

MALACHI
“Faithfulness in Relationships”
Pastor Michael Lee & Pastor Stephen Han
August 15, 2010
Malachi 2:10-16 (ESV)

WHAT IS A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

A covenant is a solemn and binding relationship that is meant to last a lifetime. It stands in stark contrast to a contract. In a contract, a relationship remains in effect as long as terms and conditions are met. However, if a breach occurs, then that relationship can be terminated. But, in a covenant, a relationship is unconditional and, thus, unending. God pronounced a covenant relationship with his people in Genesis 12:1-3, amplified it in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34), and ultimately fulfilled it in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:6-13).

HOW TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IN OUR MARRIAGE

1. Only marry a _____ (vv. 10-12).

- When we claim to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and then willfully choose to unite ourselves in the most intimate personal union on earth with someone who cannot and will not love God (i.e., the “daughter of a foreign god”), we profane the holiness of God (v. 11).
- In contrast, when we marry a like-minded follower of Jesus Christ, we affirm that the preciousness of God’s holiness and nearness is more important than our emotional drive for human intimacy.

What This Is and Is Not Saying

- It is not saying that it’s impossible in every case for an unbelieving spouse to be converted. Although difficult, it is not impossible. In fact, the Bible says that we should live in such a way as to make conversion happen (1 Peter 3:1-2).
- It is not saying that if you are married to an unbeliever, you should get out of the marriage (1 Corinthians 7:12–13).
- But, it is saying clearly: if the choice of marriage partner still lies before you, settle it in your mind right now to marry only someone who loves the Lord Jesus with all his or her heart.



2. Honor the marriage covenant _____ (vv. 13-16).

- **Marriage is a covenant before God (v. 14).**

When God stands as witness to the covenant vows of a marriage, it becomes more than a mere human contract. God is not a passive bystander at a wedding ceremony. In effect he says, “I have seen this, I confirm it, and I record it in heaven. And I bestow upon this covenant by my presence and my purpose the dignity of being an image of my own covenant with my wife, the church” (Ephesians 5:25).

- **Marriage is to mirror God’s covenantal love for his bride—his people (vv. 15-16; also Isaiah 54:4-8).**

God will never nullify his covenant relationship (“marriage”) with his people. Christ will never forsake the oneness he has with his bride, the church. He is a covenant maker and a covenant keeper. And that is the meaning of marriage, and that is what we are to emulate.

PRACTICAL HELP

- 1. Growing & Healing after Divorce** – A meeting is planned by the Marriage & Family Ministry on 8/22 (Sun) at 9:30 a.m. in Rm. 216 to hear how people can take some steps necessary to begin the healing process after divorce. Also, learn how to help children after a divorce.
- 2. Resources and Pastoral Counseling** – If you would like resources or a time with Pastor John (Pastor of Marriage & Family) to talk privately about how to experience hope and healing after a divorce or in a current marriage crisis, please email john@ynccla.org.

CENTRAL TRUTH

God’s people are to be faithful to the covenant relationship with God in their marriage.

** LifeGroup Study questions are available for pick up at the Information Center located in the lobby. They are also available online at www.ynccla.org.

** Today’s message will be available on CD next week in the YNCC office. Previous weeks’ sermons are also available on CD and viewable online at www.ynccla.org/sermons.

