

Day 1

October 23



Pray | *Thank God for the loving relationships you have with others.*

God pursues us even though we are an unfaithful bride.

Despite the fact that many marriages tragically end in divorce, no one starts out with that intent. People don't walk to the altar with the expectation of marriage failure, and even fewer enter into that covenant relationship with the expectation of unfaithfulness. This week, we will see how the marriage of God's prophet Hosea shows us the great lengths God goes to in order to pursue the people he loves. Even during our unfaithfulness, God loves us and is willing to take on the personal cost and sacrifice of bringing us into and keeping us right in a relationship with him.



Read | *Hosea 1:2-9*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

Hosea knew that the relationship he was entering into was going to be filled with infidelity, yet he had faith in God and chose to obey. Reflect on your level of faith in God. Would you be willing to obey his command and enter into a commitment knowing it was doomed to fail?

So often, God brings about more than we expect. Reflect on a time when you have entered into a situation with a "this is doomed to fail" or "this is unfair" attitude. Looking past the struggle along the way, how did God prevail?

When God tells us to do something we're uncomfortable with, we tend to brush it off or make excuses. What is God asking you to do today that seems odd or maybe not socially acceptable? Is your first inclination to obey?

Day 2

October 24



Pray | *Confess your false idols.*

Our worldly choices seem appealing but ultimately prove unrewarding and alienate us from God.

Tabloid magazines and social media parade the ugly and private details of public figures, actors and athletes. Privacy has been tossed out the window. Today's passage reads almost like a tabloid article of the breakdown of Hosea's marriage to Gomer. Gomer had turned to other lovers, and Hosea was prepared to punish his wife's infidelity by exposing her sin. Just as the marriage between Hosea and Gomer had been severed by adultery, the Israelites were unfaithful in their covenant to God, giving credit to foreign gods for meeting their basic needs. Today we often find ourselves guilty of the same sin, worshiping our false idols and taking credit for our accomplishments and wealth.



Read | *Hosea 2:1-13*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

In verse 8, Gomer didn't realize that Hosea had given her everything she owned. In what ways are you like Gomer? Who do you give credit to for your wealth and good fortune?

Spend some time in prayer, recognizing your blessings and thanking God for his gifts and blessings to you.

Using the marriage metaphor, describe your relationship to God now and in the past. When have you ever left or "cheated" on God? During this time, did you notice God's continued faithfulness to you?

Day 3
October 25



Pray | *Thank God for his faithfulness.*

God promises his love to us forever.

We love sports, movies, pets, food and many other things. We throw around the word “love” without thinking about it; it’s just tossed around as a feeling or emotion. With God, we find the true definition of the word “love.” The definition of love is not forged with words but with action, exemplified by the work of Jesus on the cross.

God, in his love, not only pursued us in the midst of our unfaithfulness, as Hosea did with Gomer, but God promises his love to us forever. Threaded into the narrative of Hosea’s marriage is God’s promise of love for his own people. Just as Hosea was called to continue to pursue love for his wife, God has committed himself to his people.



Read | *Hosea 2:14-23*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

We often commit ourselves to the false idols of our world, yet God continues to love and pursue us. When have you seen God pursue you? How does it make you feel knowing that God will not withdraw his love from his people?

Reflect on how our culture’s definition of love differs from the love that God has for us. How have you seen this play out in your life?

Which of God’s promises in Hosea 2:14-23 stands out to you? Why?

Day 4
October 26



Pray | *Thank God for his steadfast love.*

God purchases us out of slavery.

Although we don't know why, at some point between Hosea 1 and Hosea 3, Gomer runs away from Hosea and to another man and a life of slavery. Imagine you are Hosea at this point. After years of adultery, your spouse has abandoned you and is living with another partner. What do you do? Your spouse is the one who seems to have ended the marriage, choosing another partner. Do you choose divorce? Just as God would not give up on Israel when the people were unfaithful, he wants Hosea to symbolize his undying love to his unfaithful wife by loving her again and buying her back.



Read | *Hosea 3:1-5*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

In a very real sense, we are all Gomer. We are unfaithful people who deserve God's wrath, not his mercy. What's one way you have seen God's grace in your life? What's one way you can show grace to someone else today?

Like Gomer, we struggle to let go of our sin. Even when we have so much love to receive, we seek fulfillment elsewhere. When have you experienced feelings of guilt or unworthiness and have sought out something other than God in which to find your worth?

How do these first three chapters of Hosea help you better understand your relationship with God? Rewrite verse one to fit your circumstances, and reflect on the magnitude of God's love for you. *...the Lord loves me, though I turn to other gods and love [insert your god here].*

Day 5

October 27



Pray | *Thank God for sending Jesus to save us.*

Unconditional love. That's how God loves his children.

In Hosea 1-3, we are assured that God has an unconditional love for his people, despite their sinful ways. Having been pursued and loved by God, we are called to extend the same pursuit of love to others. We love because we have been loved. To follow God and pursue others with the message of the gospel will be a costly endeavor. It will hurt some of our relationships with others, make us reprioritize financial resources and force us to change our priorities. But when the cost seems too great for us to handle, we must remember the cost that God himself paid for us.



Read | *1 John 4:9-12*



Reflect | *Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.*

Despite Gomer's unfaithfulness, Hosea forgave her and made many sacrifices for her. Hosea loved Gomer unconditionally. If you want to do a better job loving others, what changes do you need to make today?

Spend a moment in prayer, committing your heart and your life to God and to living your life for him every day, regardless of the cost to you.

God's love lives in us. How are you reflecting God's love onto others every day?