

Hosea 9:10-11:11

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[0:00] We're going to read Hosea chapter 10 together. Israel was a spreading vine.! He brought forth fruit for himself.

! Because we did not revere the Lord.

But even if we had a king, what could he do for us? They make many promises, take false oaths, and make agreements. Therefore, lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in a ploughed field. The people who live in Samaria fear for the calf idol of Beth-Avon. Its people will mourn over it, and so will its idolatrous priests. Those who had rejoiced over its splendor because it is taken from them into exile.

It will be carried to Assyria as tribute for the great king. Ephraim will be disgraced. Israel will be ashamed of its foreign alliances. Samaria's king will be destroyed, swept away like a twig on the surface of the waters.

[1:19] The high places of wickedness will be destroyed. It is the sin of Israel. Thorns and thistles will grow up and cover their altars. Then they will say to the mountains, cover us, and to the hills, fall on us.

Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, Israel, and there you have remained. Will not war again overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? When I please, I will punish them.

Nations will be gathered against them to put them in bonds for their double sin. Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh. So I will put a yoke on her fair neck.

I will drive Ephraim. Judah must plough, and Jacob must break up the ground. Sow righteousness for yourselves. Reap the fruit of unfailing love and break up your unploughed ground.

For it is time to seek the Lord until he comes and showers his righteousness on you. But you have planted wickedness. You have reaped evil. You have eaten the fruit of deception.

[2:23] Because you have depended on your own strength. And on your many warriors, the roar of battle will rise against your people. So that all your fortresses will be devastated.

As Shalman devastated Beth Arbol on the day of battle, when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children, so will it happen to you, Bethel, because your wickedness is great.

When that day dawns, the king of Israel will be completely destroyed. Well, keep your finger or app open at that chapter that was read for us.

If you're just joining us, then we are working our way through the prophecy of Hosea. We've been looking at it. We could look at each of the sort of sections or chapters as a sort of a different window and avenue on the sins of our hearts and just how they can manifest.

But instead, we've kind of framed it looking around the character of God and really how that sin grieves him. And we've done that so that our principal motive for changing our lives, of drawing closer to the Lord, it's not simply, you know, I'm so unworthy and I must do better.

[3:33] Because that is always doomed to failure. Rather, so that our motivation is as we see something of the glory and the character of our gods, is that we're saying that he is so worthy of our affection because his love is so incredible, his love is so undeserved, that I cannot but desire to love him and gladly yield myself to love's cause in my life.

Because the scripture says, wherever our heart is, then our treasure will be also. And if our heart is with the Lord, then that he is our treasure. And so we must guard the heart, as Proverbs says, is the wellspring of life.

So that we're motivated by that personal relationship, the privilege of that that we have, and all that is involved in that as we live by faith and love and trust and surrender and repentance and that spirit-enabled transformation that he wants to bring in our lives as we draw closer to him.

And that is what we want, isn't it? In our best of moments, is that life that is yielded to him, that understands who he is, his heart for us, and our heart being changed for him.

So we've seen God's character in chapter 1 as the faithful one, in chapters 2 and 3 as our redeemer, in chapters 4 and 5 as judge, in chapters 6 and 7 as omniscient, the one who is all-seeing and all-knowing.

[5:00] Last time we looked at chapters 8 and 9 as the one who is truth, who we saw just how God sees things as we look through those chapters.

And this week, really building on a comment from James Montgomery Boyce, whose commentary on Hosea has really helped me in thinking about this series. If you look at chapter 11, verse 8 and following it, you observe there something of what you could call the divided heart of God.

Now, in case your doctrine detector is going off and thinking, what? I'll explain that more later on. But I want us to sit with that kind of title and use that kind of divided heart frame in kind of understanding these two chapters.

So chapter 10, we're looking at sin's divided heart. And then chapter 11, God's divided heart, as Hosea speaks about it. So first of all, sin's divided heart.

And why use that title? Well, if you look at verse 2 of chapter 10, the NIV translates the Hebrew that their heart is deceitful.

[6:07] The Hebrew literally says that it is oily. It is double-tongued or false or divided. So right there, we're kind of introduced to the sort of divided heart of sin.

But layered on that is also this other metaphor, which we encounter in verse 1, is that of the vine, of this vine and the fruit that it produces.

