

Faithfulness in Christ's Kingdom

Malachi 2:10-16

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I. Here a Covenant, There a Covenant

All of life is covenantal in character, shaped by bonds of _____ in which the parties of the covenant have solemnly sworn to devote themselves to seek the _____ of the other party. We are surrounded and enveloped by covenants because covenants reflect the very nature of God – the Persons of the Trinity bound together by love and seeking the blessing of One Another.

Preliminary Observation: Covenants of whatever sort belong to _____ – thus, even when men fail to enforce their terms, God enforces them.

II. The Nature of the Sin [Covenantal Treachery]

A. Marrying Unbelievers (vv. 10 – 12)

1. The Prohibition (cf. Dt 7:3,4; Ex 34:11-17; Josh 23:12,13)
2. Pervasiveness of the Problem (Gen 26:34f; Num 25:1ff)
3. Continuance of the Prohibition (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14ff)

The same principles apply to this day – Christians may not marry non-Christians. We are forbidden to marry outside the faith.

B. Divorcing Spouses (vv. 13 – 16)

1. The General Principle (v. 16)

God hates _____. Divorce is never a positive good. It is sometimes, in the case of unrepentant adultery, a necessary evil. But divorce is not a remedy for an unhappy marriage.

2. The Rationale (verse 15)

- a. Did he not make them one? **[Nature of Marriage]**

Divorce is not a remedy for an unhappy marriage because marriage is a covenantal union. In marriage, God unites the man and woman

together; they become one flesh by the power of God's Spirit. Therefore, as Jesus says, "*What God joined together let no man put asunder.*" A covenant cannot be severed except when that covenant has been fundamentally betrayed.

b. Generational Faithfulness [**Purpose of Marriage**]

Divorce is not a remedy for an unhappy marriage because marriages exist to equip the next generation to fear and serve God and divorce undermines this purpose. Our children are given to us in trust. Therefore we have a moral obligation to raise and train them to love and treasure God. *We cannot do this when we are divorcing our spouses. Covenantal treachery kills kids.*

II. The Seriousness of the Sin

- A. Covenantal Treachery (vv. 10, 14, 15, 16) [**Way it is Described**]
- B. Covenantal Curses (vv. 12, 13, 14) [**Curses Accompanying It**]
 - 1. Maledictory Oath Accompanying *Intermarriage* (1 Thes 4:6)
 - 2. Covenantal Sanctions Accompanying *Divorce* (cf. Lev 26:31)

When we refuse to honor our covenants, God refuses to hear us – If we do not love our brother whom we do see, how can we love God whom we cannot see? Our treatment of our spouse reveals our attitude to Most High. How we treat our covenant partner is how we treat Christ Himself.

III. The Remedy for the Sin

- A. Take Heed to Your Spirit (cf. Prov. 4:23)
- B. Confess Unfaithfulness (cf. Lev. 26:40 – 45)
- C. Seek the Lord