

Middle School

Teacher's Plans



May 31, 2020

Youth Topic: Unit III. Called to God's
Work of Justice
Size It Up!

General Lesson:
**Return to Love
and Justice**

Lesson
14

Background Scripture: Hosea 11–12
Print Passage: Hosea 11:1-2, 7-10; 12:1-2, 6-14



You must return to your God. (*Hosea 12:6a*)

PREPARING TO TEACH

- **Resources Needed:** Bibles, student books, paper, pens or pencils, index cards, (optional: Youth Leadership Resource Kit [materials for this lesson])

LESSON OVERVIEW

People often equate prosperity with righteousness. Is prosperity the right standard by which to judge others? Hosea reminds us that God's standards are love and justice.

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

STATUS UPDATE (check-in)

Before introducing your lesson, take some time to get a quick status update from your students; check in with them to see how their week has been.

Status Update: WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? "What do you think about people who say they love God, but they do not obey God?"

It's Go Time! (illustration)

Get your students moving and thinking by using the following illustration, a game, or an activity that relates to this week's lesson.

Say, "God wants Christians to repent when they sin. Unconfessed sin will interfere with their prayers and block God's willingness to move on their behalf." Lead the students in a prayer that specifically includes

repentance, forgiveness, and a commitment to become more obedient. Encourage them to join you and pray aloud.

WAKE UP! (10 minutes)

Have the students read this week's contemporary story and connect it this week's lesson.

After today's story is read, explain that Tia's father realized how their pursuit of pleasure and recreation was interfering with their spiritual life. Ask the students to discuss how a believer's life may be impacted when he or she leaves God out of his or her plans. Allow the students time to discuss the question and other points from the story.

WORD UP (10 minutes)

Inspect the passage for the day. You will want to make sure that you have Bibles or copies of the passage for those who do not have a Bible with them.

Back Up! (background)

Here is some background for today's text that should be used throughout teaching this lesson—in order to set the stage for the passage.

The story of Hosea reminds us of God’s love for those who refuse to obey Him. God loved Israel, even though the nation chose to be stubborn and rebel against His commandments. God never stops loving His people.

The prophet Hosea called Israel to live by two principles: love and justice. These principles are the foundation of God’s character, and God expects His people to live by both. Some people are so loving that they make excuses for those who do wrong. And some are so committed to justice and what is fair that they forget love and compassion. God wants us to be balanced—living with love and justice.

In Hosea’s day, many people got rich by being dishonest. Some thought that having money meant that they did not need God. Others thought that their wealth was a sign of God’s blessings and that it did not matter how they had gotten it. But God sees success differently than we do. God is more concerned about our character and our commitment to doing right than about how much money and stuff we have.

Hosea’s message is still relevant today. God expects us to live with love and justice toward others. He still wants willing, loving obedience to His commandments, and He is still concerned about the attitude of our hearts toward others. There may be times when we fall short of what God expects, but we must never forget that God is willing to restore us if we repent and return to Him.

Hosea called Israel to live by love and justice. These two principles are the foundation of God’s character. God’s people are to demonstrate His character, so all believers should demonstrate the characteristics of love and justice. Hosea encouraged the people to return to God because he realized they would not be able to change their hearts without God’s help.

It’s Text Time! (Scripture)

Here is the New International Version of today’s Scripture. However, you may consider studying another one or two translations in preparation for leading.

(Hosea 11:1-2, 7-10; 12:1-2, 6-14)

1 “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. **2** But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images.”

....

7 “My people are determined to turn from me. Even though they call me God Most High, I will by no means exalt them. **8** How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. **9** I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not a man—the Holy One among you. I will not come against their cities. **10** They will follow the LORD; he will roar like a lion. When he roars, his children will come trembling from the west.”

....

1 Ephraim feeds on the wind; he pursues the east wind all day and multiplies lies and violence. He makes a treaty with Assyria and sends olive oil to Egypt. **2** The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah; he will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds.

....

6 But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always. **7** The merchant uses dishonest scales and loves to defraud. **8** Ephraim boasts, “I am very rich; I have become wealthy. With all my wealth they will not find in me any iniquity or sin.” **9** “I have been the LORD your God ever since you came out of Egypt; I will make you live in tents again, as in the days of your appointed festivals. **10** I spoke to the prophets, gave them many visions and told parables through them.” **11** Is Gilead wicked? Its people are worthless! Do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal? Their altars will be like piles of stones on a plowed field. **12** Jacob fled to the country of Aram; Israel served to get a wife, and to pay for her he tended sheep. **13** The LORD used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt, by a prophet he cared for him. **14** But Ephraim has aroused his bitter anger; his Lord will leave on him the guilt of his bloodshed and will repay him for his contempt.

