

# Sunday School Lesson for Family Month - September 2014

## The Recovery of Family Life

*Hosea 3:1*

**Sunday, September 7, 2014**

Many of the problems that face our nation can be traced to one root: the destruction of wholesome family life. With this deterioration, we see lack of values, the renunciation of basic virtues, distrust of others, and rebellion against authority and regulation. Many of these things can be traced to the lack of family strength and discipline.

Hosea was a prophet of God. He married a wife named Gomer who was unfaithful to him. After the birth of their children, each of whom had a symbolic name, she left him and actually became a prostitute. Possibly Gomer never believed in God. She may have worshiped Baal or one of the Canaanite Cults that practiced sacred prostitution as a part of their worship. At any rate, she later sank to such depths of immorality that she was sold as a slave. Prompted by God's spirit and displaying a love like God's, Hosea bought her. He restored her to a place of love and usefulness. He recovered his family. Hosea used his tragic domestic experience as a vehicle for teaching about God's love. He likened Israel's rebellion against God and their departure from him to his experience of his wife going into adultery and forsaking him. He loved his wife and brought her back. God loves His people and will bring them back to Him if they respond.

Look at this story from the vantage point of the recovery of the family life. From Hosea's tragic experience we can find some helpful priorities for our lives. D. Elton Trueblood says in his book "The Recovery of Family Life," that just as a physician can't diagnose an illness until he has a vision of what a well body is, so we can't work toward the recovery of family life until we first have a model of a wholesome Christian family life.

### **I. We must focus on persons.**

A. In the family, each individual is important. Hosea loved Gomer as a person. He loved her so much that he was willing to relinquish his pride and purchase her as a slave so that she could be a wife again. In some families, causes or appearances are so important that persons are obscured.

**B. A family begins with the love of two persons.** The family's life can never be healthy if that original love is not healthy.

**C. Guard the personhood of each family member.** Family life experts tell us never to attack the personhood of a child when correcting that child. You could say, "I don't like children to lie" instead of "I don't like children who lie." That safe guards the personhood of the child while expressing displeasure at the child's action.

**Sunday, September 14, 2014**

## **II. We must find our priorities.**

**A. What is our top priority?** The recovery of family life must become a top priority for us just as it did for Hosea. Can you imagine the shame he must have felt at Gomer's behavior? Can you imagine the jests and the jeers he received from his friends at her actions? But he was willing to forgo all that because he had a priority: the recovery of his family life. No other success can compensate for failure in the home.

**B. How do we achieve this priority?** It must be an internal matter rather than an external matter. It will not come by changes in the structures of society as much as by the intent of the individual. When you choose the family as a top priority and begin to work toward the recovery of family life as a goal, it can be achieved.

**Sunday, September 21, 2014**

## **III. We must consider our pride.**

**A. We must forget our personal pride.** Hosea forgot his personal pride to purchase his wife in the slave market. Pride often stands at the base of family problems. We are too proud to reconsider a position, too proud to admit guilt, too proud to allow someone else to have an opinion, too proud to say the important, but difficult words "I'm sorry- I was wrong."

**B. We must foster family pride.** Individual family members should be able to take pride in being a part of the family to which they belong. Religious life witness

should be a normal part of family life. Children want to admire their parents and parents should cautiously shape their children's lives by living as godly examples.

**Sunday, September 28, 2014**

#### **IV. We must pay the price.**

**A. We have paid the price for fractured family life.** The price for fractured family life has been costly. What it has cost in the lives of persons has been very dear when you consider the hurt, the maladjustments, and the pain.

**B. We must be willing to pay the price for recovered family life.** It cost Hosea something to recover his family life. The money that it cost to purchase Gomer was incidental. The real price was the personal cost to Hosea. It will cost us something, too. The place to begin is in personal surrender to God and commitment of the family to Him.

The key to the book of Hosea is the intensity of his love for Gomer, his wife. God loves us even more intensely; He wants us to be in fellowship with Him. When we are right with God, we can be right with our families as well. And that is where we begin the recovery of family life.