Approximately 30-60% of all married people in the U.S. will engage in infidelity at some point in their marriage. If these figures factor in the high divorce rate (53%), then the numbers probably lean to the higher end. Because extra-marital affairs are most often kept a secret, it's hard to pin down exact numbers.

Some statistics state that 2-3% of all children are the product of infidelity. Others say it is becoming more common among people under the age of 30. Office romances are also happening more as some people spend increasing amounts of time with people they know at work than with their own spouse. The internet has certainly contributed to making it easier for people to cheat on their spouses. In more than one study, men are more likely to be unfaithful than women.¹

Hosea felt the pain of infidelity. Gomer broke her marriage vows and was unfaithful to her husband. The neighbors knew about it. People whispered behind his back. Hosea grieved. Like a walking parable, this first of the Minor Prophets raised a voice against the unfaithfulness of God’s people. Israel was the Lord’s bride and she turned to prostituting herself before Baal. Hosea didn’t just “preach theory”, he spoke from his heart.

The truth about Israel’s “cheating” on their vows is woven tightly to the personal experience of Hosea. The voice of the seer comes from the gut-wrenching reality of his own broken marriage. The wake-up call he shouts to a nation enamored in soap-opera living falls mostly on deaf ears. People don’t want to hear or change. Perhaps this is why God chose Hosea’s life to shock complacent Israel into seeing the desperateness of their spiritual adultery.
This week's Sabbath school lesson is as fresh as the statistics of infidelity and divorce in our world. The Lord still longs for us to be exclusively God's bride. Christians still are tempted to turn away from their first love and go after other gods. What are the idols of this age? Who are the spiritual lovers that draw us from God? Where are the houses of prostitution—is this language too strong?—that tempt people to turn away from the Groom who first loved us?

Hosea’s story may be easily understood in our time—but his next steps are what amaze us most. What does he do when he discovers Gomer’s unfaithfulness? Here is where the statistics part company. God has an unusually persistent love that cannot be measured.

~ cr

1. Truth About Deception

How to Order Sharing Scripture

1. Order this week's Sharing Scripture study guide for $1.49, [click here].
2. Order the entire electronic 2nd Quarter Sharing Scripture for $8.75 [Click Here].