



Hosea

SCANDALOUS
GRACE

DISCUSSION GUIDE



college park church

INTRODUCTION

God's grace is scandalous. Because of sin, all of mankind deserves eternal punishment, assigned to an eternity where God will pour out His wrath, and where sinners will be separated from the joy of His presence. But, mercifully, God provides a way for sinners to have a restored relationship with Himself. Despite the great divide, God's plan for redemption is greater.

The book of Hosea was written during a time of prosperity for the people of Israel in both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Rather than thanking God for their prosperity, the people continually fell into idolatry as they elevated themselves above God, put their faith in created things, and turned to other so-called "gods" to fulfill sinful desires. Sound familiar? In our current culture and context, it's easy to let the comfort and idols of the world take the place of God, the Creator and Owner of it all.

Thankfully, in the book of Hosea, we see God's scandalous grace on display in several ways:

- ▶ We'll see Hosea warn Israel of God's soon, swift, and coming judgment that will carry them into exile.
- ▶ In a real-life metaphor, God calls Hosea to marry a prostitute who is a picture of Israel's promiscuity, whoredom, and adulterous heart.
- ▶ Because of Israel's continued adultery, though God separates Himself from His people (no longer even describing them as His people), He also looks forward to a day when He'll restore them as His people.
- ▶ We'll see prophecy regarding the Messiah through whom a remnant will prosper, bring glory to God, and enjoy Him forever.
- ▶ We see a picture of what God has done for us in Christ—that Jesus paid the infinite price, and provided a way back to God so that we may have eternal joy in Him. When we walk alongside other believers, we become part of something bigger than ourselves—we belong to a people.

As we study Hosea and see parallels with our own idolatry and adulterous ways, may we learn through the power of the Spirit to be a faithful people who joyfully rest in the scandalous grace of God.

In this study guide, you'll see three sections each week:

1. Discussion. These questions are designed to help you get into God's word, apply the sermon, and guide your group discussion. Use the questions that fit best with your group's situation or needs. Beyond your Small Group, these questions can also be used in the context of a Bible study or discipleship relationship.

2. Family Discipleship. These questions were created specifically with families in mind and we hope they'll be useful in facilitating family discussion (maybe around the dinner table, or another family devotional time). These questions are applicable for all ages, including young children. We pray these bless you as you disciple your family.

3. Next Steps. Each week, we've suggested one or two possible next steps. Whether you take these steps, or find out other ways to respond, our hope is that you intentionally act on and obey God's Word.

GOD LOVED A WAYWARD WOMAN

Hosea 1

DISCUSSION

1. What are the circumstances surrounding Hosea's calling and the writing of the book?
2. What themes do you see in this first chapter? Do any of these themes overlap with other portions of the Bible?
3. How does God want His people to behave? What kind of behavior is condemned?
4. What about this first chapter shocks you? What does this tell you about God?
5. How might you be living like Gomer? What can believers learn from God's call for Hosea's life? How can Hosea's calling encourage us to live as believers?
6. What promises from Scripture have helped you in the fight of faith?
7. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. What does it mean "to be faithful"?
2. What does it mean that God is faithful? What other Bible stories demonstrate God's faithfulness?
3. What things has God done or said that make you feel safe and trust Him more?

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Spend time reflecting on ways you may have been unfaithful to God this week. Confess your sin, and ask God for the strength to overcome it.

Is there someone in your life who claims to be a Christian, but has been deceived by the promises of the world and is living in sin? Find a way to connect with them to share God's grace and the hope of the gospel.

DISCUSSION

1. Read Hosea chapter 2 and 3 out loud. What does this passage teach you about God's attitude towards sin.
2. What is God's plan for His adulterous people? How is this an encouragement to believers?
3. How does the theme of God's redemption apply to us?
4. How does this passage point to Jesus? (see Hosea 3:4-5)
5. God calls Hosea to love someone who is difficult to love. How does the gospel empower you to love those who seem unlovable?
6. How does God's redemption and restoration of an unfaithful people provide hope for the people in your life who are far from God? How does it affect the way you relate to other people?
7. Where do you find hope in this passage? What encourages you?
8. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. Is there someone that's hard to love (or even get along with), that God is calling you to love? Who is it? How does God empower you to love them? How can you love them better?
2. Have you ever disobeyed when you know that you shouldn't?
3. What is God's response to sin and disobedience?
4. How does God forgive sins? Why does He do this?

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Sometime in next week, read Ephesians 2:1-10, and praise God for the redemption that He worked in your life.

God graciously redeems us into a grace-filled community. Over the next week, meet with someone to confess your sin, encourage on another, and keep each other accountable.

