

"A Lack of Knowledge"  
Hosea 4:6

October 16, 2005

**SERMON NOTES**

A. Introduction

1. the thrust of Hosea – his message; what was Hosea asked to do as part of his prophetic ministry (Hosea 1:2–3)?
  
2. why would this not be the normal situation
  - a. for servants of God (Leviticus 21:7ff, Ezekiel 44:22, Isaiah 8:3, 1 Timothy 3:2, 11-12)?
  
  - b. for Christians (1 Corinthians 6:12–20, 2 Corinthians 6:14)?
  
3. What was God's purpose in doing this with Hosea (3:1, Jeremiah 31:3)?
  
4. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being my priest ..." — "knowledge of God" or "knowing God"
  - a. is not merely
  
  - b. but describes

B. God saying, "My People: Israel"

1. Exodus 19:5-6, the people of Israel were considered P\_\_\_\_\_ who were responsible for
  
2. (Note: information on "Urim and Thummim" found in Exodus 28:30, Numbers 27:21, Nehemiah 7:65)
  
3. Who alone of God's chosen fulfilled this role (Isaiah 42:1)?
  
4. How does he qualify (Hebrews 4:15–16, 7:25; 1 John 1:9)?

C. God saying, "My People: the Lost"

1. How does God view all mankind (Exodus 19:5, Isaiah 43:3, Jonah 4:11)?
  
2. To whom in particular does this apply (Acts 18:9-10, John 3:16)?
  
3. What responsibility, then, do Christians therefore have (1 Peter 2:9, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8)?

D. God saying, "My People: the Church"

1. How may Christians fail so that the text applies to them? What may God do in this circumstance according to the text?
  
2. Therefore, what should we seek in our devotions and prayers (2 Peter 3:18, Ephesians 3:19, Philippians 1:9, 3:10)?

A. Introduction

1. the thrust of Hosea

a. the prophet was called upon to take a wife

- (A) a wife with a sinful background and life-style
- (B) Hosea 1:2a, 3a: *At first, when Yahweh spake to Hosea, Yahweh said to him, "Go, take a promiscuous woman to marry ... and he went and took Gomer for a wife." (a free translation of "Public" reading)*
- (C) a wife that would likely prove to revert to her past
- (D) a wife that did, indeed turn out to be unfaithful

b. and yet, Hosea was to continue

- (A) to care for that wife and
- (B) to love that wife, as we read in Hosea 3:1a (NIV): *"The Lord said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. ..."*

c. now this is not the norm in seeking a wife for

- (A) servants of God
  - (1) for the priests in the Old Testament there were given very strict instructions as to who could be suitable wives or else they lost their priesthood —{2}.
  - (2) Isaiah's wife, for example was a prophetess —{3}.
  - (3) the requirements in the NT for elders and deacons specify that these must be *"the husband of one wife"* and many understand 1 Timothy 3:11 (ASV) as describing the wives of deacons, *Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*— though some understand this to be describing deaconesses
- (B) nor would such a wife be the norm for a Christian
  - (1) the last half of the 1 Corinthians 6 explains why this sort of union, kind of marriage is unfit for the child of God, explaining, with other reasons, that we are the *"temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you"*
  - (2) and 2 Corinthians 6:14 (NRSV) warns *"Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness?"* – which deals not only with marriage but many other

relationships

(C) so why did God have Hosea the prophet do this ?

2. here we have this prophet Hosea

a. who in his personal life situation

(A) with his unfaithful wife, Gomer

(B) with his continuing devotion to Gomer

(C) or, as Rev Doug Goins describes it, his ["Unbroken Love from a Broken Heart"](#) <sup>{4}</sup>.

b. well, this was to be a graphic portrayal

(A) to his congregation, the children of Israel

(1) who were God's chosen wife

(2) of their infidelity; unfaithfulness to God

(3) in that they turned their love from him

(4) to prostitute themselves to idols; to vanities

(B) and of God's continuing

(1) mercy and love and fidelity and faithfulness

(2) in the face of their infidelity and unfaithfulness

(3) the God whom Jeremiah 31:3 (NAS) describes with these words, ... ["I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."](#)

(4) this purpose for Hosea is revealed when we finish reading the verse we started earlier, Hosea 3:1 (NIV): [The Lord said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."](#)

c. so, it is within the context of a sorrowing husband over an unfaithful wife that God speaks the words found in ...

