

# 07 AN UNFAITHFUL BRIDE

**KEY TEXT:** HOSEA 1:2-9; 3:1-5

## CENTRAL truth

Because we have a hard time forgiving people, we might worry that there are some things God can't or won't forgive. On the contrary, our holy God is always ready to forgive us when we repent. **God offers us grace even when we are unfaithful to Him**, no matter how serious our offense might be.

## key question

**What does God's willingness to show love to Israel, even after they were unfaithful, reveal about His character?**

Because He is holy, God expects and deserves holiness in return. He doesn't expect perfection—He knows the dust we are made of (see Ps. 103:14)—but He does expect us to make an intentional effort to reflect His nature to the world. When we don't make this effort, He has every right to cut us off forever—but He doesn't. When God's chosen people Israel gave themselves in worship to false gods, God proved that He is faithful even when we are not. Our behavior never alters His character (see 2 Tim. 2:13).

## keep in mind

It might seem extreme to your students that God asked a man to live his entire life as an illustration of God's undying love for an unfaithful nation and made children go around with shameful names. Your students have likely even been told by some of their non-believing peers that God is cruel. This story could play right into that rhetoric if you don't help them process it properly.

Help your students understand that the extreme nature of God's actions in the story of Hosea is actually a statement on the serious nature of sin. If this story reveals anything about God, it shows just how far God will go to warn us about sin and rescue us from it. Share Lamentations 3:32-33 with your students to explain that God does not enjoy causing suffering to His people, and will always show compassion as well.

## application

**What can we learn from Hosea's commitment to God? How can we apply this lesson to our own lives?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** Students need to understand that sin is serious and that their sin can affect others, even when it doesn't seem to come with immediate consequences. They also need to know that God loves them enough to discipline them when necessary.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Approach the family life of Hosea and Gomer as the metaphor God intended to be and avoid unnecessary conversation about adultery and marital infidelity. Instead, focus on the importance of remaining faithful to God and repenting when He calls sin to our attention.

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