DISCUSSION

1. What sin does Israel commit in these chapters? How do we commit the same sins in our own lives?
2. According to this passage, where have the Israelites placed their hope? Why is this ironic? (see Hosea 4:8-12) Do you see any parallels between your life and the way Israel wanders from God?
3. What steps are necessary for someone to repent and return to the Lord? What does the Bible say repentance should look like?
4. Contrast James 4:8 (“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you”), with what happens to those who do not live in a God-honoring way.
5. Contrast Hosea 4:1-6 with 6:1-6. What does this teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself? Where do you find hope?
6. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. Is there a time when you have observed people disobeying God’s commands? What did this look like?
2. In what ways have you not followed God’s commands? What does God say, in the bible, that you deserve because of your disobedience?
3. What hope does God offer to you?
4. If you accept this hope, how should it change the way you live?

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Set aside time to intentionally pray for the members of your Small Group.

Consider pursuing Soul Care training through classes offered at College Park, so that you can practically care for the needs of others.

DISCUSSION

1. What is the overall theme of this section? (See Hosea 10:13-15; also, 7:16; 8:4; 8:7; 9:10)
2. Despite the theme of these chapters, discuss the hope found in Hosea 10:12. Why did the Israelites have trouble embracing this hope (10:2)? Where is this hope anchored? (consider discussing Hosea 8:12)
3. While not all suffering comes from our sin, when we do sin, we reap the fruit of our labor, which is suffering (Hosea 8:13-14, 10:13-15). If Scripture teaches that sin can lead to suffering, why do people sin? How does God empower and equip you to overcome sin?
4. What do we learn about God in understanding that He justly punishes sin by pouring out His wrath? How should we respond to this truth?
5. How would you define God's holiness? Why is it good that God is committed to His own holiness, and takes His holiness seriously?
6. How should we talk about God's holiness and wrath to our neighbors, friends, family, etc. who do not know the Lord? How can we faithfully make the gospel attractive?
7. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. What does it mean that God created a perfect world?
2. Discuss sin and obedience and how what you do affects who you are.
 - a. When you have sinned, what have been the results? How did you feel afterward?
 - b. Think of the times you have loved God and others well. What were the results? How did you feel afterward? How did others feel?
 - c. Discuss how sin transforms and changes you.
3. Where can you find hope in the midst of sin? Discuss how God's grace can change and transform us.

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Write out your testimony with an emphasis on how God saved you from His wrath. Look for opportunities to share your experience of God's grace in the next week.

Using Operation World (www.operationworld.org) or the Joshua Project (joshuaproject.net), pray for the nations—that they would understand the wrath of God and the hope of the gospel.

DISCUSSION

1. Though God is the all-satisfying Creator of the world, Israel continually fell into sin. What mistakes did they make that led to their failures? How do we make the same mistakes and how can we avoid them?
2. What about our sin is shocking? What does our sin say about what we think about God?
3. Why is it important for Christians to remember God's acts of grace from the past? What difference does remembering His grace make in our lives?
4. Have you personally forgotten or are you tempted to forget God's past grace? How can you keep from forgetting?
5. When is it hardest for you to trust God and live for Him? What steps can you take to guard against sin in your life?
6. Think about the seasons of your life when you've been spiritually healthy. What characteristics were true of you in those seasons? What can you do to cultivate spiritual health in your present season?
7. What does the gospel say about our forgetfulness and how to overcome it? How can you keep God's promises and the gospel in the forefront of your life this week?
8. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. What about your sin is shocking? What does our sin say about what we think about God?
2. When has God showed His love for you? How can remembering that help you live for Him?

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Memorize this week's Fighter Verse to help you remember the promises of God.

Read Gospel Primer by Milton Vincent to encourage your faith and remind you of the hope of the gospel.

THE WAYS OF THE LORD ARE RIGHT

Hosea 14

DISCUSSION

1. Read Hosea 14 out loud. What stands out to you in this passage? Summarize the main point of this chapter.
2. What can you learn about the nature of God in this passage?
3. In this passage, where do you see evidence of God's grace and kindness to the people of Israel?
4. Read Hosea 14:9. What role do wisdom and discernment play in obedience? How can we cultivate these characteristics personally, so that we can both sow and reap godliness?
5. What does Hosea mean in 14:9 when he states that the "transgressors stumble in the ways of the Lord"? How does the character and work of God serve as a stumbling block to unbelievers?
6. Read Hosea 14:4–7. What promises does God make to the people of Israel? How does Jesus fulfill these promises?
7. What can you use to 1) encourage a believer or, 2) share the gospel with an unbeliever from this passage?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. What can you do to deserve God's goodness toward you? (see 14:4)
2. What does God promise to you if you believe in Him? (see 14:4-7)
3. What does it mean to be wise, discerning, or walk in the ways of the Lord?

PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS

Spend time with your family, roommate, or another Small Group member sharing evidence of God's faithfulness in your life..

Meditate on key passages in the Bible that emphasize God's faithfulness toward us, so that you can have confidence in His grace as you follow Him. (Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalm 100:5; Psalm 108:4; Psalm 111:7-8; Isaiah 54:10; Lamentations 3:22-23; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 1 John 1:9)



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