

# Sermon Discussion Questions & Follow-up Notes

## May 3, 2026 // Pastor Andrew Keuer (andrew@firstprotestant.com)

Sermon Texts: Hosea 6:1-7

Series: Anchored in Hope, part 4 (Easter Season 2026)

Sermon Title: "Hope in Prayer"

(a series on the prophet Hosea)

Link to Easter 5 sermon: <https://youtu.be/ZaTPcyW4J-c?t=1509>

### Key Points & Observations of the Text

**It is suggested to read the passage aloud as a group (Hosea 6:1-6, with Matthew 9:9-13 also).**

**Opening discussion:** Pastor Andrew shared the story of Albrecht Goes' "Arrow to the Heart," where a chaplain overseeing a military execution realizes the accused was caught in a bureaucratic technicality and is substantively innocent. Share a situation where your "head knowledge" of what was 'right' conflicted with a deeper "heart knowledge" of a person involved? How did you navigate that dissonance?

**The big idea:** When our hearts and heads are disconnected in the complexity of life, the only remedy that unites them is prayer marked by persistence and penitence. This type of prayer requires we push past human solutions and transactional religion, bringing our whole selves to God. This alone is the prayer that revives, raises up, and opens life to the face of God.

**A few words about two qualities of transformative prayer:**

#### **1. Persistent Prayer: The "Two or Three Days"**

Hosea calls for a prayer that is not flimsy, embarrassed, hasty, half-hearted, or routine. It is a prayer that presses through, modeled by Abraham's three-day journey to Moriah and Israel's three-day wait at Sinai. It's the "shut yourself in your closet" kind of prayer that says, "God, I'm not leaving until you act."

**Discussion:** The pastor noted we have difficulty with persistent prayer because we have "so many solutions of our own." What "human solutions" are you most tempted to rely on instead of pressing through in persistent prayer? Think of a time you relied upon prayer over the long-haul – describe a breakthrough moment that came from such prayer.

#### **2. Penitent Prayer: Beyond Transaction**

The people of Hosea's day defaulted to a transactional faith: "God, if I give you this sacrifice, you should give me this/that." They "logged their hours" for God, but did not love Him. God rejects this, quoting Samuel to Saul: "I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice."

**Discussion:** Where do you see traces of a transactional mindset in your own approach to God? ("I've done right, so I deserve..."; "I'll serve if you do that...")

#### **The Three "R"s of Penitent Prayer:**

**-Recognize your Sin:** This is the gut-wrenching, self-reflective prayer that asks, "God, is a given criticism true of me?" It involves claiming our sins before God without self-defensiveness.

**-Resolve to Change:** This is what King Saul lacked. He felt sorry (recognized sin) but had no intention to be different. Hosea demands a resolve to be different.

**-Reform of Life:** This means taking active steps God gives you to live in a new way. Jesus demonstrates this in Matthew 9 by calling Matthew, the tax collector, and dining with sinners, showing that God's kingdom operates on mercy towards those seeking reform.

**Closing Discussion:** Appoint a scribe for your group. Drawing upon Jesus' command to the Pharisees in Matthew 9:13, create and write out together a one-sentence prayer that exhibits the kind of persistence and penitence Hosea 6 encourages.