

God's Never-Stopping, Always and Forever Love" (Hosea 3:1-5, 11:7-9, 14:1-4)

Sermon Reflection Questions

Calvin famously said *"Our hearts are idol-making factories"* and Tim Keller defined idolatry as *"anything you love/serve more than God."* How have you seen this in your own heart? Why is Hosea's marriage to Gomer such a shocking illustration of how our idolatry grieves the heart of God?

Where do you find God's never-stopping, always and forever love (Hebrew word: *Hesed*) in these passages? Why is God's covenant faithfulness such good news for people with Gomer hearts?

How does Romans 9:22-26 help you better understand how the book of Hosea relates to the gospel message of grace? Why is this good news for you personally?

Respond to this quote by C.S. Lewis: *"It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."*

Respond to this quote by Dr. George Schwab Jr: *A person's loves defines that person. The Pharisees "loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God" (John 12:43). Someone who cares too much about what other people think or about winning their approval or respect or affection will be diminished in their valuation of the Father. Two masters cannot be served. Jesus declared, "Whoever loves his life loses it" (John 12:25). Whatever a person loves determines what motivates that person—either love for God or love for other things. Remember, we have been bought with a price, like Gomer, and therefore we owe our Lord all our heart. The Father will discipline us in order to loosen the grip of these idolatries in our hearts. This process will be painful. But a day is coming in which all of those things that compete with our love for God will be put in proper perspective. On that day we will in full measure bask in the goodness of our salvation.*