

Intro: Valentines Day. Tomorrow we celebrate a holiday intended to increase the affections of the heart and our expressions of love to each other. With paper hearts and the overpriced banter of other people's words of desire we have become accustomed to cheap expressions of an extravagantly grand virtue. It is easy to buy a card. It is easy to purchase chocolates or flowers, to take your beloved out to dinner, particularly when it's expected. Not that these things are empty or fruitless. They are good when actual expressions of love. However, if we only "love" once a year, then we do not love at all. Anymore than the truth that if we do not worship 7 days a week we do not worship once a week (Tozer). And love is so much deeper than an \$80 dinner or even the too-little spoken words, "I love you." Talk can be cheap, too. But real love, true love, godly love, is costly. It costs tears, it costs time, it costs sacrifice, it costs blood, it costs humility and humiliation. This is the kind of love that God is, and this is the kind of love that He has poured out within our hearts. It is an electrifying love, a powerful love, a love that moves mountains and reconciles enemies. This is the love of God for His wayward Bride, of whom it cost Him the life of His own unique Son. So, to you this day, I celebrate this holiday with a "Merry Christmas, Good Friday, and Happy Easter!"

## 1. Go Again and Love

- a. Again – implies repetition, this was not the only time Hosea as pursued cheating Gomer
  - i. See the patience of God exemplified in the patience of Hosea: love is patient
  - ii. This little word, "again", is a very powerful attestation to God's patient love
- b. "another" applies to the word "man" which is a different word than "man" or "husband" and actually means "companion, fellow, friend" but here is applied to the other "lover" to whom Gomer had run
  - i. The NAS has "her husband" which is an unfortunate translation which seems to imply polygamy, which should not be implied in this context
  - ii. More so, it implies that Gomer had run off with some friend of Hosea's
- c. "adulteress" is now different word than "whore" in chapter one
  - i. revealing that this woman is married, to Hosea, and has cheated on him with "another man"
  - ii. This shows, also, that Gomer's sin was against Hosea
  - iii. God is calling Hosea to love the woman who has so mistreated him, "keeping no record of wrongs"

## 2. So I Bought Her Back

- a. 15 shekels of silver and 330 liters of barley (75gallons)
  - i. This price is indicative of desperation on the part of Gomer, but also of Hosea's love for her
  - ii. Usually there was not food-stuffs included in purchase unless the seller's situation was dire in need of food, prt. barley
  - iii. It is unclear to whom the purchase price was made, but presumably it was made to the other man who "loved" her
    1. Interestingly, this man's affections could be bought off
    2. Thusly with idols, which never truly love us, they merely use us and enslave us
    3. However, because the recipient of the payment is not mentioned, it is not important to the analogy of God's people and Himself
      - a. God did not purchase us away from some other god
      - b. There was no payment made to our idols, we were wrested from their deceptive power by the effective power of the Holy Spirit applying the

purchasing power of Christ's blood...made to the Father because of God's love (John 3:16; 2 Cor 13:14)

- b. It may have even been that Hosea had to purchase her at a slave market
  - i. This price is the same as the price of a slave
    - 1. This may indicate, again, that Gomer had become enslaved to another man through her foolish pursuit of luxury
    - 2. It is just like the immoral man to get tired of his lover and stop giving gifts to her as he seeks another different lover
    - 3. Gomer might have been cast aside, destitute and unwilling to return to Hosea, thus was selling herself into slavery (much like the prodigal son)
  - ii. Imagine having to buy your spouse back at a slave market
    - 1. Slaves were bid on publicly
      - a. "one shekel", "three shekels", "15 shekels", "15 and a homer of barley", etc.
    - 2. Slaves were stripped and sold naked, exhibited in the public eye
      - a. They would be bidding on her body
      - b. Treating her like an object of their lust and passion
      - c. Hosea bore the shame of this, and was lumped together with them when he bid...publicly
    - 3. As Gomer would have been sold naked, so Israel was stripped and laid bare before the world, as God had promised (2:2-5)
      - a. He had taken away her ease, her gifts, so that he might allure her again in the wilderness of destitution
- c. The major point here is that a price was paid to bring Gomer home again because he loved her ("Go again and love the woman...")
  - i. Redemption: the act of saving something or somebody from a declined, dilapidated, or corrupted state by purchase and restoring it, him, or her to a better condition
  - ii. Hosea, though Gomer's sin was against him, paid the price for her sin and its consequences
    - 1. We see the same act of redemption in Boaz's purchase of Ruth as his wife and the redemption of her husband's family land (Ruth 4:9-10)
    - 2. We see the right to purchase, or redeem, the firstborn donkey with the price of a lamb in its stead (Ex 13:13; 34:20) as well as redeeming the firstborn sons by the LORD taking the entire clan of Levites to Himself to serve Him completely (as well as the Levites cattle).
    - 3. The *kofer* was the ransom price placed upon those whose crime, either of accident or negligence, required repayment to the offended.
      - a. Ex 21:30 – if an oxen gets out and gores someone to death, and it's owner was found to be negligent, the owner was to be put to death along with the ox. However, if a ransom price could be established by the offended, his life would be spared through the purchase of the redemption price (*kofer*) though the ox was still killed.
  - iii. Again, the point here is that the concept of payments in redemption are common fact in the OT
    - 1. Some people want to reject the reality that God makes payment to free us, but rather merely wins victory or sets us free
    - 2. He does win victory, for sure, but He does so by making payment, not to other gods, or to Satan, but to His own justice and holiness.

