

MALACHI 2:10 – 3:6

REVIEW...

- **Malachi** – the 39th book of the Old Testament - the 12th and final of the Minor Prophets!
 - Malachi – My Messenger – was a postexilic prophet during the time of Nehemiah...
 - He wrote to challenge the people who had begun to doubt the love of God...
 - Their worship devolved into empty religion - and they no longer took the Law seriously...
 - The Lord answered their doubts by assuring them He never changes – **Malachi 3:6**
 - He assures them the Day is coming when God will do all He has promised - **Malachi 3:18**
- To prove the point God had always loved Israel – He compared Jacob and Esau...
 - Israel would see Esau – their close relative – receive the judgment of the Lord...
 - But ISRAEL had been just as rebellious over the years – maybe more so!
 - Yet while Edom lay in ASHES – God continually showed GRACE to Israel!
- Yet the priests had no respect for the Lord – they despised His Name...
 - They would offer blind and lame animals as sacrifices to God!
 - Better to just close the Temple – shut the doors – extinguish the Altar...
 - God was not pleased with them – He WOULD NOT accept their offerings!
- If the priests did not listen - then God WOULD send a curse upon them!
 - The Priests were to fear the Lord – live Godly lives – teach the people the Truth / Law!
 - Because the priest were the messengers of God to His people!
 - But these priests lost sight of their calling – and accepted the defiled sacrifices of the people...
 - They forgot they were the messengers of God – and were trying to please the people!

UNFAITHFULNESS IN MARRIAGE... (5 THINGS)

- **1ST – THE COVENANT... VS. 10**
 - 1st - Having addressed the unfaithful priests – the Lord turns His attention to the people...
 - We are all children of the same Father – the ONE God who created us all...
 - The simple but profound truth that we are all united under one Creator!
 - **A great proof text to refute racism of any type - we are all equal – with one father!**
 - **Galatians 3:28** – “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
 - 2nd - But what happens when we forget / reject the One who created us...
 - We profane / break the covenant of the fathers – and are faithless to each other...
 - The covenant of the fathers – in the context of the passage – is marriage!
 - Marriage is a crucial covenant - meant to help us understand the Love of God...
 - Marriage is not some convention / idea of men – it is something God GAVE to men...
 - It was a covenant He gave to man BEFORE sin entered the world – **Genesis 2:24**
 - **God can say He loves us – but what exactly does that mean...**
 - **To define His love - He calls us his kids – He calls us His bride!**
 - **Therefore marriage impacts our understanding of the Love of God...**
 - **That is why satan makes such an effort to attack and destroy marriages...**
 - **If the marriage covenant is broken – our understanding of the Love of God is damaged!**
- **2ND – WHO THEY MARRIED... VS. 11-12**
 - 1st - Judah / Jerusalem had dealt treacherously – committed an abomination...
 - The people broke / profaned the HOLINESS (*Kadosh*) of marriage – which God loves!

- By marrying daughters of a foreign god – women who worshiped pagan deities!
- **Deuteronomy 7:3** - Under no circumstances was Israel allowed to marry pagans...
- The danger was if they married into these nations - they would worship their gods...
- The example of Solomon - **I Kings 11:14** – whose pagan wives turned him from the Lord!
- **II Corinthians 6:14** - “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”
- A powerful warning – never consider marrying an unbeliever – missionary dating...
- People will either draw us closer to - or father away from Jesus!
- o 2nd - We have seen this compromising attack on marriage take a dark turn in recent years...
 - As society has rejected the creator - the very definition of gender has been challenged...
 - We see people today questioning the design of the creator – there is no non-binary!
 - **Genesis 1:27** – “God created man in His own image... male and female He created them.”
 - The attack has gone on to question WHO people can marry – ‘love wins’...
 - We are pressured today to accept homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle...
 - There are even some churches that are ordaining homosexual pastors...
 - Society tries to argue people are born that way (*no scientific evidence*)!
 - And we can expect it to get worse – people will marry pets / trees (*already happened*)!
- o 3rd - The Lord would cut off those who committed this abomination...
 - Those who were AWAKE / AWARE – they knew what they were doing was wrong...
 - AND not only SINNED – they were hypocritically still going to the Temple to offer sacrifices!
 - **Judges 21:25** - “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”
 - The world is not ignorant in their choices – no man has an excuse – **Romans 1:20-21**
 - Men know God exists – and know what He expects – but willfully choose to ignore it...
 - They go so far as to hide/deny what they know - because they prefer their sin!
 - They try and avoid anything to do with God – some even try and deny God even exists...
 - Because by denying God – they can fool themselves into denying their sin!
 - **Psalms 14:1** – “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”
- 3RD – HOW LONG THEY WERE MARRIED... vs. 13-16
 - o 1st – People came crying to the altar – but the Lord would not accept their sacrifices... vs. 13-14
 - The reason God would not accept them – because they broke their wedding vows...
 - Thinking marriage was not for life - men were getting divorced!
 - The people had been disloyal to the wives of their youth...
 - Their companion (*only used here in the OT*) – the word speaks of friendship...
 - Since God had made them one – how could someone who had HIS Spirit break that up!
 - God joined (*friendship / spiritually*) – literally glued – a man to his wife – **Mark 10:9**
 - If you take two pieces of wood – and super glue them together - then rip them apart...
 - They might separate – but not cleanly – they splinter – the separation damages both!
 - When a marriage is broken – it tears apart the hearts of both the husband and wife...
 - Divorce is not clean – it rips apart something that was never meant to separate...
 - What God has glued together – no man (*including us*) should take apart!
 - Men and women divorce - because they think it is going to make them happier...
 - More often than not because they have met someone else who makes them happy...
 - And at first it might seem like a good answer - we put our best faces on at first...
 - But over time they find they left one sinner - only to marry another sinner!
 - o 2nd - God desires Godly children to come from the marriage... vs. 15
 - A healthy Godly marriage produces children who love the Lord...
 - God calls parent to be the example to their children of how to follow the Lord...
 - Our children are watching – learning – and we get to be an example for them...