And really the chapter kind of goes on to outline that fruit, the sort of false fruit of this oily or divided heart. And actually, it may be surprising that we think of kind of biblical metaphors of the vineyard and vine and so on as used quite frequently within the Scriptures.

But it may be surprising to note that often when the vineyard or the vine is used, it's often a symbol of Israel's unfaithfulness or sinfulness, not of their fruitfulness.

You can look at, for example, Isaiah chapter 5. It's page 690 in these church Bibles. You'll be using it by Isaiah chapter 5, verse 1. The Lord says through Isaiah, I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard.

[7:21] My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up. He cleared of its stones. He planted it with the choicest wines. He built a watchtower in it and he cut out a winepress as well.

Then he looked for a crop of good grapes and it yielded only bad fruit. Similar thing in Jeremiah 2, verse 21. You can look at it, page 757, if you're looking at, again, the Blue Bibles.

I had planted you like a choice vine, says the Lord, of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt and wild vine?

And Ezekiel, something similar. Sam, something similar. We have the same here in Hosea chapter 10, verse 1. Israel is a spreading vine. He produces forth fruit for himself, i.e. not for the Lord.

And as his fruit increased, he built more false altars. And as his land prospered from the proceeds of sin, he adorned his sacred stones.

[8:22] And then in verse 13, but you have planted wickedness and you have reaped evil. You have eaten the fruit of deception because you have depended on your own strength and on your own warriors.

So we can see that sin in them, sin in us, produces arrogant independence of God, doesn't it?

Rather than a heart that is yielded to him, it produces, verses 1 to 3, arrogant independence.

That they, and of course we, do things in our own strength, in our own wisdom, our own way, for our own purposes.

And we baptize or we adorn that kind of thinking with sparkles, if you like, for our false altars, of our own religiosity, based on our own half-baked notions of the gospel.

And I know that is true for us because it's true in my heart of just when you know that you've gone off in your own strength and again, I can do this, I will do it in my, you know, in my wisdom and in my way.

[9:31] And we've talked about how you kind of see that in the prosperity gospel or in the liberalized gospel, but we need to kind of reflect how we see that in our own hearts, don't we?

how we can have divided hearts in regard to kind of trust and faithfulness in the Lord. How you, I, live our lives and how when we have that divided heart, pride comes in, doesn't it?

Pride is this sort of motivator that thinks, I'm going to do it in my own strength. And so pride stamps out the work of God in us and produces ugly fruit, doesn't it?

But actually when we yield to the spirit, when we yield to the work of God, he wants to cultivate in us the opposite of that, doesn't he? That humble, beautiful, humble dependence that desires to bear fruit for him, not principally for ourselves.

And I think that kind of notion is important when we think about the ministry opportunities that God gives to us, whether that's within the fellowship or in wider ministries or in a workplace in our home, whatever it is that we're involved in, that actually, the ministries that he's given to us, it's not principally about us, about what we can get out of it and how good it's going to make us feel.

[10:57] Therein lies danger. We start to do it in our own strength, in our own way, rather than in his way, doing it for ourselves rather than from him.

We can use the ministries that he gives, good things that he gives to us to prop up a fragile identity or ego. We can use it as a means of justification to atone for or excuse our wrong behavior.

Oh, I'll make up for it, Lord, by doing this and that for you. Or we can use it to think that somehow if we do that for him, he will love us more.

And in each of those kind of wrong ways of operating, we step out of gospel liberty that God wants us to enjoy because our justification is nothing other than in Jesus Christ alone.

And that is for us a source of joy and amazement. It both humbles us and gives us confidence as we step out. We don't need to use these things to justify us, prop up our ego or whatever.

[12:05] We are loved in the Lord because of our faith in Jesus Christ and in nothing else. It can't make these things. We'll never make him love us more. And we can use the things that he's given to us as an overflow of the joy that we already have because we know that we are loved.

And these things are done as a love gift in return to him. Not in our own strength, but in humble, confident dependence on him. So how do we kind of keep ourselves from sort of going into that self-authenticating mode or self-justifying mode or own strength mode and keep that kind of humble, sweet dependence on him?

Well, I guess part of the thing is just to kind of make sure that we have a place in our day where actually we are consciously setting aside a time to just be with him.

