

The Problem with Divorce

Malachi 2:13-17

Introduction:

- A. Almost everyone has been touched by divorce
 - 1. Divorce is not always p_____
 - 2. Divorce can be m_____ among believers
- B. Malachi 2:13-17
 - 1. Gives us two problems that divorce produces
 - 2. Many other things could be said about divorce, but we will restrict ourselves to what this passage reveals.

Divorce victimizes the innocent (13,14)

- A. The Lord's charge against the men of Judah - *You cover the altar of Yahweh with tears, with weeping and with groaning so that I no longer respect sacrifice nor accept any atonement from your hand.*
 - 1. The tears were from the v_____ of divorce – their discarded wives (we see this in the next verse)
 - 2. These unrepentant men's s_____ were not accepted by the Lord
- B. The men question why the Lord rejected their offering
 - 1. Covering the altar with tears was not specific enough of a charge
 - 2. The reason is that they have dealt *treacherously with the wife of their y_____.*
 - a. Many versions translate as being unfaithful, but the picture is NOT of men having affairs, but of men d_____ their wife as a wife.
 - b. In Jewish tradition, women married quite young – as their beauty faded, a husband would divorce them and take a y_____ woman as his new wife.
- C. The Lord reminds these men that they had entered into a c_____ with the wife of their youth. – *although she is your companion and your wife by covenant.*
 - 1. Some versions use the word partner rather than companion – the Hebrew word refers to a very strong tie often applied to two men who are best f_____.

2. The marriage covenant was that the man and wife were to regard one another as best friends, companions for 1 _____ without any conditions attached.
- D. Some effects that divorce has on children according to many studies:
1. Depression
 2. Guilt as if it were their fault
 3. A _____ - getting behavior
 4. W _____
 5. Fear of m _____. Here are some of the effects:
a high

Divorce violates the Lord's will (15,16)

- A. Comparing translations of verse 15
1. NAS - *But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while seeking a godly offspring...*
 2. ESV - *Did He not make them one with a portion of the Spirit in their union. And what was God seeking? Godly offspring.*
 3. KJV - *And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed.*
 4. NLT - *Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and in spirit you are his. And what does He want? Godly children from your union.*
- B. The debate is over the word, ONE. – does it refer to one person, one couple, or the oneness between a married couple?
1. Hebrew – *and not make one?*
 2. The action verb, to make, is the same Hebrew word used in Gen 1:26 of God making m _____ in His own image
- C. My understanding – This passage is going back to c _____
1. The LORD fashioned one c _____, a male and a female, as opposed to a male and two females.
 2. The word, *spirit*, can refer to the human spirit, the holy spirit, or b _____ - this is referring back to

God breathing life into man. He had more life to breath in and could have made many

3. Instead of breathing in more life, he wanted the couple to produce g_____ offspring.
4. Wester paraphrase - *The Lord fashioned only one couple, even though he still had more breath to give. And why did He just fashion only one couple? His purpose was to produce a godly offspring from them. So guard your spirit and don't discard the wife of your youth.*

D. God h_____ divorce (v. 16)

1. Practical divorce – this is when the marriage relationship has reached a point where it is non-existent (e.g. because of constant a_____ or constant sexual infidelity)
2. Legal divorce – this is when legal d_____ is made stating that the marriage no longer exists.
3. Therefore, the sin is not the legal action but the wrong actions that deteriorated the marriage.

Conclusion:

A. Victims of divorce

1. If you are a victim, talk it out with others you can trust (forgive those who victimized you)
2. If you aren't a victim, be sensitive to those who are and help them to not live as a victim.

B. The sin of divorce

1. If you committed it, regret it, and communicate that regret to the one you sinned against (this is true r_____)
2. If you are not divorced, never put a label on a person who is.