- Taking the time - making the time - to teach them about Jesus – **Ephesians 6:4**

- Not missing the most important ministry God has given to us - our family!

- But when there is divorce it cripples the impact of the Love of God...

- Even secular society recognizes the immense benefits of a stable marriage!

- APA - In Western Cultures - More than 90 percent of people marry by age 50....

- Healthy marriages are good for couples mental and physical health...

- They are also good for kids - growing up in a happy home protects children...

- However - about 40 to 50 percent of married couples in the United States divorce!

- 43% of children growing up in America today are being raised without their fathers!

- Marriage impacts our childrens understanding of the LOVE of God...

- The greatest gift you could ever give to your kids is to love each other!

o 3rd - God HATES divorce... vs. 16

- Is it no wonder that God says He HATES divorce - He likens it to an act of violence!

- Therefore LISTEN to the SPIRIT – and be loyal to the wife of your youth!

- While the Law of Moses did allow for a certificate of Divorce - **Deuteronomy 24:1**

- The Law did not specify for what reasons Divorce was allowed...

- The New Testament qualifies ONLY 3 reasons when divorce is permissible!

- 1st - Death – If your spouse dies – you can remarry - **Romans 7:2**

- Note – you are not allowed to kill your spouse so you can remarry

- 2nd - Sexually immorality – adultery – **Matthew 19:9**

- The word is (*pornea*) – carrying the idea of ongoing deviant sexual behavior...

- Adultery is any physical relationship outside the covenant of marriage...

- Why only adultery– it is a violation of trust that is almost impossible to overcome!

- But even with adultery there is hope - Jesus can still restore a shattered marriage...

- I know amazing godly couples where both had adulterous affairs...

- Divorce is not required if there is adultery – just allowed!

- 3rd - Abandonment – if an unbelieving spouse leaves permanently - **I Corinthians 7:15**

- Note the believing spouse is not permitted to abandon the marriage...

- But if the unbelieving spouse leaves – the believing spouse is free to remarry in the Lord!

- 4th - What if we have been divorced for ANOTHER reason...

- The most common cause for divorce today is irreconcilable differences – not Biblical...

- ANYTIME you put two sinners together there are going to be irreconcilable differences!

- But divorce is not an unforgivable sin – and God can take beauty from the ashes...

- But there are consequences – broken hearts / the challenge of blended families!

- The thing to remember is that divorce is NEVER the best option!

- Not that God wants us to be miserable – He wants us to have GREAT marriages!

- The best marriages are not based on feelings / attraction / or commitment...

- These things are not consistent - because we are not consistent...

- We get cranky / have bad days / we get old and wrinkly / not always committed...

- The one constant we can build a lifelong marriage on is Jesus - **Hebrews 13:8**

- 4TH – CALLING GOOD EVIL... vs. 17

o 1st - The people had wearied the Lord with their words...

- In seeking to justify their actions – marrying pagans / getting divorced...

- They went so far as to say – everyone who does EVIL is GOOD in the sight of the Lord!

- God must delight in this EVIL – because God had not judged them!

- Sadly this is the state of our nation today...

- Americans have grown comfortable with divorce as a natural part of life...

- There no longer a stigma attached to divorce - seen as an unavoidable rite of passage...
- Young adults want their initial marriage to last - but are not particularly optimistic...
- Young people are moving toward embracing the idea of serial marriage...
- Where a person gets married multiple times - a different partner for each phase of life!
- Heaven forbid we apathetically accept divorce as an inevitable part of life!
- Or allow society to redefine marriage as if it is theirs to rewrite as they wish!
- We need to protect marriage – understand its crucial place in the plan of God!

