

Knowing The Way Home

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Introduction: It is a frightening thought to not be able to go home!

- A. It is possible through neglect to be away from the protection of God!
 - 1. When we are "at home" with God no force can remove us! (Rom 8:35-37)
 - 2. That place called "home" is an active way of walking (living).
(Jn 10:27-28; Heb 11:6)
 - 3. When we walk by faith we can have the full assurance of God's fellowship.
- B. We need to see the real danger of the thinking that pride can put in our hearts.
 - 1. Imagine the Son of God saying this to us personally. (Lk 22:31-33)
 - 2. We can talk a good fight and not listen to God's warnings.
 - 3. To be away from "home" is a place of real danger. Consider the nation of Israel in the book of Hosea.

I. How can one "leave home?" - Consider the example of Israel

- A. They let someone else study and discern God's word for them. (Hosea 4:1, 6-11)
 - 1. The first actions of Jeroboam should have brought a swift reaction from the people.
 - 2. When some says "it is too much for you" what are they really saying? (1 Kgs 12:28)
 - 3. With the Northern Kingdom starting like this, how hard would it be for a future descendant to take a stand against these actions? "Fellowship in time will determine practice."
- B. They became filled with pride and fought God. (Hosea 5:3-6)
 - 1. It is very difficult to break away from sin when pride prevails.
 - 2. Pride causes blindness and is the worst kind of deception. (Gal 6:3, 7; Rom 1:21-23)
 - 3. These people would have talked about serving Jehovah and that they were wiser than Judah who stuck to the "traditional worship in Jerusalem."
 - 4. Proud people do not want to be corrected. The people of Israel fell in line.
- C. They were unstable, only taking brief stands for what is right. (Hosea 6:4-7)
 - 1. These people were like Judah was in the days of Josiah, they could be manipulated by circumstances to occasionally do right.
 - 2. How should they have built a foundation that would produce a consistent life?
(Hosea 6:1-3, Mt 7:24-25)
- D. When we leave God it is likened to Harlotry.
 - 1. This is not just a "moment of weakness." God wants His people to see the great pain they were causing Him. (Hos. 1:2; 9:1)
 - 2. God will not allow such a people to have fellowship with Him. (Hosea 2:2; 1:9)
 - 3. In spite of this great sin, God does not give up on Israel! Gomer, after leaving Hosea, is later bought from those who used her as a slave. (Hosea 3:2-3)
 - 4. He paid thirty pieces of silver, the price of a wounded slave! (Ex 21:32)

II. The first step home is to remember the character and past actions of God

- A. God described His rescue of Israel being like a cast off newborn in a field. **(Ezk 16:4-5)**
1. We live in a world of "throw-away people." This is not so with God.
 2. Listen carefully to what our God is like. He wants to heal, cleanse and provide for the utterly helpless ones! **(Ezk 16:7-13)**
 3. Some view God's covenants as "rules and legalism." They do not know God.
 4. If we would keep God's love fresh in our thoughts we would never become indifferent.
 5. Remembering our God is always the first step back. **(Lk 15:17-18)**
- B. We must learn to serve and be blessed by a holy God! **(Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26)**
1. Anyone in a covenant of God lives a lifetime of teaching and change.
 2. What a tragedy when men fear the anger of other men rather than plainly teach the Holy ways of God. Blessings and holiness must be found together!
 3. Within the paths of holiness are provisions of forgiveness. Many will turn away.
 4. Those who yield their spirits to God will find "the secret of the Lord." You will never regret trusting God. **(Ps 25:12-14)**

III. The only way home comes through repentance that leads to complete obedience

- A. God does not give up on anyone.
1. Imagine the scene as Hosea redeems Gomer from the slave auction block!
 2. Does God's love towards me personally depend on my actions? **(Rom 5:6-10)**
 3. How can this knowledge help me turn back to God?
 4. How can this knowledge be perverted to drive me further away from God?
(Rom 2:3-5)
- B. When one understands God's nature they come to understand unchangeable, dependable truths. **(Hosea 14:1-3)**
1. Some are blessed to finally understand that men will let them down.
 2. When one finally approaches God with "nothing in my hand" but a plea for His mercy, then God will receive him and bless him abundantly.
 3. How much have you been forgiven? Do you see yourselves as Gomer?
(Lk 7:40-47; 2 Pt 1:9-10)
- C. The love of God will be a constant force for growth in the restored sinner. **(Hosea 14:4-8)**
1. God's love changes one's whole life and changes our thinking.
 2. How does God's love defeat worldliness? **(Eph 3:16-19)**
 3. What a great blessing to finally realize these truths! **(Hosea 14:9)**

Conclusion: Let us never leave the God who so loves us!