

Malachi 2:13-16
Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam
October, 2022

The destruction of the family in society is one of the most tragic problems facing the human race today. The destruction of the family begins with the destruction of what starts a family – the marriage of one man and one woman. It is becoming more difficult to find marriages that last 20 years or more. Why? Because the institution of marriage is not shown the respect that God meant for it.

In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve and joined them together for life. At your wedding, God united you as husband and wife. You became one, a team. God joins a husband and wife together in marriage so that they might work together as a team, using their gifts to help each other, live as Christians and raise Christian children.

Since God has joined us together, human beings should not separate. The problem today is that many people want to team up in marriage and to raise children, but when things get difficult, they will quit the team. People do this even though leaving the team will mean the family unit is being destroyed. Divorce was never part of God's plan.

There are many reasons people give to end marriages: lack of commitment, infidelity, arguing or conflict, marrying too young, and money problems. It often comes down to selfishness. People think only of ME instead of WE. God's plan of a husband and wife working together as teammates to raise a Christian family is being ignored. Children in turmoil and confused teenagers are often the results of parents not doing what God wants in their marriages.

It is because of sin that people divorce. Today we consider
Divorce? Remarriage?

The Lord looks upon His people as His beloved wife. In Isaiah we read: As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you. Husbands, remember how beautiful your wife looked and how much you loved her on your wedding day? God

looks at us with the same kind of love every day. This beautiful relationship between husband and wife is what God wants to protect. Since God has always been faithful to us, He wants us to be faithful to each other in the same way.

A broken marriage is broken trust. All the divorces in the world prove that some men and women are unable and unwilling to remain faithful to their spouses. Divorces are proof that some husbands and wives make promises they didn't intend to keep.

Our world has become too used to divorce. The average marriage lasts 8 years and 2 months. The divorce rate of people marrying for the first time is close to 50%. Couples who live together before marriage are likely to divorce half of the time!

Today divorce is thought of as a way out for people who tried valiantly to make their marriage work, but just couldn't do it. What does God say about divorce? I hate divorce! It is a terrible thing when people do something that God hates! God hates divorce because someone has sinned and destroyed a team that promised each other that they would work together in love. In divorces people end something that God promises to bless!

There are two reasons that God gives for a divorce: unfaithfulness of either husband or wife and if one spouse would desert the other. (abuse, refusing sexual intimacy, or refusing to support the family) There are only two reasons God gives for ending a marriage. Just because the government permits other reasons does not mean that God approves of those reasons. Just because a husband does not pick up his dirty clothes is not a reason for a wife to get a divorce!

In marriage the two shall be one flesh. Why are husband and wife **one** in body and soul? Because God was seeking godly offspring. To Adam and Eve God said, Be fruitful and increase in number. God blessed Adam and Eve with children, many children. God still wants to bless marriages with children. And there is no question as to what God wants Christians to do with their children. Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. The Christian home becomes the greenhouse for future beautiful Christian children!
We can see what happens often in homes broken by divorce –

instruction in God's Word usually suffers – it happens in Sunday School, Confirmation classes, and church attendance. What chance do children have to become “godly” offspring when they see selfishness, unfaithfulness, lack of love, inability to forgive in their homes where father and mother want out? Is it any wonder why God hates divorce?

Broken promises can be healed by forgiveness. It may happen that the spouse who destroyed the marriage by his/her actions may see their wrong and repent. If the innocent spouse is willing to forgive, then the marriage can continue and with God's help, that marriage might become stronger. But sometimes the sin has become too hurtful to the innocent spouse and reconciliation is impossible.

If you are in a boat a mile off the shore of Florida, you might want to jump into the water and cool off. But there are dangers in that water, aren't there? There are also dangers lurking in marital waters. Those dangers may hit us when we least expect it. If problems arise in a marriage, give your friendly pastor a call. He is willing to listen and to give advice from God's Word. In that situation, you need God's help, God's Word.

If divorce occurs, is remarriage possible? Sure. If a husband dies in an automobile accident, it is possible for the wife to remarry. Scripture permits that.

What about this scenario? Two people come to see me. They want to get married. I find out that they are both divorced. I ask the woman why she divorced. She said her husband was unfaithful to her. I asked the man why he was divorced. He said, “Because we could never agree with one another.” That is not a godly reason for a divorce. I told the man that his divorce was not godly and he was officially still married to his wife. (silence) We talked about what marriage is and the roles of husbands and wives. The man came back another time and we talked about why his first marriage fell apart. He repented. I spoke to his former wife and asked if she wanted anything to do with her previous husband. She didn't want her former husband back – ever! Eventually I married that couple. We spent a lot of time speaking of marriage and how to minimize future problems.

Marriage is a wonderful institution. Is it perfect? No, both spouses are sinful. In marriage we enjoy the blessing of companionship, the blessing of sexual happiness, as well as the blessing of children. (the only blessing that can go with us into eternity) But marriage takes work, hard work. It takes teamwork.

Scotty Wolfe holds the record for the number of marriages, 31. None of his legal wives attended his funeral and only one of his 40 children.

Divorce outside of what God permits is sinful and those who do so may lose their salvation. Hopefully people will realize their sin and trust in Jesus as their Savior before it is too late.

May our Lord bless every married couple with Christian love for God and each other. A love willing to forgive each other. A love willing to work together for the good of the family. A love for others that shows God's love for them.

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