▪ **5TH – UNABLE TO STAND... vs. 1-6**

o **1st – Who is the messenger... vs. 1**

- Side note – chapter breaks are not Biblical...
 - You will notice we have not been teaching Malachi along chapter lines...
 - The chapter breaks in Malachi are not particularly good ones...
 - The Bible was divided into chapters in 1227 / into verses in 1555...
 - They are very useful – but they are not divinely inspired!
- The people thought God was not going to judge them for breaking their vows...
 - But judgment was most definitely coming – and the time to repent was limited...
 - So God would send His messenger (*Malachi*) to prepare the way before He came...
 - The messenger is a reference to John the Baptist – who came to prepare the way for Jesus...
 - **Mark 1:2** – “I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.”
 - John reminded the people they were sinners – so they would see their need for Jesus!
- Time to be a messenger!
 - The up and coming Millennial Generation – represents 50% of the worlds population...
 - They are a generation that grew up with Google – and think they have all the answers...
 - They get their identity from group connectivity – social media – the majority rules...
 - They have been indoctrinated into a world where there are no moral absolutes...
 - They distrust marriage – and organized religion – believing tolerance is supreme!
 - If we are not willing to be THE MESSANGER and tell them the truth – who will...
 - It is easy for people to think they are right when they only talk to those who agree...
 - Out job is to lovingly tell them they are wrong – VERY wrong!
 - **Romans 3:4** – “Let God be true but every man a liar...”

o **2nd – Who can endure... vs. 1-5**

- The Jews were seeking the Messiah – and the were delighted in the idea of Him coming...
 - But that was because they thought He would come to conquer their enemies...
 - Yet when Jesus first came He did not come to conquer nations - He came to conquer sin!
 - Often we miss the work God is doing – because we are looking for something else...
 - Looking for God to provide – we miss the blessing of being dependent on Him...
 - Looking for God to heal – we miss the grace He wants to give in the suffering!
 - **II Corinthians 12:9** – “My grace is enough, My strength made perfect in weakness.”
 - Rather than coming to God with expectations – we need to come with an open heart!
- The Lord will come SUDDENLY to His Temple...
 - Jesus will come AGAIN – **Revelation 19:1** - when He does WHO will be able to stand...
 - When the lord comes there are two possibilities of what will happen...
 - JESUS will be like a refining fire – purifying those who fear the Lord...
 - He will purify the sons of Levi / Priests – so they can serve the Lord in righteousness...
 - Then the offerings in Jerusalem will be pleasant and acceptable to the Lord...
 - The solution to the unfaithful priests from chapter 1 – the coming of the Lord!
 - In the Philippines one of Jens favorite dishes to cook – was banana bread...

- But you have to keep it in the oven for just the right amount of time...
- As hot as it is inside – if you remove it too soon – it's just a sloppy mess!
- No one likes to be in the fire – the refiners furnace is a very unpleasant place...
- While we have the guarantee that God will deliver us from our trials – **Psalm 34:19**
- When God says He will deliver us – He does not always mean right now...
- Because as much trouble as we might be in – as hot as things might get...
- If He takes us out too soon – we will end up still being a sloppy mess...
- It takes time in the fire to make us complete – teach us to depend on Jesus!
- **I Peter 1:7** – “These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure.”
- JESUS will be like intense bleach – washing away all who rebel against the Lord...
 - He will bring swift WITNESS – because nothing is hidden from Him – **Hebrews 4:13**
 - He will be against Sorcerers – those who practice the occult – horoscopes...
 - Adulterers / liars (*perjurers*) / those who exploit their employees – widows – orphans...
 - Those who do not help out strangers (*aliens*) – because these people do not fear God!
 - **Proverbs 9:10** – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom!”
 - A partial list to show – those who practice sin – are in VERY REAL danger of judgment!
- o 3rd – God does not change... vs. 6
 - The people thought maybe God had changed...
 - God no longer cared about who they married – if they stayed married...
 - But the only reason that God can not condemn Jacob – was BECAUSE He does not change...
 - He would hold true to His Word - a remnant of Israel would be saved...
 - But that in no way excuses their actions – or removed the certainty of judgment!
 - Just because God has not judged yet – does not mean God will not judge...
 - God is patient – longsuffering – giving time to repent and turn back to Him...
 - God waits to punish sin only because He loves the sinner – **II Peter 3:9**
 - God is patient – longsuffering – to give time to repent and turn back to Him...
 - But for those who harden their hearts / not to repent - sin will bring judgment!
 - **Revelation 20:12** – “Both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened... and [they] were judged according to the things written in the books, according to what they had done.”