

Foundation of the sermon

Purpose

Cause reflection and repentance.

Principle Idea:

The listener should seek to understand his/her relationship with God. The need to see if their life-style is trying God's patience and realize that it eventually runs out.

Type of Outline

Textual based on Hosea 9:10-17

I. Introduction

Have you ever seen something that was unusual or unique and you just had to have it. Some people a few years ago had to buy a Delorian car. It was different. It was a luxury car. It had those doors that opened like wings. Yet within a short period of time the company was bankrupt. Those that had bought one had a car that was not all that it was cracked up to be. They had a vehicle that couldn't be repaired.

Once God found something unique and different. It was the nation of Israel. Shortly after He had made them His people He had buyer's remorse. Israel which had looked so good, and had so much potential turned out from God's perspective to be a lemon.

This is the theme of today's passage. It is found in:

Hosea 9:10-17

10 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went to Baal-peor, and separated themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved.

11 As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

12 Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, that there shall not be a man left: yea, woe also to them when I depart from them!

13 Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place: but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.

14 Give them, O LORD: what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

15 All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes are revolvers.

16 Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb.

17 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

II. Body

A. Grapes in the wilderness. (10)

1. It was an unexpected surprise to find grapes growing wild in the desert. God says that is what it was like when He redeemed Israel from Egypt.
2. It was good from God's perspective to take this nation and pick its fruit. He looked at them like a fig tree putting forth its fruit for the first time. It is sad to realize that their fruit was no good. In fact Christ during His lifetime curses a fig tree, again representing Israel because it does not produce fruit. This was during a trip to Jerusalem just before His passion. We find this story in Matthew 21:19-21:

"19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. 20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! 21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done."

3. It had been about 700 years since God had taken them from Egypt. At the very beginning they showed their true nature as a sinful nation.
4. Shortly after Israel had left Egypt they committed a great sin. This sin is recorded in Numbers 25:1-4. It says of this sin:

Numbers 25:1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. 2 And they called

the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. 3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. (Num 25:1 KJV)

It is this sin that is referred to here in verse 10. God had recently taken them from Egypt, and here they commit a great sin. In essence God is telling them. "I saw great potential in you, but from the very beginning you were rotten to the core." Now I am not putting words in His mouth. He says "you were like grapes found in the wilderness" and yet "they went to Baal-peor ..."

5. This verse of scripture begins of section of Hosea that recounts the sins of Israel throughout their history.

B. Cutting down the bad vine. (11-14)

1. In Isaiah chapter 5 God once again compares Israel to a choice grape vine. In Isaiah the focus is Judah, but Israel is also mentioned. Let's look at that comparison. Turn to Isaiah 5 and let's look at verse 1-7 :

KJV Isaiah 5:1 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: 2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. 4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? 5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry. (Isa 5:1 KJV)

2. When Cindy and I moved into our house in Arkansas we found that the previous owner had planted fruit trees in the yard. Most of them were natural to Arkansas. In fact most of them he had rescued from a local drainage ditch before it was cleaned out for the season. One tree he had bought at a store. It was an apple tree. He actually had unknowingly planted it in a bad spot. This tree never grew straight. It never produced a lick of fruit. Cindy did everything to try and encourage it to produce fruit. She pruned it. She tried to straighten it. For years I said let's cut it down. Cindy wouldn't let me. She said let's give it another year. Again the tree would not produce fruit. It finally died of natural causes.

It had such promise but it failed to produce. It just wouldn't do what it was suppose to do. Eventually you have to destroy the plant. This is what God is doing with verses 11-14.

C. Bad fruit must be destroyed (15-17)

1. The reference to Gibeah in this passage is to an incident in Judges 19:16-30. This incident speaks of a murder and rape carried out by the the male population. It speaks to the total depravity that had possessed the nation.
2. God here promises to cut-off the fruit from Israel. He will no longer allow them to reproduce.

III. Conclusion

God saw great potential in Israel when He took them out of the land of Egypt. From the very first days of their existence as a nation they had rebelled. They had not acted as the chosen nation. God had to throw them out like bad fruit. He had to cut-down their wild vine.

The questions each of us have to answer is what did God see in me when He first called me? Have I lived up to the potential that God wanted me to develop? Have I continued to be a rebellious person, having refused to follow God'

If the answer to these questions make you uncomfortable, and leave you wondering about your relationship with God, you need to do something. You can either commit to changing your life, or continue down the road you have gone. God was patient with Israel for nearly 700 years, but His patience ran

out. Has God been patient with you for a long time? Is His patience running out. Now is the time -- repent and seek God's help for your sins.

Title: A wild vine.