

Minor Prophets Summer 2025 - Lesson 1

The Cross of the Word - Hosea 1

Theme Verse: "Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD." Hosea 1:2 (ESV)

A Prophet's Burden

1. Read Hosea 1
2. How is the Word of the Lord unpopular not only in the world but also sometimes among churchgoers?
3. Look at other men and prophets of God who were asked to difficult, foolish, or unthinkable things:
 - a. Genesis 22:1-2, 9-10
 - b. Ezekiel 5:1-4
 - c. Luther wrote that Hosea "prophesies not only with words but with things which the senses feel" (AE 18:4). As the passages above show, the Lord asked other prophets to "act out" their prophecies.
4. How would people respond to these sorts of activities today?

Hosea's Burden and Israel's Sin

5. Why did God command Hosea to marry a "wife of whoredom" (Hosea 1:2)?
6. The Lord compares the seeking of other gods (the breaking of the First Commandment) to adultery and to prostitution. How does such shocking and graphic imagery help convey the Lord's hatred of idolatry?
7. Hosea used the images of adultery and prostitution to show clearly that, when it comes to sin, we are not only weak and impassioned, but also that we sin willingly.
 - a. Read Psalm 51:3-5. How is the sin we commit in our personal lives and in the Church both out of our weakness and willfulness?
8. How is Hosea's rescuing & marrying Gomer similar to the Lord's rescue of Israel?

God's Word for Today

In the Book of Hosea, Gomer is not only a real person, but also a representative of Israel. Just as Gomer needed Hosea to save her from the sin of adultery, so, too, did Israel need the Lord to save her from her sin of idolatry. Likewise, we need the Savior, Jesus, to rescue us from sin, death and the devil. Through Baptism, Absolution, the Gospel, and the Lord's Supper, Jesus continues to seek us out to bestow upon us His rich forgiveness and grace.

9. We most often think of God as our Father, as both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer direct us. But the Scriptures also speak of God or Jesus as the Bridegroom and Israel and the Church as His Bride. How might this imagery of our relationship with God in Christ bear on how we respond to temptation?

In Closing

- Consider this week the good that the Lord has worked in your life, even when the situation was bad. Offer a prayer of thanks.
- Read Hosea 2-3 for next Sunday.

Prayer: Merciful God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, was lifted high upon the cross that he might bear the sins of the world and draw all people to Himself. Grant that we who glory in his death for our redemption may faithfully heed His call to bear the cross and follow Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

This study is based on:

"God's Word for Today: Hosea, Joel, and Amos - Faithfulness amidst Unfaithfulness."