



fact was, you see, that no matter who they were in the nation of Israel, they would find themselves cut off simply by virtue of the fact that the compromise they had made in choosing the unbeliever over the Lord would be a choice fraught with problems.

There was a reason God forbade intermarriage with unbelievers then and a reason God forbids it now. Paul makes clear what that reason is (2 Corinthians 6:14-15).

The judgment upon those who marry unbelievers is this: it is difficult to walk with God when your spouse is pulling you in the opposite direction. This is why God says they would find that they had, by virtue of this choice, made it difficult to walk with God and His people, "even though he brings offerings to the Lord Almighty." That's what the Bible means in 1 Corinthians 2:14.

Rather than finding their satisfaction in their love relationship with God, the people in Malachi's day were left to find satisfaction in something or someone else, which led them to choose compromise over conviction. Sadly, too many of God's people today are doing the same thing, and are making choices that are causing their life to be far more difficult than what God would have wanted for them.

## **2. They chose hypocrisy over holiness. Verses 13-14**

Despite the fact that their lives were not right with God, the people were "going through the motions" of worship and wondering why God seemed so distant. Rather than being willing to be honest about their sins, they were content instead to ignore each other's sins and let each other off the hook, rather than get honest with each other about why they were so far from God.

This reminds me of the old joke about the guy who sat on a chair with a nail that had worked its way up through the seat, and sat there crying about it, but who was too lazy to get up off the chair.

John Charles Ryle, Anglican bishop of Liverpool in the 19th century speaks of holiness. He says, "It is not knowledge...nor great profession...nor doing many things...nor zeal for certain matters in religion..." He continues that holiness is not "morality and outward respectability of conduct, nor taking pleasure in hearing preachers, nor keeping company with godly people. These things alone are not holiness. A man may have any one of them, and yet never see the Lord."

John Brown, Nineteenth-century Scottish theologian said "Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, enthusiastic fervours, or uncommanded austerities; it consists in thinking as God thinks, and willing as God wills."

There's a little poem that goes like this:

*One day I looked at myself—at the self that Christ can see;  
I saw the person I am today and the one I ought to be.  
I saw how little I really pray and how little I really do;  
I saw the influence of my life—how little of it was true!  
I saw the bundle of faults and fears I ought to lay on the shelf;  
I had given a little bit to God, but I hadn't given myself!  
I came from seeing myself, with my mind made up to be—  
The sort of person that Christ can use, with a heart He may always see.*

These folks preferred to pretend to others that everything was alright than get honest and right with God. They preferred to cry about how distant God seemed than to do the repentance and reformation needed to get right with God. Too many today do the very same thing.

## **3. They chose convenience over commitment. Verses 14-16**

The reason why God seemed so distant was that the people had moved away from Him. One sin that had drawn them from the Lord was that the men of Israel were trading in their older wives for newer models.

Does the Bible say there are legitimate reasons for divorce? Yes.

**1) Sexual infidelity** is justifiable grounds for divorce (Matthew 19:9). The innocent party can divorce and remarry without guilt.

**2) Abuse and neglect** are justifiable grounds for divorce (Exodus 21:10-11). The innocent party is free to remarry without guilt.

3) If a divorce occurs for **other reasons**, the one who did not want the divorce is considered guiltless (Deuteronomy 24:1-2).

But it is clear that none of these legitimate reasons for divorce were being observed by the men of Israel. They found it more convenient to disregard God's call to commitment than to remain in marriage with the "wife of their youth," who now was old, or not as attractive, or whatever. Let us consider what was at the root of all these sins. Note verses 15 and 16 - "So guard yourself in your spirit."

What led them to marry others outside their faith? Wrong choices that hurt us and others come from a lack of satisfaction with God's provision, which results from a lack of investment in our relationship with God.

Unless one has invested in their relationship with God, they can't be satisfied with His provision, and will look in the wrong places to satisfy their needs. Choices will be made that hurt themselves and others. That is why the people in Malachi's day made choices that hurt themselves and others. That's why people make the same kind of choices today.

### **Conclusion**

When our Savior walked upon this earth, He modeled for us how to live in communion with and dependence on the Father. Jesus found His satisfaction in His relationship with the Father, consequently, He could willingly reject everything this world had to offer and choose instead to do the Father's will, which, by the way resulted in bringing the possibility of eternal blessing to you and me.