Do you have a time in the day? Do you have a place in your home where you can go? It might be a corner in the chair of a room where you can close the door and just sit and be in his presence a while each day.

It might be, you know, if you're commuting, a long commute, it might be on the chair on the train, it might be in the driver's seat of your long commute where we strive to, not that, let that just be a kind of chore or a thing that we always do, a head exercise, but the place that we come where we delight to humble ourselves and get that heart level with the Lord where we're honest with him about how we're feeling, about what we're thinking, that we might see things as he sees them, that he might deliver us from a false or divided heart, that he might deliver us from pride and our self-justification, keep us in that beautiful gospel liberty as he reminds us of how much he loves us and how he has loved us, going deep with him and asking that the Lord would even deliver us from our own deceptions when we can't see just how, in a sense, we're lying to ourselves and deceiving ourselves.

[14:23] And it's important that we come with that heart level honesty before the Lord because we need to take the Bible's assessment of our hearts as we think about sin's divided heart seriously.

Jeremiah helps us with that. There's a familiar verse in Jeremiah 17 verse 9. Again, you can find it on page 777 in the church Bibles but where the Lord through Jeremiah reminds us the heart, well, it's deceitful above all things and beyond cure.

Who could understand it? And of course, he's given us the Lord. But we need to, as we come, say, Lord, in the light of that, that my own heart can deceive me. Would you help me to have a heart and a conscience that is tender?

Tender to you. Heart and conscience that's tender to you but a mind that is tough, tough and strong in the truths of your word and what it says and the truths and the promises that it brings to bear on my life situations.

See, sin's deceitfulness, when it gets to work in the heart, gives us the opposite. Rather than tender hearts and consciences, it gives us hard hearts and consciences to the truth and the light of God's words.

[15:37] And it will refute and deny that our hearts are hard or our minds are hard. And rather than having sort of minds that are tough in the truth of God, there are minds that are soft in the truth of God because we don't know them and we're not yielded to them.

And again, we know that dynamic is true in our life. I know it's true because it's true in my life. So what was the consequences for God's people who were stubbornly waywards?

Well, it's verse 2, isn't it? For this unfruitful vine, now they must bear the guilt. Sin, you know, could actually really pay dividends. We see that in verse 1, that they become prosperous.

But actually, sin demands a huge cut of that wage, doesn't it? Paul reminds us of that in Romans 3, verse 23, that the wages of sin ultimately, they may be a moment of prosperity, but ultimately, they are death.

So rather than bear fruit for the glory of God, they are, as he had gifted to them, this gift of life and all that they had and the abundance that they had, they sought to bear it for themselves and for their own benefit and therefore, independent of him, bear the guilt for their own sin.

[17:03] They want to live independently of God and bear the fruit for themselves and so they have to pay the cost of their own sin rather than receive from the one who wants them to live in joyful dependence upon him and receive from, and let him bear the cost for their sin.

And we know that that cost is coming, verse 2, that death and destruction of exile is on its way. The Lord will, and in that time, the Lord will demolish these altars and sacred stones that they've set up in their arrogance and in their pride.

They'll cry out, verse 3, that they have no king or even if they did, they could do nothing. In other words, their trust and their political initiatives are just swept away like a twig on a river, verse 7, and a vision of the poo sticks is that the twig is sort of swept away because the scriptures are really clear that God opposes the pride, Proverbs 3, 34, but gives grace to the humble, James 4, verse 6. And so, we can see something of sin's divided heart and what it produces in us, that arrogant independence, but also, we see verse 4, it produces strife and broken relationships because they, he says, they make many promises and they take false oaths and vows and they make agreements and therefore lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in a plowed field.

See, sin's divided and deceitful and false heart creates strife with false oaths and false promises and false vows and therefore, folks, you know, it creates this kind of tension and folks, lawsuits and so on.

[18:51] They are a poison in the community. And again, we see how, you know, God set up this beautiful covenant relationship with them and he gave them this sort of 10 laws for living, if you like, words for life that were to bring life to them and as they disobeyed them, they brought nothing but death and decay within the community to what was supposed to be good.

And in verses 5 to 9, you see, sin's divided, deceitful, false heart producing false worship, false priests, leaders, and false hope. And verse 5, instead of being distressed by their sin, rather the distress by the poor calf idol that's been carried off as plunder by the Assyrians.

