

Hosea

GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE
FOR HIS FAITHLESS PEOPLE

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You're Not Fooling Me

Hosea 6:4-6

It has been remarked that the opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. I don't know whether I would go that far, but I think we do greatly underestimate the damage apathy does to a relationship. Sometimes "I don't care about you" hurts more than "I hate you." This matters because when we come to Hosea, we find Israel indifferent to God, not hating him. The question that leaves us with tonight is not "Do you hate God?" for I doubt any here would, but rather "Are you apathetic towards God?" From this passage we see that...

God is looking for real love.

I. God wants a love that endures (v 4).

A. God is conflicted over Israel's situation. We find a fascinating picture of God in these verses – a God who is conflicted. He does not want to bring judgment, yet he sees no other option. He has repeatedly warned his people, yet his warnings have been ignored. Israel, meanwhile, thinks everything is fine and continues worshipping God, even as God is furious over their apostasy and ready to bring severe consequences.

- B. God finds a shallow, transitory love.** This passage does not say “Israel didn’t love God.” It essentially says “Israel’s love was transitory and fleeting.” Israel’s love is fickle, not non-existent.

II. God wants a love that listens (v 5).

- A. God sends warnings to his people.** God had sent prophet after prophet, warning of the coming judgment. His powerful words threatening judgment should have been enough, but they were not.
- B. God sense judgment to his people.** Just as God had previously promised to come to his repentant people as surely as the sun rises, he now promises to judge their rebellion as surely as the sun rises.

III. God wants a love that is authentic (v 6).

- A. God is unimpressed with empty externalism.** Israel continued to worship God, even as she chose to ignore his commands and rebel against his rules.
- B. God desires love for him and others.** Christ quotes this passage in the New Testament to the Pharisees, who were more focused on following the details of the law than loving God and man.
- C. God desires a personal knowledge of Him.** God wants a relationship with people. He wants his people to love him because they know. When you know God as he is, you can’t help but love him.

If you find that you don’t love God as you should, 1) recognize your problem, 2) repent of your indifference, and 3) return to the Lord by seeking to know him in his Word.