

Return to the Lord

Hosea 6:1-6

11/16/03

Intro

- .

.....
Hosea's life, marriage and the names of his children all are life lessons that God is using to speak to the nation of Israel.

He married a wife of harlotry as a picture of what was in the hearts of the people. That is a strong message and one that would cut right to their hearts, because Hosea's marriage was easily seen by everyone. Gossip and rumor no doubt spread like wildfire.

At one point, Hosea even has to purchase her out of the slave market after she leaves him and falters badly. **That became a beautiful picture of what Jesus did for all of us when He purchases us with the greatest price of all – His own life.**

But the message of Hosea is not just about the faithlessness of Israel, it's also about God's heart for them and His desire to restore them to a place of fellowship and blessing.

Hosea 6 is a call to respond to God message by returning to the Lord. And He gives us great insight into the process of returning.

These, then, are insights into returning to the Lord.

I. He Has Torn Us

A. Because of His love

- If He didn't love us, we would be in without hope.
- But because of His love, **He has wounded us**.

Proverbs 13:24, “He who spares his rod, hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.”

Revelation 3:14-22 – To the church in Laodicea.

Illus – When Nicole was in the hospital with Hodgkin's disease.

B. That we might return

Vs 6:1

- That is the point to the disciple of the Lord.

Hosea 2:7, “Then she will say, ‘I will go back to my ... husband, for it was better for me then than now.’”

Jeremiah 50: 4-5 – They will ask for the way to Zion, weeping as they go.

C. But our deeds keep us from returning

Verse 5:4

- Sometimes it takes troubles to get our attention.
- Our deeds become rooted deeply in our lives and make us resist going back to the Lord.

Illus – some people are very stubborn spiritually and refuse to turn back.

II. He Will Heal Us

- A. “He will revive us after two days”
- This was meant to encourage them that the healing of the Lord was not far away.
 - **The word “revive” means to make alive.**
 - They did not understand that it had great prophetic implications as well.
- B. “He will raise us up on the third day”
- The reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ seems very clear.
 - This is the only place in the Old Testament that specifically refers to three days for being raised up.

I Corinthians 15:4, “...and that He was buried, and that He was raised up on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Illus – What is important to see is that the scripture in Hosea also refers to us, that He would raise us up in three days.

- This is a very important point, because the resurrection of Christ is something we also experienced **in Him**.

Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ: and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the

Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”

- C. “That we may live before Him.”
- His resurrection is a proof that we will also live.
 - **The point of Hosea 6:2 is that we are revived by God not just so that we will live, but that we will live before Him.**
 - **The point is that we would live in close relationship with Him, no longer turning our back on Him.**

III. Let Us Know the Lord

- A. “Let us press on to know the Lord”
- The words “press on” could also be translated, “pursue, chase, follow after, etc”
 - **In order to know the Lord, or to have relationship with Him.**
 - **This was what created the trouble for them in the first place.**
 - **See Hosea 4:1, 6**

When the Word of God no longer has an important place in our lives, we are in a dangerous place, because it is in His Word that we get to know Him.

B. With loyalty in our hearts

- God said their loyalty was like the morning dew.
- But see **verse 6, “I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice.”**
- **But the word has a larger field of meaning, it means, “compassion, mercy, kindness, lovingkindness, and goodness.”**
- **He is saying that He wants our heart and our character to be like His.**

Proverbs 29:7, “The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such concern.”

C. He delights in our knowledge of Him

- Verse 6.
- When we made our relationship to Him a priority, He is very pleased.
- He would prefer relationship to sacrifice.

Conclusion

It is God’s heart that we return to Him, if we have wandered from him. Why not decide now to come to Him?