

## **BLOW YOUR WIND ON OUR MINDS AND HEARTS, HOLY SPIRIT**

John 3: 8, Hosea 6: 1-3, – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

March is the windy month. Last Saturday warnings were out for 47 mph winds. A few weeks ago in Cheyenne on I-25, the wind was blowing so hard that semi-trailers blew over. The pictures were in the Rocket-Miner. The winds were hurricane speed, at 105 mph. Although we can't see where wind is coming from or where it is going, we can see the evidence that it is blowing by looking at bending trees, by looking at white caps on Flaming Gorge, and by feeling the blasts against us as we try to stay on the road as it hits us full force. Jesus used this example of the wind to describe His own movement in our lives when we come to faith in Him, or when we yield to His Spirit's leading. When God's Holy Spirit blows upon our hearts and minds, we will no longer be embarrassed about what we think and dwell on, because we know God is in full control of our hearts and minds. God has placed on my heart tonight John 3:8. "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." God can even use painful, sharp, cold Wyoming wind to turn us to Him.

Along with our text in John 3: 8, I want us also to turn to an Old Testament prophet, Hosea. Hosea was a prophet who longed to experience the movement of God in his life and in the lives of his people, the Jews. I believe he would have welcomed the wind of the Spirit that Jesus spoke about with Nicodemus in John 3: 8. Yet, Hosea knew that the movement of God is not always pleasant--at least at first. Listen as I read Hosea 6: 1-3. It sounds like the prophet was preaching at Snow Camp in Judah. His words are strong and they sound a bit frightening. He wrote, "Come, let us return to the Lord. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us; but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days: He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain; Like the spring rain watering the earth." Hosea used nature words, but he did not mention wind as Jesus did. Rather, He speaks of God moving by using the dawn and spring rain. Do we want God's wind, His spring rain, and His dawn? Tonight, I want to get us started on our Snow Camp theme—"Where do our minds dwell in 2012? I want to suggest two ways God moves in our lives to change what our minds dwell on—these are two ways that God may well use in each of our lives during this weekend. If we are serious with God, saying, "Change my heart and mind, O Lord, then expect God will get down to business with those who get down to business with Him. God moves. He changes our hearts and minds. He

blows on us. He dawns on us. He makes things dawn on us that never ever dawned on us before as He draws us close to Himself. God can send spring rains that can come in as a flood, and often those floods are a flood of tears. What will happen if God comes down among us with His wind, His dawning and his spring rains here at Snow Camp 2012? What will happen? In each message, I will only suggest one happening God will use if we will listen to Him and let Him change our minds this year at Snow Camp. Tonight, He wants to tell us His first movement to change our hearts and minds.

**GOD'S MOVEMENT WILL BRING PAIN.** Notice Hosea 6: 1. Can you see any work or movement of God that might be painful? Tell me your answers. Now notice verse 1. "Come, let us return to the Lord! For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us." Pain can be the first evidence that God is starting to work in our minds and hearts. He brings pain to our minds and hearts as we become convicted of things that we have been doing that have brought Him pain? Sometimes God brings to our minds decisions we have made, choices we should never have even considered, but we did them and the results haven't been good results in our lives. How many of you would be willing to admit that you have made one or more choices during this new year of 2012 that you wish you could choose over again, but it's too late? I recently read a story that tells of the pain of making a bad choice. This story isn't true, but it illustrates the pain we cause by making bad choices.

Once upon a time, a scorpion needed to cross a pond. Wondering how he could get to the other side, he noticed a frog nearby. He said, "Mr. Frog, Will you please take me across the pond?" The kind, gentle frog said, "Certainly, Mr. Scorpion. I will be glad to do so." So Mr. Scorpion jumped up on to Mr. Frog's back as Mr. Frog hopped from one lily pad to another, bringing Mr. Scorpion to the other side of the pond. Just as Mr. Frog started to say, "Well, Mr. Scorpion, here we are," he felt an excruciating pain in his back. Mr. Scorpion had stung him. As Mr. Frog lay dying, he looked up at Mr. Scorpion and said, "How could you do this? I brought you from one side of the pond to the other and now you stung me so that I will die." Mr. Scorpion looked at Mr. Frog and said, "I can't help it. It's my nature." Did you know that when God begins to change our minds, he brings back to us the pain of some of our very tragic decisions? You may ask, "What kinds of decisions give us pain to remember?" Here are a few! How many of us have agreed to do something we said we would never do? We've tried smoking, or marijuana, or we started using vulgar language, you know—the F word, the MF, the SOB words, or we've had premarital sex or gone way too far with a boyfriend or girlfriend, we've gotten angry and said awful words we can't undo, we've sassed our parents, we've spent

lots of time having sexual thoughts that have grieved the Lord, and the list could go on. Having God move this weekend at Snow Camp means we have let God by His Spirit bring back the pain to our hearts, pain that we have unsuccessfully buried. We must face ourselves and turn finally, first to God for forgiveness, and then in days and weeks to come, we may have to get right with our parents or a teacher or a spouse or someone at work or even someone else here at Snow Camp.

I'm glad the Lord is willing and ready to forgive us. Unlike the frog, we are not dead yet. What we don't know is that we may be closer to disaster than we know. Way back before many of you were born, in 1987, there were some sky divers diving from 13, 500 feet. One parachutist that hadn't jumped yet, Gregory Robertson, looked down from almost 3 miles high. He watched a fellow skydiver, Debbie Williams collide in mid-air with a third parachutist. The collision knocked Debbie unconscious. She was free falling to her death at speeds greater than 100 miles per hour. Gregory Robertson made an incredible decision in compassion. He started to dive towards Debbie as fast as he could go. He rolled himself into a compact cannonball shape. Soon he reached his greatest ever terminal velocity of 200 mph and when he had almost caught her. He made himself go spread eagle to slow himself down. Now matching speeds with Debbie's terminal velocity of about 125 mph, Greg made his move. With only split seconds to spare as they hurtled towards the ground, he opened Debbie's chute and then his own. God used his heroic risk to save Debbie's life, and God kindly spared them both. Don't mistake how close some of you may be to having a scorpion sting from the enemy. God has spared some of our lives this past year. You may not believe it, but there may be more than one of us here, that God is giving another chance to follow Him, before we make a decision that may impact us tragically the rest of our life.

