



So Close, Yet So Far Away

Hosea 6

Pastor John Sloan

Introduction: An *expedient religiosity*. That's nothing more than a fancy way of describing what some would call a "foxhole religion." It works like this: when things are going horribly, we feel the pressure of the world creeping in, and we can't find happiness, *then* we turn to God. But as soon as the crisis is resolved and normalcy restored, it's back to business as usual. Life on our terms not on God's. God has a very specific response to such a mindset.

Note: If you miss a point or quote, visit northpointcorona.org and click on "Resources" to find today's **sermon slides** or to listen to the **sermon** (both will be posted tomorrow afternoon).

What Israel Understood

What Israel Tragically Failed to See

Love Undeserved

[A Study through the Book of Hosea]

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & DISCOVERY

1. Who is speaking in verse 1a? What prompts this apparent change of heart?
2. In what ways does God “tear apart” and “strike down” those He sets His affection on (verse 1b)? And for what purpose?
3. What’s the difference between viewing Christianity as fundamentally about what God calls us to do vs. what God has done for us (in Christ)?
4. Why is stubbornness so destructive and dishonoring to God? Are there areas in your life where you tend to resist instruction?
5. What is the sine qua non (essential element) of all true repentance?
6. Far more than behavior modification or lifestyle improvements, God says He desires something else. What is it?

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1. "Their deeds do not permit them to come to God." - *Hosea 5:4*
2. **What Israel understood ... For those who belong to Him, God crushes in order to make alive; He breaks down in order to fully restore.**
3. "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." - *Galatians 2:20*
4. "Aroused consciences, when they have to do with God, feel this [God's justifying grace] to be the only asylum in which they can breathe safely. For if the stars which shine most brightly by night lose their brightness on the appearance of the sun, what do we think will be the case with the highest purity of man when contrasted with the purity of God?" - *John Calvin*
5. "The people assume that returning to and knowing God is accomplished by acts of sacrifice and increased religiosity." Bruce Birch
6. **What Israel Failed ... True repentance, the kind that brings healing and reconciliation, ultimately hangs on: contrition.**
7. "Unless this moment comes first, a change in action can work the opposite of repentance. The Old Adam who must be righteous and will never accept blame (Genesis 3:12) is alive and well in believers. The idea that we will be better people next week, next month, is far more [pleasing] to talk about our ongoing sin." - *Ethan Richardson*

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