



Going Deeper into

Malachi 2:10-16 – “Guarding Against Faithlessness”

1. **Malachi 2:10 says, “Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another?” Our actions affect the community of faith that we are a part of.**

Read the description of the church in Ephesians 2:18-21, and Ephesians 4:4-6, which details the common things that believers share. Between these two passages, how does the Bible describe the church?

Unity is a huge theme of the passages from Ephesians, and in our text from Malachi. What examples of disunity between believers have you witnessed or experienced?

Since we are brothers and sisters that share the same spiritual Father, what does God desire regarding issues between us? How do you think he respond to your examples above if he were to intervene?

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for reminding me that you are the Father and Creator of all believers, even those I disagree with. Forgive me for the times I have participated in growing a spirit of disunity, and help me to work toward unity with my fellow believers. Amen.

2. **In Malachi 2:11, God charges the people with doing violence to the holiness of his sanctuary because they are serving the gods of their foreign wives while still bringing offerings to God.**

In what ways can church-going people commit the same offense today?

Read James 4:4-8. What terms does James use for believers who are fond of this world? Why do you think James gives them these labels?

What similarities do you see between what the people are doing in Malachi 2:11 and the people James describes in 4:4-8?

Review James 4:7-8 again. What instructions does he give for how to fix this problem?

Pray: Dear Lord, forgive me for the ways in which I hold onto the things of the world. Purify my heart and my focus so that I would give you my best and my all. Amen.

3. Malachi 2:16 and Matt 19:4-8 reveals that allowing our heart to harden towards our spouse is what leads to divorce, which consequently does violence to the family.

Read Matthew 18:23-35. Who does the king represent in this parable? What does the debtor that was given grace, but did not reciprocate grace, represent?

How does this parable relate to the following passage about divorce and the problem of hard hearts?

Malachi 2:16 ends with the admonition to “guard ourselves in our spirit;” how can we guard ourselves against allowing a bitterness towards someone else harden our hearts against them?

Pray: Almighty God, you have forgiven me and continue to forgive me. Forgive me for the times I withhold forgiveness from others and cleanse me from bitterness and a hard heart. Help me to have mercy on my family, my church, and anyone else that I may become hardened and unforgiving toward. Amen.