In relating these principles the Lord said to the prophet Hosea, "Go and marry a girl who is a prostitute, so that some of her children will be born to you from other men. This will illustrate the way my people have been untrue to Me, committing open adultery against Me by worshiping other gods" (Hosea 1:2, LB).

What about it?! Isn't it time you turned or returned to the God who loves you? "Come, and let us return unto the LORD...I don't want your sacrifices—I want your love; I don't want your offerings—I want you to know Me (says the LORD)" (Hosea 6:1, 6).

King David in the Old Testament committed adultery with Bathsheba and killed her husband to cover it up (2 Samuel 11-12). After being confronted by Nathan the prophet for his sin, David cried out, "Against you LORD, ...have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" (Psalm 51:4). "Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood... and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7). "Then I will teach your ways to other sinners, and they—guilty like me—will repent and return to You" (Psalm 51:13, LB). What about it?! Do you need the forgiveness that God so freely offers? Do you need to turn or return to the God who loves you?

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The Pain of Infidelity

It has been said that 75% of all couples will need counseling at some time. One out of two married couples will divorce eventually with the average duration of the marriage being 7 years. For people drawn together only by sexual attraction the marriage will be only a 3 to 5 year duration. 50% of marriages within the first 5 years will experience an extramarital affair. 37% of ministers will be involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in their church. Although love, marriage and relationships are foundational to our well-being, there is no other subject that has started with such hope and expectation that has failed so regularly as love.

John and Sally were married for 20 years, with two children, Judy (17) and Trey (12). Sally was devastated when John told his wife he'd been seeing another woman and wanted a divorce. They had always struggled to communicate but Sally never thought it would come to this. After John moved out and found his own apartment he never witnessed the continual heartache, confusion and rejection he caused his wife and children. Only briefly did John ever stop by, even then it was only a cold and uncaring visit.

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Several months after John left his family he finally met his match. Judy his 17 year old daughter had written her Dad a letter.

Dear Daddy,

I wanted many times to sit and talk with you but I know as a family we may never see you again. I realize that you're dating another woman and that you and mom may never be together again. I can't accept this and every night I cry myself to sleep thinking about you and our family. Trey also as well as mom is very hurt.

Dad, I dreamed last night that we were all involved in a car accident. Trey and I were riding in the back seat and mom was driving. Suddenly we looked up and a car had swerved into our lane and was heading right for us. As it came closer we looked and it was you driving. We had a terrible crash. Mom was thrown into the steering wheel and a piece of the gear shift almost pierced her heart. Trey was thrown from the backseat into a window and his head went through broken glass. I was thrown out of the car and broke my arm and leg. We were all laying there at the accident and didn't know how to help each other. What is worse is that we didn't know what happened to you.

Later, in the hospital mom, Trey and I missed you very much. We often talked about you and wondered if you were hurt as bad as we were. Were you hurt and in pain as we

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Later, in the hospital mom, Trey and I missed you very much. We often talked about you and wondered if you were hurt as bad as we were. Were you hurt and in pain as we are? We need to see you and are here for you, because we love you.

Your daughter,

Judy

A week after receiving this letter John came home. He told Judy he had hurt them so bad that he thought he could never return. "I never knew the extent of pain that I caused you and the truth was that I hurt pretty bad myself. I want your mother and I to seek counseling."

Did you know that the true pain of this story is told by God in relating His relationship to you? God speaks of all of us as having gone astray (Isaiah 53:6). He states, "You are like an unfaithful wife who loves her husband's enemies. Don't you realize that making friends with God's enemies...makes you an enemy of God?" (James 4:4; LB). "For your Maker is your husband; the LORD of hosts is His name" (Isaiah 54:5).

The Bible shows us that a good marriage is a small scale model of what our relationship with God should be (Ephesians 5:31-32). In a marriage relationship there should be a "knowing" (Genesis 4:1), a "oneness" (Genesis 2:24), being ravished by love (Proverbs 5:19), cleaving (Genesis 2:24), joining (Matthew 19:6), and a forsaking of all others (Genesis 2:24). Marriage involves a covenant (vow) that forsakes others to refocus your lives on each other (Genesis 2:24; Ezekiel 16:8).

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