It produces in them this false hope and misplaced hope in verses 5 to 8. So rather, instead of trusting in the eternal, steadfast gods who cannot be moved, who cannot just be picked up as loot, they're trusting in an idol that they've set up principally in Bethel.

The word Bethel, Beth in Hebrew is house, El is God, so that it's set up in what was supposed to be the house of God in verse 5. But rather, Hosea changes the name and saying, rather, you've set it up rather in Beth Avon, which you'll see in your footnotes, is the house of wickedness.

And their idolatrous priests, verse 5, have been preaching what their itching ears want to hear, which is and is ultimately gangrenous. And again, like the writer of Ecclesiastes says, there's nothing new under the sun.

[20:37] What we see in the Old Testament, we also see in the New Testament. Paul warns about these various things as he re-sees just how knowing the Scriptures, sin's divided heart just recycles the same old issues.

And so he warns Timothy in 2 Timothy 4, 3, there will be a time when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

And they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. Often folks say, oh, if only we could get back to the New Testament church and New Testament times. Well, it was exactly the same times as they are now and as they were in Hosea's day because the heart of man is exactly

the same.

And then he goes on in 2 Timothy 2, that teaching is gangrenous. It just brings death. And we see how that kind of, that these things have, the rot is long set in in verse 9 where he mentions the days of Gibeah.

That might not be familiar immediately to you, but the story actually as a recount to it is found in Judges chapters 19 to 21.

[21:54] The Judges, as you'll know, were like clan chiefs and it was, the book of Judges is a kind of, it's a cyclical book where there's a sort of cycle of people walking away from the Lord.

The Lord sends a judge or a deliverer and he brings them back to himself. It's all often very low grade kind of spirituality. Folks are pretty clueless. But the long and the short of this time in Judges 19 to 21 is that it's a sort of Sodom and Gomorrah type incident involving a clueless priest gang rape and murder.

And this time rather than being amongst the pagan Sodomites, it's actually amongst the people of God in the Benjamites in Israel. The moral rot that is present in Hosea has deep roots, God is saying.

But actually in the midst of this we can hear God's heart cry behind it all. God is saying through Hosea that as you live life this way it is the same as it is with a husband who has a wife who has been unfaithful and gone off with other men.

It is heartbreaking to me. You know, the spouse saying to a husband or wife, you know, oh, I love you and gives flowers and gifts but classically is living that double life.

[23:19] You know, they've got a late night at work or they've got the work night out or they've got a weekend business trip of their working at home in the daytime just jumping into bed with other men or women.

That is what it feels, that is as heart, what that, as heartbreaking as that is to somebody involved in that. That is how I feel when you're walking away from me. that. So God appeals to them, calling to them in love, longing that they would live in righteousness and truth with him.

Hear the appeal in verse 12 where he says, break up the ground of your hard and divided hearts. Sow not the poison of verse 4 and strife but rather righteousness, that right relationship with me and with one another that comes from living, walking aright with me and reap the unfailing love that I have for you in all the areas of life that I have for you.

So seek the Lord that I might share righteousness, that I might share a blessing on you. Hear the call, hear the heart cry of God behind all of this.

But what is the, how does this work out in our lives? Well if chapter 10 is what we see is an unfaithful vine that produces the fruit of unfaithfulness, where is our hope?

[24:47] Well of course our hope is in the faithful vine and what he says in John chapter 15 if you want to look it up look it up with me.

John chapter 15 I'm reading verses 4 and 5. Remain in me says Jesus the faithful vine as I remain in you for no branch can bear fruit by itself it must remain in the vine neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me for I am the vine and you are the branches if you remain in me and I in you you will bear much fruit apart from me you can do nothing.