WORK OUT (10 minutes)

Examine the intersections of the passage. What is the passage about? How was it heard at the time? How does it apply now?

After the text in this section of the student book is read, highlight these points from the lesson: Hosea

called Israel to live by love and justice. These two principles are the foundation of God’s character. God’s people are to demonstrate His character, so all believers should demonstrate the characteristics of love and justice. The mission of the church is to show the love of God to the world. One way the church shows love is by taking a stand against injustice in our world, our nation, and our communities. There can be no Christian love without a commitment to justice.

Say, “God showed Hosea what it means to love someone unconditionally, regardless of what they have done. This is the kind of love that God still expects of His people. When God’s people embrace the poor, reach out to sinners, and show love to others—expecting nothing in return—they are demonstrating the true love of God.”

Inside Out (interpretation)

Work on the passage from the inside out. Allow time for the students to raise their own questions about the Scripture.

After the students ask and answer their own questions about the text, lead them in a discussion that examines the meaning of “returning to God.” Share how some people believe that returning to God means going to church. Explain that “returning to God” means someone is willing to reject his/her own selfish desires and do things God’s way. When a person agrees to allow God to control his or her life, then that person has truly returned to God.

There’s an App for That! (application)

Show how this Scripture applies to present day.

After the text in this section of the student book is read, remind the students that Hosea cautioned Israel that their stubbornness and refusal to turn from their wickedness would result in God’s harsh punishment. Discuss how the people’s behavior didn’t change until they feared destruction. Let the class examine the following statement: “Without discipline, some people would never realize what they are doing is wrong.” Encourage the class to pray and ask God to guide them and keep them in the center of His will.

WALK OUT (10 minutes)

Help the students think about how this Scripture connects to them personally.

After the text in this section of the student book is read, remind the students of how important it is for believers to seek God and the company of other believers to gain strength and encouragement to live a Christ-centered life. Remind the students that human nature is naturally led to sin. Therefore, believers have to make up their minds to stay focused on doing the things that please God.

Stepping Out! (challenge)

Give the students this challenge for the week. Emphasize that they can do it!

Ask the students to think of people they know who may be unsaved or unchurched. This week, they are to make a list of people to invite to church during the month of June. Encourage them to invite at least three people (if possible). They should include their friends in the challenge for a healthy competition to see who can invite the most people. Christians should want others to know about God, too. Remind them that they are ambassadors for God.

It’s Game Time! (Answer Key)

Answers will vary. Prepare to share your reasons for loving your church.

MEDIA MISSION (after you meet!)

Finally, leave your students with a media mission. Ask them to find their own example of a Web site, video, or song that relates to this lesson.

Encourage the students to complete this week’s “Media Mission” activity. Emphasize the point that God provides many different resources to help believers interpret His Word. Encourage the students to use a Bible app or search different Bible resources on the Internet to read different versions of today’s Scripture passage. Tell the students that all believers should commit to studying God’s Word. Share with the students some of your favorite study materials. Invite them to discuss apps and other study materials they find that can help them interpret the Bible.

High School

Teacher's Plans



May 31, 2020

Youth Topic: **Unit III. Called to God's Work of Justice**
Size It Up!

General Lesson:
Return to Love and Justice

Lesson
14

Background Scripture: Hosea 11-12
Print Passage: Hosea 11:1-2, 7-10; 12:1-2, 6-14



You must return to your God. (*Hosea 12:6a*)

PREPARING TO TEACH

- **Resources Needed:** Bibles, student books, paper, pens or pencils, (**optional:** Youth Leadership Resource Kit [materials for this lesson])
- Prior to class, copy the activity in the "It's Go Time!" section for each student.
- Prior to class, select a word of the day.

LESSON OVERVIEW

People often equate prosperity with righteousness. Is prosperity the standard by which people and society should be judged? Hosea reminds us that love and justice are God's standards.

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

STATUS UPDATE (check-in)

Before introducing your lesson, take some time to get a quick status update from your students; check in with them to see how their week has been.

Status Update: WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? "Can there be love in our society without God? explain."

It's Go Time! (illustration)

Get your students moving and thinking by using the following illustration, a game, or an activity that relates to this week's lesson.

Give each student a copy of the premade activity sheet. Next to each word, students should write their responses. They should also be prepared to share their responses.

Hands = Things I can do to serve others affected by injustice: _____

Head = Things I know and can do to raise awareness of working for justice and equality for all: _____

Heart = Things I am passionate about when it comes to justice and equality for all: _____

REFLECT (10 minutes)

Have the students read this week's contemporary story and relate it back to the main points of this week's lesson.

Have the students read the contemporary story and then read and discuss the statement posed at the end. Move into the lesson by saying, "Today, Hosea will teach us that when it comes to God, love and justice go hand-in-hand."