When we read in Hosea 6: 1, "He has torn us...He has wounded us..." does that sound painful? It surely does sound painful. But God has a purpose. When we came to Snow Camp this morning, most of us weren't thinking about some of the sins we have been trying to unsuccessfully bury, were we? No. Now for a moment, how many of you know what the context of a verse of Scripture is? You are right. It is the scripture passages surrounding the text both before and after the writing of the text. In the writing of the scripture, there were no chapter divisions. So tell me the verses that come just before our text. You're right. They are Hosea 5: 14, 15 where we read, "For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away, I will carry away, and there will be none to deliver. I will go away and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me." Go back just a little earlier

in the context, God speaks in Hosea 5: 12, 13 saying, “I am like a moth to Ephraim—Ephraim is another name for Judah, and like rotteness to the house of Judah.” But notice in verse 13, the response of God’s people. “Then Ephraim went to Assyria and sent to King Jareb. But he is unable to heal you, or to cure you of your wound.” These Jewish people didn’t turn to God for help. No, they decided to turn to another country, Assyria. King Jareb couldn’t help them.

Think of how God often works. He sometimes uses slow means to get our attention, maybe like Snow Camp 2012. But as we listen, He allows our stubbornness and rebellion to work like a moth or rotteness. Both of these means are slow, but they destroy. A moth finally destroys a good piece of clothing and blow flies bring rotteness that finally destroys meat. As God was trying to use a slow means to open the eyes of Judah, the people turned not to Him for help, but they went north to Assyria and looked for help to king Jareb. Making friends and allies with others, and thinking friends can cure us when we have sinned is false hope. No one but God can cure us of being moth eaten or of rotteness to our bones.

How many of us at Snow Camp have known we aren’t truly living for the Lord in our lives? We have known we aren’t taking time to read God’s Word, time to pray, time to meditate. So what does God start letting us do? He lets us slowly start to struggle. Our grades go down. He’s hoping we will turn to Him, but how often do we turn to our own friends, our king Jarebs? We make alliances with friends and we accept their ideas as the rotteness in our spiritual bones gets worse. No king Jarebs will cure us. We watch our sports skills struggle. We watch our attitudes get snippier and sharper and harsher and meaner and we don’t like it, but the moths are at it. The green rot is causing the elk meat of our lives to stink. So we turn to a pick me up. One little pick me up won’t hurt. Fill in the blank for me. What kinds of “pick me ups” -- king Jarebs, have we turned to? Somebody tells us, “Here, have a cigarette or smoke this joint of marijuana with me or have a drink of Bud or watch this an R or PG-13 rated movie or write down the test answers on your hand, or act snooty to a friend—and the list goes on. All the King Jarebs can ever do is make the moths eat faster and the rot get worse. All the king Jarebs do is make matters worse.

Moths and rot come silently to our lives. But now, God starts to get us to come back to Him with more than a silent means, He turns to sharper pain—sometimes roaring pain, as a lion tears us fiercely. The country Judah turned to was Assyria. She was supposed to be an ally, an alliance. What did Assyria do? Assyria double-crossed Judah. Assyria came and carried the nation away into

captivity as her spoil for winning the battle against them. Sometimes God lets us go even farther away from Him—into the captivity of an addiction. He seems to almost let us go. Verse 15 speaks for God, “I will go away and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction, they will earnestly seek Me.” What are the lions God allows to tear us? They are common mountain lions even for people in Wyoming. These lions can be selfish thoughts and prideful thoughts that pierce us when we remember. They can be sexual thoughts we fantasize on and no one knows except God and us. The lions can be more vicious lions of painful depression that turns to wrist cutting, suicide attempts, anorexia, bulimia, or other food disorders. These mountain lions can be guilt and despair that turns to pornography, pre-marital sex, and an unplanned pregnancy. Why does God allow this pain in our lives? Why does He use pain to change our hearts and minds? Go back to our text in Hosea 6: 1. God wants us to start saying to ourselves and to each other, “Come, let us return to the Lord, for He has torn us, but He will heal us. (the king Jarebs can’t) He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.”

You may ask, “Is God the mountain lion that tears us and wounds us?” He can be, but most often, He just lets our stubbornness and rebellion moth-eat at our lives and bone marrow rot us as we seek help from others than Him. Then He lets the picture get worse with lions tearing and wounding us, until we cry to Him for Help. So asking God to move in our hearts and minds means that we are asking Him to bring us to a place where we are willing to seek His face. He is confident we will finally cry out, “Help, Lord!” Is it that God doesn’t care for us His children, especially if we are His born again sons and daughter? Oh, He cares for us. That’s why He wants to heal us. That’s why He wants to bandage us up. Remember when God is moving, “No pain, no gain.” In fact, if we talk about knowing Jesus and there is no pain in our life evidencing God’s movement, I question if we yet know the Lord as our Savior. When God moves among us, His movement will often start with pain! What painful experience are you going through right now in your life? Could it be evidence of the wind of God’s Holy Spirit? Could it be His dawning in your life? Could it be His spring rain? Could it be God the Holy Spirit blowing in you because He is calling you to be born again? Could it be the Lord calling you to surrender to Him, calling you to obey His will? Bow your heads with me.