

## **Are We Really That Bad?**

Hosea, Day 2

Hosea 1:1-3

*The word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.*

*When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.” So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. – Hosea 1:1-3, ESV*

Sometimes, we need to take a step back and look at our actions from a more objective perspective, so we can see what we’re really doing. God did this for King David when He sent Nathan the prophet to confront him over his sin with Bathsheba and against Uriah the Hittite. When Nathan came to confront David in 2 Samuel 12, he first presented David’s sin to him in the form of a story about another man who had wronged his neighbor. Only when David’s righteous sense of justice was aroused by the story of a man who stole a precious only lamb from his neighbor did Nathan turn and make his confrontation more direct and bold: “You are the man!” he told David. And David saw his sin and repented.

I don’t know what excuses David was making for his sin, but I do know how easy it is to minimize and excuse gross sin. Sadly, that is one area of life where I have too much personal experience. The rationalizing usually involves the words, “it was only” and “I had to” and maybe “if they had only.” So, for David: “It was only an impulsive act of passion. If only she wasn’t bathing on her rooftop. I tried to give Uriah a chance. If only he had been more like normal men and gone in to sleep with his wife. Once he refused, I had to save face. I had to cover up our act of passion. He left me with no choice.” Nathan’s words cut through the rationalizing denials like a sharp sword: “You are the man!”

The Book of Hosea does that for us. We are shocked and horrified by the story of Hosea marrying a woman who was habitually unfaithful to him and who even bore children with other men. We’re outraged, and our sense of righteous justice is aroused. This isn’t right! But then God says: “for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.” In other words: We are the adulterous woman!

Do we believe it? Or do we recoil from such an association and say, “No, Lord, we can’t be that bad.” Really? What does James say? “*You adulterous people! Don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*” (James 4:4, ESV) Have we set our affections on the things of the world? Of course, we have! Do we have worldly idols in our hearts, deep and desperate longings for wealth, status, reputation, comfort, illicit pleasures? Of course, we do! Then we need to look at ourselves in the mirror of God’s word and realize that we are, indeed, the adulterous people.

We will not come to repentance until we realize the depth and horror of our sin. Until we see our sin for the ugly unfaithfulness it is, our hearts will not be broken. May the Lord be pleased to break us, that He may be pleased to heal us in Christ.