See what he's asking of us? Hear the good news behind this so there we started with our heart cry a heart that is faithful and tender to the Lord we'll hear the Lord speak into our lives and say here is wonder here is joy for what I ask of you is to come and to abide remain in me and draw from me by my holiness with a life giving sap for your life each day come abide set that place aside in your day to have that moment to reset before the Lord to come and remind yourself that you are abiding in him not just at that moment but in the whole of the day his presence abiding presence is available for you so then in chapter 10 then we have something of the sins divided heart but in chapter 11 God reveals something of his heart so when we speak of God's divided heart you know it is what we we don't mean that he is uncertain or inconsistent like us he is perfectly holy and perfectly loving at the same time and in these verses that holy tension within the heart of God is kind of demonstrated his perfect justice demanding judgment for sin and yet his covenant love and compassion crying out things like how can I give you up so we we're sort of revealed in kind of very human terms that tension within God's character that he is able to hold perfectly that we will see he holds perfectly and finds perfect resolution ultimately in the cross doesn't it and there are various places where the Lord reveals his heart aren't there in the scriptures famously as we looked at gentle and lowly the book together in Matthew chapter 11 verse 29 where Jesus reveals his heart

as being just that gentle and lowly or humble and in these first four verses in chapter 11 here are really

I guess the Old Testament equivalent of that where God reveals something of his heart his paternal heart his perfect fatherly heart to his people actually to you and me and what we see as we look at these verses in chapter 11 is that his heart is tender and so you know when I said that our hearts we want to keep them tender to him that there was only ever responding to what he is his heart is first of all and that is revealed as tender it's since the tender heart of God in these verses verse 1 when Israel was a child I loved him I loved him and out of Egypt I called him my son God is pictured as the one true constant the perfect father who is always present who has loved his people from their infancy from the get go you know parents love their children whether it's you know even from the womb praying for them talking with them before they even arrive enjoying their presence before they're even physically present outside of the womb with them there's just love from a parent to a child that is the love that

[29 : 30] God wants to remind you that he has in his fatherly care for you this morning verse 2 but it says but the more you were called the more you went away from me they sacrificed to the bals and they burned incense to images like rebellious teenagers the more that they were called the more that they went away lured by their fleshly appetites they find momentary satisfaction in things like the immorality of Baal worship priests and leaders and people alike they were spending the very blessings God had given them to fund their rebellion against him verse 3 it was I who taught Ephraim to walk taking them by the arms but they did not realize it was I who healed them almost like God is depending on how old you are God is looking through the old family albums if you are really old you have the old family albums with the cellophane thing and the pictures that were printed out and stuck in them they might be in black and white they might be in colour they might be date stamped over the years different things but it's as if or more modern if you have got an app or a widget on your phone and the collections come up each day don't they you see one and it's as if God is looking at these photo reminders reminding himself looking at the thing and saying oh there is one where

I taught him to walk another one where I carried him in my arms tired asleep he reminds them that the way in which he fathered his households was with the cords of human kindness verse 4 and with ties of love that is how God deals with his people that is the kind of God that we worship the one who we give our lives to who deals with us in kindness and in love then he says verse 4 to them I was like the one who lifts a child to his cheek again maybe a wee film reel might come out the young child running to him huge smile on their face his arms are open wide as they jump into his arms and he closes his arms around them and gives them a hug lifts them up close to his cheek and in that moment it's a picture of mutual love and joy and affection of peace of deep contentment together isn't it beautiful intimate picture where God reveals his heart for us you know not all of us experience fatherhood in a perfect way some of our fathers were less than perfect and did us a great deal of harm some of us are great fathers and you know image something of God's fatherly care but irrespective of our experience of imperfect fathers or good fathers hear the perfect father speaking to you this morning of his love for you and if your fatherly care was not great then let him heal that in you as he says

I am your perfect father always with you there for you I saw you in your infancy I watched you grow and now you are mine and I am yours beautiful tender picture in verse 4 I bent down I fed! you know that another picture of just those spoon feeding open wide choo choo trains coming beautiful intimate moments aren't they that you look back with of just joy and affection in the heart of a parent towards a child we're taken aren't we in these verses into the inner thoughts of the father of that father that Jesus portrays in the parable of the prodigal son aren't we can you hear him calling his heart longing for the prodigal to return maybe you've come this morning and you've been a prodigal you've been running away from the Lord you hear this morning as you hear these words you know he's calling you know he's calling you can feel the tongue on your hearts as he overwhelms you with his love and longing for you to return to him to run to him to confess what you've done to let him wrap his arms around you pick you up and hold you close to his cheek and as

