

# Take It Home

Applying the Preached Word



## Spiritual Reformation: Marriage

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**Text:** Malachi 2:10-16

### Main Point

When we forget the joy of living for God we live for something far less.

### Key Ideas

God had made a Covenant with his people that promised provision, blessing and protection in Him. Malachi is addressing people who no longer find covenant living to their liking. This passage is a warning to them as a nation. But it also has application for us as believers who have tasted Christ but can be enticed to want other things more. Here are two pitfalls we can find ourselves in:

1. We long for that which is outside the Covenant (10-12)
  - The problem here is NOT international marriage... or interracial marriage. No, God does not say the problem was marrying the daughters of other nations. He says the offense of faithlessness is in marrying the daughter of a foreign god. This is being unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14-18). The issue is how can we be faithful to God if we willingly yoke ourselves to someone who is not faithful to God?
  - This is more than just marriage. It can be the way we live life. Certainly, we want God to be a part of the mix. However, when we determine our needs, he often is not enough. So, we marry the 'daughters of foreign gods'. With our actions, we boldly state, "God, you are not sufficient for me. I must have you...AND...you fill in the blank."
  - God will be faithful to fulfill all His promises, but they are promises within the covenant He has established with us. We cannot live for things outside the covenant and presume that God will bless us with covenant blessings.
2. We hate that which is inside the Covenant (13-16)
  - Malachi chastises the people for becoming habitual covenant breakers. Specifically he is dealing with marriage, that people have treated the marriage covenant as something that belongs to them, that they can do with what they please. But the marriage covenant has and always will belong to God. He determines what happens with it and not us.

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- The motivation to break the marriage covenant connects with a heart motivation that begins to despise the 'restrictions' God places on our lives. In our wayward hearts we want to be free of covenant commitments.
- When God's children hate that which is inside the covenant, it has a direct impact on their relationship with God. We simply are not free to hate what God loves. We are not free to dispose of what God has purchased and filled with significance.
- What do I do when my satisfaction seems to require God AND something outside his covenant? What do I do when my satisfaction seems to require God WITHOUT something inside his covenant?

### 3. The One who was utterly satisfied

- There is One who was utterly satisfied. His name is Jesus, and He calls us, invites us, exhorts us...even commands us to keep our eyes fixed on Him. Hebrews 12:2 calls us to look to Jesus, "the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2).
- Guard yourselves in your spirit. Love what God loves. Hate what God hates. Set the Lord always before you and you shall not be shaken. Cherish this covenant called marriage. Protect it with your very lives. It matters enough to God to preserve it with his.

### **Fellowship Starters**

*Treasure - Application to stir our love for Christ?*

1. Read Malachi 2:10-16. Then Read aloud Psalm 16:5-11. Before any discussion take some time to thank God specifically for what he has done for you according to the words of this Psalm.

*Grow - Application to stir our obedience to Christ*

2. Is there any area in this message where you were aware of the convicting work of the Spirit in your life.
3. What is the difference in the way a marriage will function if it belongs to God rather than us?
4. Are there any areas of "I need God AND...." that are strong temptations for you right now?

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*Proclaim - Application to stir our witness for Christ*

5. In light of the warnings in this passage to be careful with how we involve ourselves with those who don't know God, how can we meaningfully engage in the world with unbelievers without adopting their system of values?