

## Nothing can be hidden from God

25-June-2017

(Hosea 6:11b-7:12; Mark 2:1-8 & Hebrews 4:12-13)

Good Morning Church Family!

It would be good to have your Bibles opened up to Hosea chapter six - verse 11 - the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of verse 11 - and we're going through to chapter 7, verse 12.

There's an outline in the bulletin to follow and take notes, if you wish

### Intro

Let me begin with a story...

A telemarketer called a home one day, and a small voice answered and whispered,

"Hello?"

"Hello! What's your name?"

Still whispering, the voice said, "Johnny."

"How old are you, Johnny?"

"I'm four."

"Good, is your Mum home?"

"Yes, but she's busy."

"Okay, is your Dad home?"

"He's busy too."

"I see, who else is there?"

"The police."

"The police? May I speak with one of them?"

"They're busy."

"Any other grown-ups there?"

"The firemen."

"May I speak with one of the fireman, please?"

"They're all busy."

"Johnny, all those people in your house, and I can't talk with any of them? What are they all doing?"

"Looking for me," whispered Johnny.

Johnny did a good job of hiding from all those people - didn't he?

I wonder if we can hide from God like that?

(pause)

Well that's what Israel thought they could do in our passage from Hosea this morning

They thought they could hide all their sin and rebellion from God?

### **What are we hiding from God? (6:11b-7:12)**

See verse 1 - even though God would have healed them - their sin continued

They practiced deceit and robbery

[Powerpoint 1-God sees everything]

It never crossed their mind that God sees and remembers every evil and wicked thing they do!

They are in fact deceiving themselves - not God

Because God is watching!

I wonder if there are things in our lives that we think we are hiding from God  
And like the people of Israel - we are deceiving ourselves?

[Powerpoint 2a-Hidden thoughts]

What about wicked or unsavoury thoughts we might have about someone?

God is watching and knows all our thoughts

He knows our angry thoughts; our lustful thoughts, our thoughts of revenge - our secret greedy thoughts and our "hidden" jealous thoughts. God knows about our secret longings, hopeful desires and private dreams (Psalm 139:2 says: *you perceive my thoughts from afar*)

(pause)

[Powerpoint 2b-Hidden words]

What about harsh, angry or unkind words we say about someone?

What about words of gossip we say about someone?

What about things we say which are not completely true about someone?

We make sure the person we're talking about - doesn't hear about it -

But God is watching and He knows everything we've said (Psalm 139:4 says: *Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.*)

(pause)

[Powerpoint 2c-Hidden actions]

What about the actions we do?

Acts of hatred - acts of revenge - acts of anger - acts of lust - acts of greed - acts of jealousy - that we may have done in secret - no one knows it was us - we've got away we it?

But God is watching and He knows everything we do (Psalm 139:1-2 says: *You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. <sup>2</sup>You know when I sit and when I rise;*)

(pause)

What thoughts, words and actions are we hiding from God - that we need to confess and repent of this morning?

Write them down and take action today by saying sorry to God and committing to not hiding them anymore...

(pause)

Hosea then goes into a bit more detail about what Israel is like

And he uses a few pictures to describe what they are like

[Powerpoint 3a-Lust]

First, they are like a burning hot baker's oven - in verse 4 - they are hot for adultery, passion and lust -

What about us?

Do we have lustful or cheating thoughts that we need to repent of?

God is watching!

(pause)

[Powerpoint 3b-Partying]

Second, the princes of Israel in verse 5 are so much in party mode that their passions are inflamed by alcohol - and they then start to join in with the people who are mocking the king - their leader.

What about us?

Are we drinking and partying too much?

Do we mock people in leadership?

Do we mock God - our King - by watering down His rule for our lives?

God is watching!

(pause)

[Powerpoint 3c-Hearts]

Third, then in verse 6 - the people's hearts are as hot as an oven. Their hearts are so hot for betrayal - they're ready to betray their rulers and leaders in verse 7 - and in fact they're anger is burning so hot they can't wait to get rid of one king after another

History tells us that Israel had six different kings in just over twenty years at the time of Hosea. Four were assassinated and the last one was forcibly removed from the throne.

What about us?

Is our anger burning hot against someone?

Do we have thoughts of betraying a loved one or betraying someone who is our leader or boss?

God is watching!

(pause)

### [Powerpoint 3d-flat loaf]

Fourth, Hosea says in verse 8 - Ephraim (aka Israel) is a flat loaf not turned over - in other words they are half baked - they're faith in God is half-baked - their worship of God is half-hearted because they have hung around with foreigners (their non-godly neighbours) - and these ungodly neighbours have sapped all their strength from them - they've been sucked into ungodly behaviour

They don't even notice what they're doing the wrong thing in verse 9- just like a bloke who has gray hair - and doesn't notice he's getting old - and still acts like a teenager

What about us?

Have we failed to notice our behaviour is ungodly? It's kind of just gradually crept in?

Who are we hanging around with - that has ungodly behaviour?

The Apostle Paul warns in 1 Cor 5:13:

<sup>33</sup> Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

Are we being influenced by someone's ungodly behaviour?

