

*Malachi 2:16*

*"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty.*

*So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.*

In our study in the Book of Malachi over the last couple of weeks we have looked at how, in application of this Old Testament truth, the church is to function today as a light in this dark world, as salt in this dead earth. But we have also seen, just as the people in Malachi's day experienced, awful indifference and apathy in the lives of believers today. We live in a day of little passion and even less power among God's people! Even though we are New Testament priests, we find that we are not living up to the charge that God has given to us. I ask again, in all that we are experiencing in the church today, is God not disciplining us and chastening us, because we have allowed the world in which we live to push us into its mold?

The specific question and application here today is: have we become so like the world in our family life, like those in Malachi's day, that God's purpose in choosing and saving us to be a witness has been jeopardized? We need to remember there is a reason why God chose us and saved us and set us apart. If we are following the ways, lifestyle and attitude of the world, there is a very real danger our light won't shine and our salt won't work. The reason why we were saved in the first place, to be a witness, has been jeopardized.

This has become abundantly clear in Christian marriages. Today, even believers seem to enter into it with the assumption that there is a get-out clause. God's express purpose from the beginning is that no marriage would end in divorce. If you're here today and your marriage is on the rocks, remember all of us have problems, and you're no any different. As far as is possible, persevere and don't give up to the spirit of the age. What is the spirit of the age, you ask. The spirit of the age tells us our personal happiness is what determines our willingness to honor the covenants we have made. That's the spirit of the age. A Christian ought never to start that process prematurely. It has been said that when the doors on a marriage are shut and bolted, and a fire breaks out, all your time and energy goes to putting out the flames.

Are the doors of your marriage bolted and shut as a Christian? Decide to make your vows before God a covenant in His presence, and stop looking for a fire escape. Decide you will make this work, no matter how difficult things are. If anything, one of the reasons why we have a lukewarmness in the church today is that Christians are too easily running — for every reason — for a divorce. What does it do to the testimony of Jesus Christ? God says: 'I am the LORD, I change not' and He still hates divorce.