Jesus describes him kissing him kiss you welcome you love you and know that joy and that peace and that love and the new life that he wants to give to you and for you that you've been running away from call him on while he is near don't be like Israel refusing to repent facing wrath rather than

receiving mercy in verses 5 to 7 but even then even then we see as the passage goes on his heart is divided where we see that tussle in his heart that which is just and his mercy beginning to also come to bear none of us can truly grasp the mind of God but here he communicates doesn't he in this personified manner in a way that we can grasp Calvin described that when God speaks he lisps it's almost like baby talk to him so that we can understand but he makes it abundantly clear doesn't he hear here as we see something of the merciful heart the covenant faithfulness of God coming to bear as he says how can

[35 : 41] I give you up Ephraim how can I hand you over Israel how can I treat you like Adma how can I make you like Zeboi and these are cities that were destroyed along with Sodom he said my heart is changed within me all my compassion is aroused 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 they will follow the Lord verse 10 he will roar like a lion when he roars his children will come trembling from the west they'll come from Egypt trembling like sparrows from Assyria from the north fluttering like doves Israel will go into exile will be exiled by the Assyrians and the land will be resettled the Assyrians and the Babylonians as well would take folks out and from other lands that they'd conquered they would put them in and that's part of the beef with the

Samaritans that we read about in the Gospels but as he speaks in a sense he's got one eye to a distant horizon where he would bring about the solution to that heart tension that he feels from the one who is God and not a man verse nine because as with the failed vine in chapter 10 came the perfect true the better the greater vine so also here as we read in chapter 11 verse one of the kind of failed sun if you like there comes in a distant horizon the perfect sun and in fact this verse in chapter verse one is quoted in Matthew's gospel chapter two verse 17 out of Egypt I've called my son Jesus came the perfect son from whom all the spiritual descendants the redeemed of God would come Jesus the perfect son who would come unlike the elder and the prodigal and not sort of stomp off in a rage would come and lay down his life on the cross for the prodigals for you and for me to satisfy the conflicted heart of the father this divided heart his need for truth and justice and that desire for mercy for on the cross as the hymn says it is the place where wrath and mercy meet isn't it and as we begin to close the banner going to come up so we can start you notice in these two chapters actually two roars going on the roar in the last part of chapter 11 is contrasted with the roar in chapter 10 verse 14 the roar in chapter 10 verse 14 is the roar of battle that will rise against his people so that all their fortresses will be devastated this is the roar of condemnation isn't it of the wrath of

God against sin but there's a second roar and it is the roar not of condemnation but of salvation in chapter 11 verses 10 to 11 for they will follow the Lord he will roar like a lion when he roars his children will come trembling from the west and from Egypt and so on it is the roar of this salvation of the savior and where do we hear that roar well I wonder if we heard it on the cross because remember what happened there the way that it's described that he cried out in a loud voice that he roared and what did he roar he said it is finished the price is paid that is the roar of the lion of Judah the lamb that was slain to the nations and to all the ages to come now salvation's work is done it is finished the price is paid for you and for me for our sins and it is paid in full so come and as he roars the roar of salvation he is ushering in isn't it the fulfillment of the words spoken through the prophet Ezekiel in chapter 36 verse 24 and following where he said for I will take you out of the nations I will gather you from all the land I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean I will cleanse you from all your impurities from all your idols I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you and give you a heart of flesh to replace that heart of stone I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws maybe today you need to surrender your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ who has fought for you on the cross and he has won and is offering salvation and new life to you come come like the prophet in repentance and faith and receive the new heart and the new birth or maybe like me at times or now you're feeling that your heart has just grown a bit stony it is proud it is divided but you long that it will be tender that tender heart of flesh that is filled with his spirit that longs for more of him in our lives to abide to dwell in his presence continually daily no matter wherever we find ourselves so come come afresh this morning and true repentance come and acknowledge your desire to abide and to remain in him the true and the faithful one let me pray

God our father we acknowledge that as we have gone through the book of we find these chapters hard and yet we find them liberating they do reveal something of the truth of our own heart and it is

hard to look at we are so glad that you show us and reveal us your hearts and we hear you calling behind every single verse come come to me all you who are tired and weary come abide come dwell come remain come know my love for you with all the love that an infinite heart is able to give come receive my love this morning oh lord we bless you for these amazing things we bless you in [42:47] Jesus name