We have a daily choice. Will we follow the way of Christ or the way of this world? Will we invest in our relationship with God and develop satisfaction with Him God and His provisions? Or will we neglect our relationship with God and develop a dissatisfaction that leads us to look to the empty provisions of this world? One way bless us and others, the other brings difficulty to us and to others. Perhaps your choices have led to hurting yourself and others. You don't have to continue down that road. Turn around. The Lord is still there and He still loves you.

## ***We Have A Daily Choice!***

## ***A Forever Family***

Author Keith Miller tells of an out-going 40-year-old woman who was part of a sharing group he led. Here is her story:

"When I was a tiny little girl, my parents died and I was put in an orphanage. I was not pretty at all and no one seemed to want me. But I longed to be adopted and loved by a family as far back as I can remember. I thought about it day and night, but everything I did seemed to go wrong. I must have tried too hard to please the people who came to look me over and what I did was to drive them away.

"But then one day the head of the orphanage told me that a family was coming to take me home with them. I was so excited that I jumped up and down and cried like a little baby. The matron reminded me that I was on trial and this might not be a permanent arrangement, but I just knew

that somehow it would work out.

"So I went with this family and started to school. I was the happiest little girl you can imagine, and life began to open up for me just a little. But then one day a few months later, I skipped home from school and ran into the front door of the big old house we lived in. No one was at home, but in the middle of the front hall was my battered suitcase with my little coat thrown across it. As I stood there it suddenly dawned on me what it meant---I didn't belong there anymore."

Miller reports that when the woman stopped speaking there was hardly a dry eye in the group. But then she cleared her throat and said almost matter-of-factly, "This happened to me seven times before I was 13 years old. But wait. Don't feel too badly for me. It was experiences like these that ultimately brought me to God---and there I found what I had always longed for---a place, a sense of belonging, a forever family."

In his book, *The Family of God*, Batsell Barrett Baxter says:

"There are some who think of the church as an organization like other organizations. It is true that the church is an organization, but it is not primarily an organization. Rather, it is a new way of life. Those who have the view that being a part of the church is like being a member of a lodge, a luncheon club, a political part, or even a business are seriously mistaken. Such people feel that they should give to the church the same kind of support and loyalty which they give to these other organizations. It becomes my church, as it is 'my club, or lodge, or party, or team.' The Christian's loyalty to Church, however, should be unique, for in reality it is a loyalty to Christ and His way of life. The church is like no other institution on earth and a person's membership in the church is like no other membership which he may sustain. The church is more like a vibrant, living organism, than it is like a cold, structured organization..."

Some make the mistake of thinking that the church...exists for the entertainment and enjoyment of its members. On the contrary, the church exists in order that its members may have an intimate relationship with Christ and God, as well as a close relationship with mankind."

God Bless You!

*Bro. Allan*

## **Opportunities For Service**

### **Living out Your Spiritual Commitment . . . and Fulfilling Christ's Divine Plan**

#### **Sunday, February 26, 2017**

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School ..... 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: ? ? ? ?, Ken Nice, Don Sharp, Fred Kerns

Alternate: Isaac Waters

January Bible Study.....Noon

Diversicare.....2:30 pm

No Evening Worship.....

#### **Monday, February 27**

SS Workers ..... 6:30 pm

#### **Wednesday, March 1**

Youth Study..... 6:30 pm

Prayer / Bible Study ....6:30 pm

Adult Choir ..... 7:30 pm

#### **Thursday, March 2**

G Team.....6:30 pm

#### **Saturday, March 4**

Kevin Rowe in Concert 4-5 pm

**Sunday, March 5, 2017**

Choir Rehearsal.....9:00 am  
Sunday School.....9:15 am  
Morning Worship.....10:30 am  
Nursery: Volunteers as needed  
Ushers: John Lewis, Gary Yarbrough, Joseph Coats, Isaac Waters  
Alternate: Larry McKahan  
Evening Worship.....6:30 pm

**Monday, March 6**

Food Kitchen.....5:30 pm

**Wednesday, March 8**

Prayer Warriors.....10:00 am  
Youth Bible Study.....6:30 pm  
Bible Study.....6:30 pm  
Adult Choir.....7:30 pm

**Thursday, March 9**

R Team.....6:30 pm

**Up-Coming Events.....**

**February 26 — January Bible Study at Noon**

— Diversicare 2:30 pm

**March 4 — Kevin Rowe in Concert 4-5 pm**

**March 6 — Food Kitchen 5:30 pm**

**March 8 — Prayer Warriors 10:00 am**

**March 10-11 — NW Region Disaster Relief Training**

**March 12 — Food Pantry Collection**

— Daylight Saving Time begins

**March 17 — Happy St. Patrick's Day**

**GROW Team**

Commit to **GROW!** Everyone make a contact! Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

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**Sunday Nights**

We will not have Bible study this week at 6:30 pm. Please join us for our January Bible Study following our morning worship service!

**Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study**

We will meet Wednesday at 6:30 pm. We are doing a new study by Erwin Lutzer entitled, ***One Minute After You Die***. This eight session study focuses on what we can know for certain about what happens after we leave this world. Hope to see you here!

**Diversicare**

**Nursing Home**  
**February 26, 2017 at 2:30 pm**

Please join us as we minister to those who can no longer attend their own churches.

**KEVIN ROWE**  
**COUNTRY GOSPEL SINGER**  
**IN CONCERT**  
here at  
Calvary Baptist Church  
Saturday, March 4, 2017 4-5 pm  
A church-wide  
fellowship will follow.  
**Food Kitchen**

*We will serve Monday, March 6, at 5:30 pm. Please feel free to join us as we show the love of Christ and minister to those in need.*

**Prayer Warriors**  
**Wednesday, March 8, 2017**  
**10:00 am**

**Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Training**  
**March 10-11**

Cost for first time  
registration is \$20.00.

Pleasant Valley Baptist Church 1600 North 291 Hwy  
Liberty, Missouri 64068

**Daylight Saving Time!**  
**March 12**

Please remember to spring forward one hour the night of March 11.

*In Sympathy*

*We would like to express Christian Sympathy to the family and friends of Sue Higginson who passed away  
Tuesday, February 21, 2017.*

**For the Record-**

Attendance: February 12, 2017

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Sunday School.....      | 38  |
| Visitors.....           | 5   |
| Total.....              | 43  |
| Contacts Made.....      | 0   |
| Morning Worship.....    | 47  |
| Children's Worship..... | N/A |
| Wednesday Night .....   | 18  |

### **Financial Record:**

Weekly Budget ..... \$ 2,040.52  
Offering Received ... \$ 935.07

### **Offering Received by Mail:**

### **March Counting Team:**

Bill Schottel and Mike Green

### **March Van Driver:**

George Burgess  
Remember to call 232-3747  
**before 8 am** if you need a ride.

### **March Member Birthdays:**

01...Ken Nice  
05...Sharon Yarbrough  
13...Tim Ford  
16... Don Sharp  
16... Aleana Lane  
20... Betty Campbell  
27... Jim Winans

### **March Anniversaries**

Fred and Linda Kerns  
March 14, 1969

### ***Prayer Requests ...***

Datha Dillon's Daughter's family  
The family of Sue Higgins  
Rev. A. B. Brown  
Tommy Mummert—heart surgery  
Claud McClain—leg amputated  
Tracy Maisel and Tim Ford  
Juanita and Bill Haskins—adjustments  
Tim Izer  
Gary & Peggy Fewins, Byron & Joel  
George Ferbert—strength  
Nellie Reynolds—recovery at home  
Troy Griswold—cancer  
Larry Danner—cancer treatment  
Cynthia Burdick—cancer treatment  
Jim Winans at home

Karissa and Matt Long and family  
Betty Campbell—healing  
Marcia and Don Hart—future plans  
Lisa Bowers—Jack and Flo's daughter  
LoLeta Middleton—strength  
Ellen Blanton and Lois Ulmer—  
    Elvera's daughter & daughter-in-law  
Stella Davis and Linda Rails—Doris  
    Richardson's sisters  
Madeline Swink      Ann Riddle  
Kathryn Beavers      Keon McKahan  
Louanne Laurence      Leona Reynolds  
Jozy Winans      Kenny Duty  
Kevin Duty      Buddy Means  
Bill Haskins      Debbie Sands  
Pat Puckett      Judy Anderson  
Brenda Burgess      Roscoe Lane  
Carolyn Houts  
Missionaries Don and Diane Combs  
Nickolay Nazaruk, Peski 2 Church  
David and Deborah Grace  
Jeanette Swackhamer—Beja People  
Our Nation and Leaders  
Our Military Service people  
**Today's Prayer Requests ...**

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**Our Nation and our Leaders ...**

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**Five More New Families...**

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