### 3. God Has Purchased His People by the Blood of His Own Son

- a. Jesus gave Himself as the ransom for us, for our sins had enslaved us and brought us under the mighty righteous wrath of God
  - i. Matt 20:28 – “...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, even to give His life as a ransom (purchase price) for the many.”
  - ii. 1 Tim 2:6 – “...there is one mediator between God and man...Jesus Christ...who gave Himself as a ransom...”
  - iii. Rom 3:21-26 – God publicly displayed Jesus as the propitiation (sacrifice of atonement that appeases His wrath) through His blood for our sins so that God is both just (sins are punished) and the justifier (He shows mercy and compassion) of the one who places his faith in Jesus
- b. We are Gomer!
  - i. Through our idolatrous passions we left the LORD in the foolish pursuit of other gods to bring us joy and they enslaved us, abused us, and destroyed us
    1. What we thought would bring us peace only left us enslaved to anxiety, bitterness, despair, emptiness, anger, boredom, and the feelings of shame, worthlessness, and regret
- c. Does God love like this? YES!!! HE DOES!!
  1. When we were at our lowest point, naked and laid bare before the world as impotent and shameless whores, GOD PURCHASED US AT HIS OWN COST, even though our sin was against Him!!!! (Romans 5:8)
  2. It is only when we recognize our powerlessness, our weakness, our failure, our inability to redeem ourselves that Jesus rushes in to redeem you
    - a. “I didn’t come to call those who believe that they’re righteous, but rather I came to call those who know that they’re sinners “ (Matt 9:13, paraphrased)
    - b. “Come to Me, all you who are *weary and heavily burdened* and I will give you My rest.” (Matt 11:28-29)
    - c. What Jesus requires of us to come to Him is not perfection, or even a sense of righteousness, but rather the opposite: the acknowledgment and recognition of our own desperation and destitution
    - d. And He runs to those broken-hearted over their sins (Luke 15:20), feeling great compassion for them

### 4. After Acquiring Us, God Calls Us to Holy Purity and Rest

- a. Hosea now owned Gomer, but he didn’t treat her as one owned, but as one loved
  - i. He put her clothes on her and took her quietly through the crowd...back home
  - ii. He called her to remain pure to him, as he was to her
  - iii. He called her to rest from her weariness and her whoring and to keep herself to him alone
- b. In the same way, God, after purchasing us back and bringing us to Himself, calls us to holiness, purity, and the exclusive worship of Himself, as He is exclusively ours
  - i. What a God!!
  - ii. He who pays the price of the offense against Him and patiently and compassionately purchases us for Himself
  - iii. Has He not loved you more purely and more powerfully and more perfectly than anything or anyone else?! Does His superlative love not impress upon your heart the desire to honor Him, to adore Him, to exclusively please Him as the lover of your soul?

- iv. Trust that obeys is not the requirement *to be saved*, but it is the loving response of the one who *has been saved*.
  1. "Love God and do what you want"
  2. The question is: Having seen the amazing love of God for you, and proclaiming to love God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength, then what do you want?
    - a. Doing what you want doesn't work if you're not loving God
    - b. Loving God is not truly love if you don't want Him, nor want to honor Him
- c. Christ calls us to rest in His redemption and give ourselves fully to Him because He loves us so greatly
  - i. We must learn to turn away from other lovers, from those who would promise us joy and freedom but would in fact enslave us
  - ii. We must learn to repent quickly when we have failed, not because we lost the love of our Savior, but rather because we are loved so greatly by our Savior
  - iii. In this cycle of repentant loving faith in Jesus we find the capacity to change, to be transformed into the joyous people of God, set free from sin's despair and filled with the Holy Spirit to bring honor and glory to the One who so graciously redeemed us.
  - iv. To the Glory of God Alone. Amen.

#### Conclusion:

The love of God for you is beyond comprehension. It doesn't make sense to you that God would pay down the debts of your sin and your foolish pursuits of empty passions. But, He does love you that much!! And He has not called the righteous to come to Him, but the sinners, the broken-hearted repentant whores who know that they have failed miserably and are destitute of their own righteousness. It is to us cheaters and failures that Christ has come with open arms of love. It is His love that cost Him dearly, sweating drops of blood in the garden, receiving lashes and nails and condemnation. It was His costly love for you that led Him to bear up the wrath of His father in your place. And He lives today, risen from the dead, having paid down your debt, to bring you home to Himself. That is the love of God! That is true love! That is what it means to love your enemy. May God reveal the depth of His love for you in your souls, that by the power of the Holy Spirit you might comprehend with all the saints how great is the love of Christ for you and respond with joyful gratitude and heartfelt faithfulness for His honor, renown, and glory. Amen