February 23, 2014 Sermon Application handout
"A Father's Love"
Hosea 11

I. Introduction

1. Before you begin, spend some time in prayer. Ask God to help you to remember that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).

2. Read Hosea 11 and make some general observations. What is the tone of this chapter? How does God refer to Israel? What is Israel's future according to this passage? How does God refer to Himself in this passage?

II. A Father's C_____ (Hosea 11:1-4)

3. What does God declare for Israel according to verse one? (This declaration in the Hebrew has the idea of affection, care, friendship, and devotion).

4. How does God view Israel (cf. Ex. 4:22)? Are they just some random group of people he saved out of Egypt?

5. List out ways God describes His Fatherly care for Israel from verses 3-4 (cf. Deut 1:29). What had He taught them? How did He care for them? How did He lead them?

6. In the same way God cared for Israel, list out ways your Heavenly Father providentially cares for you. How has He gently led you with cords of love? How has He lifted and removed your burdens? How has He stooped down and shown you grace?

III. A Father's Correction_____ (Hosea 11:5-7)

7. Although the Lord was like a Father to Israel, and they a son, according to verse 2, what had Israel refused to do despite His care? What would be the consequence for their ongoing rebellion (Hos 8:7)?

8. What is at the heart of Israel's sin (v. 7)? What was their constant disposition? Who were they looking to gain help from? What were they always looking for?

9. Read Hebrews 12:7-11 and Revelation 3:19. Why does God discipline His children? What does the Lord hope that His Fatherly correction will produce? What is His overall goal with regard to His correction?

10. Does it seem harsh and cruel to you that God the Father would discipline His children when they have a constant disposition of walking away from Him? List out ways God's involvement in the life of His children is a good thing (Ps. 119:71)? How has it been a good thing and a protection in your own life (see Prov. 23:13; 29:15 1 Pet. 2:11)?

IV. A Father's C_____ (Hosea 11:8-11)

11. How does God describe His restoration of Israel in verses 10-11? How will His people return? How will God settle them? How might this give His people hope once they are in captivity?

12. According to verse 8, how does God feel about Israel being taken? What is the tone of His heart? Why do you think this is?

13. How does God describe Himself in verse 9? In light of these characteristics, how must God deal with sin?

14. Based on what you have read so far in chapter 11, does it appear that God the Father disciplines His children with great joy? What does the end of verse 9 say? How does this language help us to understand the depth and degree of His emotion? What is God trying to help the reader to understand about Him?

15. What about you? How do you view God? As a Father who truly cares for you or One who is waiting to punish and condemn? Do you recognize His love for you or are you afraid His love is conditional, distant, and even demanding? Do you understand that God is willing to forgive believers when they confess and turn away from their sin? Survey the verses below and remind yourself of the Lord's loving Fatherly care for every believer. Write a summary below on how this helps you to grow in your view of God.

    - Romans 5:6-8
    - Romans 8:1
    - 1 John 1:9

16. Read Matthew 2:13-15 and 1 John 4:9. How was God's promise to restore Israel in Hosea 11 fulfilled? How was God's wrath and justice satisfied? What was punished, forgiven, and satisfied once for all for those who would believe?

17. What about you? Have you placed your faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ so that you too might have peace with God? Do you understand that it's only through the blood of Christ that you have redemption and forgiveness of sin? Did you know that salvation is by faith, through grace alone, not as a result of your own works, it is a gift given to us by God? Will you turn from your sin toward God, receive His gift of salvation, and confess Him as Lord of your life today?

"If God had perceived that our greatest need was economic, he would have sent an economist. If he had perceived that our greatest need was entertainment, he would have sent us a comedian or an artist. If God had perceived that our greatest need was political stability, he would have sent us a politician. If he had perceived that our greatest need was health, he would have sent us a doctor. But he perceived that our greatest need involved our sin, our alienation from him, our profound rebellion, our death; and he sent us a Savior. "
— D.A. Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers*

RESOURCES

Specific Resources for Hosea
Hosea by Derek Kidner

Hosea: the Heart and Holiness of God by G. Campbell Morgan

With Bands of Love by David Allan Hubbard

General Resources for the Minor Prophets

The Minor Prophets by James Montgomery Boice

The Minor Prophets by Charles Feinberg

The Prophets of Israel by Leon Wood

Major Points from the Minor Prophets by John Blanchard

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction by Gleason Archer

Interpreting the Minor Prophets by Robert Chisholm Jr

The Ultimate Priority on Worship by John MacArthur

Knowing God by J.I. Packer