mean that He judges. Love to some can be the image of romance. Love to others can be the image of family. What do we mean that God is love? Well it’s a bit of all of that but what we see in the OT is we discover Jesus’s love showing up in the act of a Prophet to a Prostitute! |
| **SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN** | **Intro:**  In this series we are opening the OT of our Bible’s and discovering that Jesus doesn’t just show up in Matthew 1 – We can find Jesus throughout the whole of Scripture!  Today we discover Him in the theme of LOVE!  ILL- Asking Brooke Out  In order to convince Brooke to go out on a date with me I had to ask her 3 times. The first 2 times she said NO!  That didn’t make me turn away, but it caused me to press further in – relentless in my pursuit!  When we look at the Love of God – it is one that relentlessly pursues us!  Text  -If you want to turn to Hosea, it’s on page 751 in the Bibles in the chairs underneath you. Hosea is one of the most fascinating prophets because he wasn’t just called into a life of speaking God’s words but he was called into a life of living out an illustration, a parable of God’s love reaching out to the people of Israel who lived out an adulterous love life.  -Hosea was a restless man who saw the incomplete picture of Israel’s fidelity to God! So God calls Hosea into this life of speaking another way by telling him to Go and to take a wife for himself, a wife of whoredom. God calls Hosea to marry a prostitute named Gomer and to form a family with her. This is a radical call to live, a way to live in the heartbrokenness of a broken relationship but to obedience to God.  -Hosea answers this call! It’s by answering this call that Hosea lives with unrest towards the culture of comfort by calling people back to God, back to His Love! He lived out the reality that he was called into, “The word of the Lord came to Hosea…called him to Go!”  -The reason that God calls Hosea to marry a prostitute is that this is the image of God’s love to His people, this is the protest that Hosea is speaking, a protest against the adulterous heart of Israel.  **1. PROTEST: Adulterous Heart -Hosea 1 and 4:1-3**  -Stop turning away from God!  -1:2-The Land is full of Adultery  -God speaks to His people and calls them no mercy, not mine!  -It’s about keeping God on the margins, instead of making him central.  -One of the main ways they were leaving the will of God was following the path of money! They were warming up to the gods of the Assyrians because they were the provision of money and wealth!  4:6-Rejected me.  7:11-called out to Assyria and Egypt as their help.  8:4-made kings without me  12:8-I am rich!-wealth for myself.  13:2-kissed calves-idols of production!  He summarizes all of this and calls it adultery!  -We turn our heart away from God when we let our lives by pulled by another voice that pulls into a temptation of obtaining more!  ILL-Adultery  -Each new man will give Gomer something she needs, something she desires.  -Adultery is the disillusionment of escaping reality. We give our hearts away to another because we hope it’ll ‘save’ us. It feels good, but it’s not real.  -The running into another’s arms is an image of not faithfulness but infidelity.  4:1-3 “Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish.”  -The protest we see in Hosea is that when you let your heard be divided from God, you lose the sense of identity and purpose that He is calling you into!  ILL-Walking around Lathrop-at the heart of it, it’s about people wanting to be heard.  -God is announcing this so that the people could examine their lives and turn back!  -The call of the prophets is to stay attuned to God’s presence in your life.  **2. Call TO Hosea: GO AGAIN! –Hosea 3**  -Relentless love of God!  -Chapter 1-marry an adulterous woman.  -Chapter 3-Go back to her again and again…  “And the Lord said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins.” (3:1)  -This is the picture of God’s love for us.  -If chapters 1-2 gives us the image of failure and judgment, chapter 3 gives us a new sense of hope, God pursues us again!  Reckless Love Lyrics  “Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine And I couldn't earn it And I don't deserve it Still You give yourself away Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God”  The Message Intro “Hosea is the prophet of love, but not love as we imagine or fantasize it. He was a parable of God’s love for his people lived out as God revealed and enacted it – a lived parable.”  A call to return:  3:4-5, “For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. **5**Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God.”  **3. Call TO People: RETURN –Hosea 6:1-6, 11 and 14**  RETURN!  -Turn back-repent!  -To go back to the Love of God, we have to let go of the ways of adulterous living, a heart that is pledged to another god.  -Returning is about Renewal!  6:1-2, “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. He will **revive us**, on the third day he will **raise us up, that we may live before him.”**  -See returning is about living!  6:6-I desire Steadfast Love not Sacrifice.  -Jesus uses this in Matthew 9:13 in the call of Matthew the Tax Collector, to say I call those who are stumbling back into another chance of walking with me!  But as for you, return to your God, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God” (12:6)  **4. CALL OF GOD: Steadfast Love: Character of God**  -Radical change from the beginning of Hosea 1 to the end.  “And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in **steadfast love** and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.”  (Ho 2:19–20)  NIV APP- **How can total despair lead to total acceptance and hope for the future? Only the miraculous power and love of God can bring grace to a rejected people!**  Used 6 times in Hosea  Hosea 6-high usage rate.  HESED-Is the image of God’s unrelenting love of God.  The Call of God is to find his steadfast love!  1 John 4:8-10  “Anyone who does not **love** does not know God, because **God is love**. In this **the love of God** was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is **love**, not that we have loved God but that he **loved** us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”  This is where we find our salvation, this is where we can direct our heart.  **Conclusion**  Walk in the Love of God!  Hosea ends in 14:9: “Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, **and the upright walk in them**, but transgressors *stumble* in them.” |
| **GOSPEL** | How does this sermon bring people to the Gospel?  The Call to Action is to READ the Bible! |
| **NEXT**STEPS | Begin | Connect | Engage | Grow | Disciple |