

LOVE

Character Tour 6 of 8

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Intro:

- * Love is one of the most talked about, sought after, and misunderstood character quality in all scripture.
- * Love is CENTRAL to who God is, in fact "God is love" 1 John 4:8 reveals.
- As we pull back the curtain on an Old Testament love story, we find it filled with sin, betrayal, and incredible reconciliation. .
- We see God's love unfold in real-life drama to communicate a kind of love that drives us to our knees in disbelief, gratitude, and adoration.

- * This love story of a man named Hosea and his unfaithful wife, Gomer reveals God's heart of patient love for each of us who follow Him today.
- * Their love story was very real, but God planned it to paint a picture of His love relationship with us today.

Background of the story:

- Hosea a prophet in Israel called to tell of God's judgment when things were going pretty well for Israel. (At least from their point of view)
- Since Israel was feeling GOOD- it was going to take a something dramatic from God to get their attention.
- * They needed to know two things:
 - 1) They would be experiencing God's judgment for their rebellion.
 - 2) God was pursuing them for a meaningful & intimate relationship.

Hosea 1:1-11

I. **AN UNFAITHFUL AND UNGRATEFUL LOVER (1:1-9)**

A. **Hosea 1:1-3a Take thee a wife of "whoredoms"**

1. "Gomer"- the land of Israel was like Gomer *Gomer* signifies *corruption*;
 2. "Diblain" signifies *two cakes, or lumps of figs*; this denotes that Israel was near to ruin, and that their luxury and sensuality were the cause of it.
They were as the *evil figs* that could not be eaten, they were so evil.
- * It intimates sin to be the daughter of plenty and destruction the daughter of the abuse of plenty.
3. (1:4) "Jezreel"- God scatters
 4. (1:6) "Loruhamah"- no more mercy
 5. (1:9) "Loammi"- not my people

B. **Familiar story because it mimics God's love for us.**

Romans 5:8 "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

1. He loves us even though we are "less than perfect"

II. **TRUE LOVES FAITHFUL PURSUIT (1:10 - 2:13)**

A. **Listen to love speaking- running from God you run into His embrace.** (1:10-2:5)

1. We have all gone "Gomer" one way or another in our lives.
Even though we don't deserve it - God invites us back to Him.
2. 2:1-2 "Ammi"- my people
"Ruhamah"- more mercy

Note: When we run from God he does several things in His pursuit of us...

B. **Three tactics God used to stop the cycle of destruction:**

1. Barricades us with Briars- pointed obstacles (2:6-8)

- If we don't listen to Him & respond He puts out the "sticky stuff"
- The consequences of our sin
- (2:7-8) - God tells Hosea to go to her lovers & give them the stuff Gomer is after.
- But she continues to run after them thinking that they are giving her the stuff- but we do the same thing - thinking God will get the CREDIT but... we call it LUCK, NETWORKING, credit our EDUCATION, our athletic prowess, yet God is shaking His head like Hosea- all that stuff is from ME!
- * You are forgetting the source...
- * When something great happens to you who do you give the credit to? Self or to God?
- * God gives us guidelines & when we get too close to the edge- we get the "sensation" that we are at the edge...so what are you going to do?

2. Ruthlessly removes resources 2:9

Note: During the briar stage she had her needs met... but this stage they are taken away!

- Her necessities were gone- broke, busted & disgusted... that is the life of Gomer.
 - a. Remember Jonah... a racist, & rebellion... he learned running from God he ran into God.
 - b. The Prodigal Son- blessed, left, lost it all & ate with the pigs, came back...

Note: This is the theme throughout scripture...

- * We all have "gone Gomer"- our own way... WHERE did it get her?
SLAVERY... (2:10)

You'd think God would just pound upside the head- but he DOESN'T.

3. Grips us with grace 3:1-3

- a. God told Hosea to buy her back - & he obeyed, because he loved her (irrational love)
 - b. Imagine Hosea standing in the auction line- then he walked up to her..
 - * And covered her NAKEDNESS- then took her back into his house...
 - * She thought about God's GRACE- IRRATIONAL LOVE...
- * We've all gone Gomer... voices bidding for us, porno, drug, greed... but the voice in the back bids for us & wins the bid.
 - * Have you responded to that LOVE?

Conclusion:

DO you want to know that kind of love?

We have all gone Gomer- but how far will you go NOT recognizing the Lord is pursuing you.