



Say to wisdom, “you are my sister” And make understanding your closest friend. For they will keep you from the immoral woman. Proverbs 7:4-5a

**Women’s Discipleship Group – 2006**  
**HELPMATES, HANDMAIDENS & HARLOTS ONLINE BIBLE STUDY**  
**LOVE LIFE SERIES**  
**LESSON #3 Love and Forgiveness Part 3**  
**THE HARLOT**

**Website:** [www.terrimcfaddin.org](http://www.terrimcfaddin.org)  
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**Definitions:** *Helpmate – Handmaiden – Harlot*

**Helpmate:** A married woman who is committed to the well-being of her husband.

**Handmaiden:** A married or unmarried woman who is committed to serving the Lord.

**Harlot:** A married or unmarried woman who will sacrifice her soul and body for personal gain.

**Scripture Focus:**

**Harlot:**

**Hosea 1:2** – (Living Translation) When the LORD first began speaking to Israel through Hosea, He said to him, “Go and marry a harlot, so some of her children will be born to you from other men. This will illustrate the way My people have been untrue to Me, openly committing adultery against the LORD by worshipping other gods.”

**Hosea 3:1** – (Living Translation) Then the LORD said to me, “Go and get your wife again. Bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery. For the LORD still loves Israel even though the people have turned to other gods, offering them choice gifts.”

**Forgiveness:** The act of renouncing anger and releasing a fault or offense. To grant a full pardon to one who has wronged you.

**OPENING STATEMENT:**

One of the deepest hurts that can be inflicted in a love relationship is the act of unfaithfulness. When partners give their love and affection to someone other than their covenant partners, a floodgate of pain and disappointment opens wide. Unfaithfulness requires dishonesty, betrayal, lies, deception, manipulation and more. Many of you know the feeling. Poor Hosea must have been devastated when he discovered that his wife was a religious harlot who worshipped in the Temple of Baal. In this pagan practice, Gomer would take the money that her husband gave her and buy gifts that were offered up to the god Baal. Then, as a part of a religious ritual, she would have sex with the men who came to the temple. The Bible says that she became pregnant more than once by men who were not her husband. Some of you may have experienced this type of betrayal. You discovered that the man who claimed to love and cherish you was in fact, unfaithful.

Perhaps you were the one who was unfaithful and broke your husband's heart. Imagine how God feels when a woman who claims to love Him takes the gifts that He blessed her with and gives them to other men whom she worships and adores. She pretends to be faithful by going to church, doing good works, and talking about how much she loves the Lord but deep down inside she is a spiritual harlot. *Isaiah 29:13 – And so the Lord says, “These people say they are mine. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”*

In spite of all of the harlot's wrong doing, the Lord is willing to forgive. *Hebrews 8:12 – “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”* The Lord urged Hosea to forgive Gomer and to take her back – even while she still loved adultery. *Hosea 3:1 – Bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery.* I must admit that it would be difficult for me to forgive a person who hurt and betrayed me and still refused to repent. But the Bible shows me another point of view: *Romans 5:8 – But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* As you think about forgiving the person or people who hurt you, remember that Jesus forgave us and paid for our sins long before we came to a place of repentance.

After reading this lesson, you may find yourself in one of the following places:

#### **A. The need to forgive.**

1. You have become a prisoner of hurt and anger. Sometimes it's hard to admit that you have refused to forgive, so you secretly remain stuck in the past. You say that you have forgiven the person who betrayed or hurt you, but if bitter feelings remain in your heart, then the process of forgiveness is not complete. When you begin to open up, acknowledge your real feelings, and fully release the offender to God, the Lord will bring complete healing and renewal to your life.
2. You don't know how to get rid of your negative thoughts and memories. Begin to think like Jesus. What did He do when people misused Him and broke His heart? He said – *Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34)*. As you focus on the Word of God (especially scriptures on forgiveness) and the examples that Jesus left for us to follow, your mind will be renewed and you will begin to move forward to the blessings of the future.
3. You cannot forgive someone who continues to do you wrong and they will not change or repent. In order to move toward spiritual maturity, you must practice the principles of forgiveness whether or not your offender chooses to repent. The Bible tells us that if we refuse to forgive others, the Lord will refuse to forgive us. This would prevent us from being blessed and leave us in a state of spiritually immaturity. *Matthew 6:14-15 – “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”*

#### **B. The need to be forgiven.**

1. I feel that my sins are too terrible to be forgiven. The greatest lie that Satan tries to get us to believe is that if we do too much wrong the Lord will not forgive us. If you read the Bible, you will find that the Apostle Paul persecuted the church and had people killed;

the Apostle Peter lied and betrayed Jesus. Seven demons were cast out of Mary Magdalene. All of these and many more received forgiveness and were used mightily by God. *Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard.*

2. You asked for God’s forgiveness, but you returned to the same sin or lifestyle. Even if you fail to get it right the first time — try, try again. The Lord is merciful and longsuffering. Ask for His forgiveness. Continue to pray and ask the Lord to give you the strength to resist temptation. Stop and think about what will happen if you continue to return to a foolish lifestyle of sin. *Proverbs 26:11 – As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.*

3. You believe the Lord has forgiven you, but you still feel guilty. The forgiveness of God has nothing to do with how you feel. Once the Lord forgives our sins, He remembers them no more, (*See Psalms 103:12*). However, Satan will hang around and attempt to remind us of our sins. When this happens, remind Satan that your sins have been forgiven and washed away by the blood of Jesus. *Romans 8:34(LB) – Who will condemn us? Will Christ Jesus? No, for He is the one who died for us and was raised to life for us and is sitting at the place of highest honor next to God, pleading for us.*

#### **YOUR STORY:**

1. Has the Lord forgiven you for what you considered a terrible sin? Tell us your story.
2. Have you ever had to forgive someone who hurt you deeply? What was the process like?

#### **OBSERVATIONS – AND PERSONALIZATION:**

1. Read *Hosea 2:1-5*. Do you think the Lord meant what He said about Israel or was He speaking out of anger and hurt?

Have you ever said things out of anger that you really didn’t mean? Please explain.

2. Read *Hosea 2:11-15*. Why do you think the Lord first punished Israel and then forgave her?

3. Read *Hosea 3:1-2*. What would be your response to a man who was willing to forgive you in spite of your sinful lifestyle? What would be your response to the Lord’s forgiveness?