3. our text, Hosea 4:6: [My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest....](#)

a. and as you this morning in listening

(A) have heard these words

- (B) and have considered them into their context
- b. you have probably most quickly noted one of the great truths found in the Scriptures
  - (A) that “knowledge of God” or “knowing God”
  - (B) is not some mere education in a creed, or a set of facts, or in a text-book of theology, or head knowledge
  - (C) but that “knowledge of God” or “knowing God”
  - (D) is a deep love relationship, as intended by God
    - (1) between the Creator and His created child
    - (2) between the Redeemer and His redeemed servant
    - (3) between the Christ and His bride, the church
- c. and this love relationship
  - (A) means life; life full and free; abundant life
  - (B) and when the offer of God’s love
    - (1) extended into this world by the birth of His Son
    - (2) given to us on the cross of Calvary
    - (3) is rejected; is unrequited; is unrealized
    - (4) the result is
      - (a) at the very best, loss of the privileges and the blessings God intended for us
      - (b) but at worst, loss of life and eternal destroying

4. Let us apply this text today in ways, with God speaking about

- a. 1. “My People: Israel”
- b. 2. “My People: the Lost,” and,
- c. 3. “My People: the Church”

B. God saying, “My People: Israel”

- 1. for the people of God were considered priests
  - a. the role of the priest in the Old Testament is manifold
    - (A) he went to God, usually with sacrifices, for others
      - (1) for example, Job as a priest, for his children

- (2) or Aaron's descendants for the people of Israel
  - (B) as part of this he prayed for others; and the same two examples apply
  - (C) so that as such he represented others before God
  - (D) and, sometimes, the same as a prophet, he represented God before men; for example, Aaron and the priests, his descendants, had on their breastplate the Urim and Thummim by which they could render the judgement of God on a particular query or controversy <sup>-(5)}</sup>.
2. likewise, Israel were to be the concrete representation of Jehovah, the true God, to the heathen nations round about
- a. from the start this was God's purpose, Exodus 19:5–6a (NAS): "Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' ...
  - b. but, on account of their infidelity, they were rejected, for as we read in our text, My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest....from fulfilling this role
3. yet, despite their failure, there is One of God's Chosen People
- a. just One, the One to whom Isaiah 42: 1 (NAS) refers, "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My Chosen One in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations."
  - b. who was faithful; faithful even to death on the cross; the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who can rightfully carry on this priestly role, pleading for you and for me when we come to Him confessing our sins:
    - (A) Hebrews 4:15–16 (NAS): For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.
    - (B) Hebrews 7:25 (NAS): Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.
    - (C) I John 1:9 (NAS): If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

4. and, having been brought to the subject of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus, who died for the sins of the world, let us consider

C. God saying, "My People: the Lost"

1. God views all of the world's people as belonging to Him

a. did you note that phrase we read in Exodus 19:5 (NAS): "... you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine ..."? Though men are in rebellion against God, yet they are His, His by His right as Creator

b. hear what God says in Isaiah 43:3 (NAS) speaking about the Israel's redemption: "For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place." – so God considered that the plagues He sent upon Egypt was a price He paid for their redemption, because Egypt belonged to Him!

c. or listen to God's words to Jonah about Nineveh, capital city of Assyria, (4:11, NLT): "But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, {Hebrew 'people who don't know their right hands from their left.'} not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?" – those people belonged to God

d. or the exalted Lord Jesus' words to Paul in Corinth, (Acts 18:9b–10, NLT): "Don't be afraid! Speak out! Don't be silent! For I am with you, and no one will harm you because many people here in this city belong to me."

