

Sermon Outline Sunday 15 February 2026 Carey Baptist Church

Preacher: Sir Les Ebdon CBE DL

Subject: Hosea 1 v 2-11 and 2 v 4-16

Love which does not give up

What is the most difficult thing God has asked you to do?

For Hosea it was to go and marry a prostitute called Gomer.

She bore him a son but then returned to her old ways producing children fathered by other men. Hosea brought up these children too as if they were his own.

Hosea was probably a prophet from 750 to 722 BC, he lived in the Northern Kingdom, called Israel, and was warning against its sin which would lead to utter destruction by the Assyrian armies in 722BC. God called Hosea to live out how God felt about the adultery of His people and their worship of the god Baal. It is the first time in the Bible that we see a picture of a vulnerable God, as a wronged husband, rather than as just a mighty King. As Christians we recognise that picture of the church as the bride and the sacrifice of God's only Son in order to win us back. How much God loves us.

We have to limit ourselves to 3 points.

1. There is a reason God asks us to do difficult things.

God asks Hosea to marry a whore and to call his children by names that remind Israel of bad things. This is so they can see how immoral and alienated from God they have become. You may not be called to do such difficult things but God may ask you to show unconditional love to others in ways that make your friends or family say 'don't be silly.' We are called to be the hands and face of our risen Saviour.

2. Are we truly faithful to God?

The book of Hosea holds up a mirror to us. As a nation, as a church, as individuals are we truly faithful to God? As a society we have dethroned God

and confined him to the margins. Like Gomer we attribute God's gifts to our own achievements, hard work or chance. But God says (2v8) 'it was me all the time.' Sex was at the centre of the worship of Baal and is at the centre of media and scandals today. In the end such sin finished off Israel and this is a warning to us.

3. What lengths will God go to get us back?

Hosea had to pay a big price to buy his own wife back (Chapter 3 v 1-2). We see a parallel in God's love for His church (1 Peter 1v 18-19). God never gives up on us. God never stops loving us.

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