INSPECT (10 minutes)

Inspect the passage for the day. You will want to make

sure that you have Bibles or copies of the passage for those who do not have a Bible with them.

Back Up! (background)

Here is some background for today's text that should be used throughout teaching this lesson—in order to set the stage for the passage.

Hosea was an Israelite prophet sent to the Northern Kingdom during the last years of the reign of evil King Jeroboam II, during the middle of the eighth century BC (see 2 Kings 14:23-29). Hosea ministered during a time of great social upheaval and political deception. Hosea served Israel at the same time as the prophets Amos and Isaiah. Like Amos, Hosea directed his message to the Northern Kingdom. Like all the pre-exilic prophets, Hosea's duty was to warn the people of impending judgment. The people had fallen so far into a state of lawlessness that they simply tuned out Hosea's preaching.

In Hosea 11, God's heartbreak is compared to that of a father who is heartbroken over a child's disobedient actions. Israel is God's son, whom God called out of Egypt (see Exodus 4:22). God had treated the nation of Israel with the kind of care a father would show to a son. Like a father teaching a child to walk, God had patiently given the people of Israel instructions and cared for them gently when they were hurt. When the people began to disobey, God did not deal harshly with them; He continued to show concern for them and provide for their needs. God had been a loving Father, and yet Israel had failed to return that love. They had betrayed God by burning incense to idols, refused to listen to the prophets, and refused to repent and turn back to God. Idols have many names, but here, the prophet groups them together and calls them all "Baals." God's divine compassion shifts to divine anger in verses 8-9. Sin had hardened their hearts and they deserved God's punishment.

The "roaring lion" refers to the time when God would roar against the enemies of Israel. When God roars, those who flee and scatter to the west will come at the sound of God's voice. God's message to Israel was that He would reward them according to their deeds; if righteous, they would receive grace and mercy; but if wrong, crooked, and stubborn, they would be punished severely.

It's Text Time! (Scripture)

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INTERSECT (10 minutes)

Examine the intersections of the passage. What is the passage about? How was it heard at the time? How does it apply now?

After the text in this section of the student book has been read, say, “Israel’s unfaithfulness to God was obvious as they trusted in pagan idols rather than the God who had blessed them across many generations. Idolatry exists today. We have made idols of possessions, money, cars, social media, smartphones, etc. Anything or anyone you love, trust, or fear more than God has become an idol in your life. Never put anything above your devotion to God. When God punishes the people so that they will turn back to Him, His redemptive love for His people is still with them. God is faithful in extending His mercy and restoration to those who acknowledge their sin and repent of their disobedience. Faithfulness is the constant turning to the steadfast love of God.” Encourage the students to pause and pray this week for forgiveness for any behavior that has been prideful, unkind, or otherwise sinful, and return to God.

Inside Out (interpretation)

Work on the passage from the inside out. Allow time for the students to raise their own questions about the Scripture.

Have the students read and respond to the questions/statements posed in this section of the student book.

Answers: (1) The people had rejected God’s love, turned their hearts far from God, and embraced idols and disobedience. (2) Those who truly love God will have a desire to honor and obey Him, rather than focusing on things that draw them away from God. (3) God never gives up on His children because of His great love for them. (4) Responses will vary.

There’s an App for That! (application)

Show how this Scripture applies to present day.

Engage the students in a chat session on the following issues and how they can live to demonstrate love and justice by embracing diversity, addressing economic inequality, welcoming everyone, showing fairness, and getting involved in community development. Every Christian must participate with God by upholding love and justice.

CONNECT (10 minutes)

Help the students think about how this Scripture connects to them personally.

Have the students read the text in this section (found also in the student book): “During the time of Hosea’s ministry, the people seemed to enjoy sin more than pleasing God. They reached the point of rejecting God and turning away from God’s commandments. Sin brings divine judgment and discipline, but believers can rejoice because if we are willing to change, God is willing to restore us!” Remind the class that God’s mercy is big enough to forgive any sin and He still welcomes those who fall short to “return to the Lord.”

Stepping Out! (challenge)

Give the students this challenge for the week. Emphasize that they can do it!

This week, youth are challenged to interview at least two people and ask, “What can Christians do to bring God’s justice to the world?” Invite volunteers to share responses during next week’s class (as time permits).

MEDIA MISSION (after you meet!)

Finally, leave your students with a media mission. Ask them to find their own example of a Web site, video, or song that relates to this lesson.

The students are asked to watch the music video entitled “Bleed the Same” by Mandisa (featuring TobyMac and Kirk Franklin) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVKuA1s5I3o>. The song’s message reinforces the underlying theme of this lesson series—since we all bleed the same, let’s stand together in the love and justice of God.