

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

Small Group Guide

Week 3: Hosea-Different Rings

Series: Dare to be Different is a 4-week series where we will look at 4 ways in which students should strive to be different than the culture around them. Our memory verse for this series is Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Scripture: Book of Hosea

Small Group Goal: To help students understand that they should reflect Christ in their relationships.

Sermon Summary: **POINT 1: COVENANT RINGS**

Noah was given rainbow; Pharaoh gave Joseph a ring; the Father gives the prodigal a ring; early Christians used Chi Rho rings. Rings are often used to signify covenants. We want to look at two of these relationships (Signet & Wedding) to better inform our relationship with God.

POINT 2: SIGNET/FAMILY RINGS: PARENT/CHILD

Family names signify a belonging. Family crests are a symbol of that belonging and signet rings are a symbol of that relationship.

- God has a lot to say about the parent/child relationship. The 10 commandments say “honor your father and mother.”
- Our parent/child relationship should inform our understanding of God
- Signet rings symbolize access to the Father.
- Dare to have a close, abiding, dependent relationship with God where you recognize the Father’s voice. Hosea 11:1-4

POINT 3: WEDDING RINGS: SPOUSES AND DATING

What would it look like if students engaged in dating relationships in a God honoring way. How can students date in a manner that leads to God honoring marriages? How does dating and marriage inform our understanding of God

- Hosea’s faithfulness to Gomer is a prophetic representation of God’s faithfulness to his people despite their unfaithfulness.
- Dating is a pathway to a promise. Almost all students are not ready to find their life partners. Most of them are not of an age where they are ready to date.
- Hosea points to a principal for marriage that is true for dating as well. The focus is not about “finding” the right person, it is about “becoming” the right person. Gomer was unfaithful but God called Hosea to become the right person.
- What can students do today to become the right person?
- How does that inform the way they date?
- Students are sowing the seeds today that can contribute to the life or death of their marriages decades from now. James 1:14-15

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Small Group Questions: Below are some topics to guide your discussion and sample questions. You know your students best. What questions can guide them through these ideas to a better understanding of God and a clear next step for themselves?

Covenant Rings: Our culture encourages “contract” relationships, not covenants.

What is the difference between a contract and a covenant?

Why do you think it matters that a relationship like marriage be a covenant?

What does it mean that God wants to have a covenant with His people?

In what ways do you treat your relationship with God like a contract?

Signet Rings: Do students have a close relationship with God like that of a parent/child or do they know about God like they know about famous people?

How is a student’s relationship with their parent different than with the principle/teacher at their school?

Which of those relationships (parent vs teacher) better reflects their relationship with God?

Do they have a close/intimate relationship with God?

Can they recognize the Father’s voice?

What can students do today to grow in their relationship with God?

Wedding Rings: Hosea’s relationship with Gomer models God’s relationship with His people. How can we be faithful to God and our future spouse today in the ways we pursue God and date.

What do you think it means to say that dating/marriage is not about finding the right person but about becoming the right person?

How does our culture encourage us to think about dating?

In what ways is this opposed to what God wants for us?

Have you seen people get hurt from dating the way our culture encourages?

What can you do today to become a better spouse in the future?

What are the influences in your life that are shaping who you’re becoming?

Are there things in your life that you should remove because of who they’ll make you become over time?