God is watching!

(pause)

### [Powerpoint 3e-Arrogance]

Fifth, they are arrogant in verse 10. They have an attitude of superiority. Knowing better than anyone - even knowing better than God - they are "know it all's". They forget that only God knows all. The more arrogant they are - the more it is obvious - and it is their downfall and their arrogance speaks against them.

It's so obvious to God!

But still they continue - and don't seek God or return to Him

So arrogant - they think they don't even need God!

Is that a bit like today?

Where many in our community - in our country - think they have no need for God

They are quite capable of running their lives without God! Thank You

What about us?

Do we think we know better than God?

Do we think we can run our lives - without committing all we do to God?

God is watching!

(pause)

[Powerpoint 3f-Dove]

Last, Ephraim (aka Israel) is like a dove - in verse 11

Doves forage for seed by walking and pecking the ground - but they won't even move leaves or litter to find the seeds.

On top of that birds, unlike other animals, tend to attack much larger birds - they throw all sense of self-preservation out the window!

That's why Hosea says Israel is like a dove - senseless and naïve

They are bird-brains!

And it's a good description for Ephraim - they think their ungodly neighbours Egypt and Assyria can help them - and can actually be friends!

Even though Egypt and Assyria are their enemies - like the doves, they are senseless and naïve and have no sense of self-preservation.

Like birds of feather than flock together - they are easily caught by putting a net over the whole lot of them

That's how easily God will catch them out

He can't be fooled by their ungodly friendship with neighbours

What about us?

Are we bird brains?

Do we have bird brain ideas that we can skip our quiet times with God, skip our prayers, skip our Bible studies, skip our worship, skip our good works that should be part of our faith - and stupidly expect that God won't catch us out

God is watching!

### **Exposed By God's Word (Hebrews 4:12-13)**

These thoughts, words and actions are easily exposed

When they are compared with God's word

Please turn to our NT passage - Hebrews 4:12-13

[Powerpoint 4-Heb 4:12]

Hebrews 4:12 says that God's words are alive and active in our lives

They are not just words in a book

They are living words - words for living a life that pleases God

The word of God - the Bible - is so powerful - it's life-changing - life-transforming

God's word is like a surgeon's scalpel

God's word is able to cut through our defences, our pride, our pride, our hard hearts, our bad attitudes and convict us and change us!

Just like a surgeon operating on our body - and taking out the bad bits -

God's word operates on our bad bits

As we pick up the Bible and read it- it is like a lamp to our feet showing us how to walk with God

A lamp which exposes our lives under a microscope - all the hidden thoughts, words and actions are brought into the light - and exposed

God sees it all!

In fact the writer of Hebrews says

[Powerpoint 5-Skeleton]

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

We can't hide any of our skeletons in a cupboard - God has the key to the cupboard - in fact He doesn't even need a key - He can see through the door and see what's hiding in our closet?

What skeletons do we have?

What skeletons are we hiding from God - that we need to confess and repent of this morning?

Write them down and take action

**We need a solution (Mark 2:1-8)**

If God knows every sinful thought, every sinful word and every sinful action

And as we have said - He is watching us

And there is nothing we can hide from Him

And we've been exposed - by applying God's word to our lives

Then we need a solution to our sin and rebellion against God

[Powerpoint 6-Solution]

That's where our NT passage from Mark 2 comes in

So please turn briefly to Mark chapter 2 - verses 1 to 8

The story describes the faith of four men who believe Jesus can heal their disabled/paralyzed friend

They're so convinced that Jesus can help - that they will do anything to get their friend healed

Even lowering him down through the roof (which means putting a hole in the roof)

Lowering him down to Jesus inside the house because they have faith in Jesus healing power

Jesus demonstrates His all-knowing power

He knows their faith is genuine

But His solution is surprising because He offers something the paralyzed man needs more than physical healing

Jesus offers something we all need

We are all paralyzed by sin and rebellion against God

The Israelites were paralyzed by their sin and rebellion against God

So are we!

Jesus offers forgiveness of sins - because He's watching us and knows what we need

We need our sins fixed and replaced with forgiveness

And He's the only one who can fix sin

And He offers anyone who cares to come to Him - forgiveness - by His death on the cross - to take the burden and punishment for sin - upon Himself

He even knows the wicked thoughts of the teachers of the law - who doubt Jesus' equality with God - to forgive sins

Jesus demonstrates His deity - by knowing what they were thinking

Jesus is God

And nothing is hidden from God

## Challenges

So - Let me finish with 3 challenges this morning:

### [Powerpoint 7a]

1. Are we going to stop kidding ourselves that we can hide thoughts, words and actions from God - and admit that that is arrogant

### [Powerpoint 7b]

2. Will we allow God's Word to be a spotlight / microscope on our lives - and allow His Word to guide us in addressing the areas of sin and rebellion in our lives

### [Powerpoint 7c]

3. Will we learn from Israel's mistakes - and return to God - will we commit to praying that our community, our nation - to return to God - will we commit to praying faithfully for a revival - that many will return to Him

Let's pray...