e. but they were, just as you and I were, lost sinners until they heard the message of salvation

(A) and came to know Him, to have knowledge of God

(B) to accept Him as Saviour

(C) to have a personal love relationship with Him who had first loved them, who had first loved us

f. Beatrice Bush Bixler <sup>-(6)</sup> wrote these words, (and perhaps one day Peter will sing this as a solo)

Along the shores of Galilee  
Our Lord five thousand fed,  
Yet no one was omitted there  
In the breaking of the bread;  
Today they die in heathen lands,

They die in want and dread,  
For they have been omitted  
In the breaking of the bread.

Lord, I would give them the Bread of Life,  
The Living Water too;  
My heart cries out, "O here am I –  
Ready Thy will to do.

- g. these people are God's but they yet wait to hear the good news that will make them His redeemed children
2. moreover, the priestly responsibility that was forfeited by Israel as our text states, is now placed upon the church of Christ, to witness to the One, true God to mankind: 1 Peter 2:9 (NAS): "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;"
3. it is this fact, then, lies behind Christ's great commission to us
  - a. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20 NAS)
  - b. or, "but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NAS)
  - c. do you see that there is to be no boundary to the gospel?
    - (A) it is for this world of people that God sent His beloved Son, His only Son, to accomplish the work of grace
    - (B) it is the world that is waiting, that is needing, that is dying to hear that gospel
    - (C) the world of people — My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

D. God saying, "My People: the Church"

1. but, how sad it is, that our text, Hosea 4:6 (NAS): [My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest....](#)
  - a. can be applied
    - (A) not just to a nation in history that forgot God
    - (B) nor just to the world of unbelievers around about us
    - (C) but also to the church, to a local assembly of believers, to an individual Christian, to me; perhaps, to you
  - b. because by our interest in other pursuits, our misplaced priorities, our concerns with material possessions, whatever it may be ... any of these or other possible idols
    - (A) we reject the knowledge of God
    - (B) we interrupt our love relationship with our Redeemer
  - c. so that God is forced to set us aside from service
    - (A) so that no longer experience the joyful fulfilment of the service for which we have been recreated in Christ
    - (B) in the words of Peter's epistle which we just read, ["that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;"](#)
  - d. what a sad situation for a believer!
2. how often do we come across prayer for those who make up the local body of Christ; for those in the church, such as
  - a. ["but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."](#) (2 Peter 3: 18 NAS)
  - b. ["and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God."](#) (Ephesians 3: 19 NAS)
  - c. ["And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,"](#) (Philippians 1: 9 NAS)
  - d. with Paul's own expressed desire for his own life, ["that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;"](#) (Philippians 3: 10 NAS)
  - e. how sad it is for a believer to be saved, yet so as by fire, not walking daily with his Saviour God, unaware of the joy of a personal, vibrant, love relationship with His Creator

## E. Conclusion

1. Before we sing our concluding hymn, I would like to sum up by leaving you with this verse as a prayer:

More love to Thee, O Christ,  
More love to Thee!  
Hear Thou the prayer I make  
On bended knee;  
This is my earnest plea:  
More love, O Christ, to Thee!  
More love to Thee,  
More love to Thee! —{7}.

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, [www.holwick.com](http://www.holwick.com). Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick’s database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. Leviticus 21: 7ff; Ezekiel 44: 22
3. Isaiah 8: 3
4. Rev. Doug Goins, Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, California in his series of messages on the book of Hosea – Kerux sermons #1581–1594
5. See Exodus 28: 30, Numbers 27: 21, Nehemiah 7: 65
6. “The Breaking of the Bread” by Beatrice Bush Bixler (1916–)
7. “More Love to Thee” by Elizabeth Payson Prentiss, (1818–1878)