



Lesson 4: Adulterous Idolators

Malachi 2:10-16

Teacher: Beth Seifert

The people had abandoned God for false idols, and had abandoned their wives for pagan women. They neglected God, His commands and covenants, and it touched every area of their lives. Read Isaiah 29:13-16. What is God calling the people out for in this passage? Can we ever, truly, get away with simply crossing off a list of behaviors, while our hearts are far from God?

Read Colossians 3:23-25. What should our focus be in all that we do? Look back a few verses in Colossians, to 3:18-22. What is the greater context of Paul giving this exhortation to the people?

Romans 14:5-8. What is Paul encouraging the people to do here? How does that impact how we live each day?

Read Ephesians 5:22-33. What is the hierarchy/authority structure God has established in the family? Consider this: if a husband is to treat his wife as Christ treats the church, does this passage leave any room for a husband to abuse his wife? If a wife is to submit to her husband as to the Lord, does this passage leave any room for her to harbor hatred or disrespect in her heart for her husband? When this is done well, it is a joy for a wife to submit to a husband who is willing to die for her. And when this is done well, the wife is the greatest encouragement and blessing for her husband as he exhibits godly authority in their marriage.

Read Malachi 2:16 and contrast it with Ephesians 5:25.

Read 1 Corinthians 7:12-16. Knowing that God calls each of us to Him at different seasons in life, and knowing that God can call a wife before a husband to Himself, what instructions does Paul give her for wives who have found themselves now miraculously saved, but married to an unbeliever? What instructions does Paul give to the man who finds himself saved and married to an unbeliever?

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. Paul wrote this, not in the context of marriage, but in the context of living life in this fallen world. Still, the principles he puts forth here are applicable to marriage, as there is no more intimate

“partnership” than marriage. Knowing this, why is it a big deal that believers be careful not to seek marriage with an unbeliever?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:1-2. Who is the “one husband”? Who is being presented to the “one husband” as his bride? Considering the instructions that are given in Ephesians 5, how does our relationship as the body of Christ relate to Christ?

Read Isaiah 44:14-20. Why is what this hypothetical man doing so ridiculous? How do we still do this today? What idols might you have created in your life, and you continue to worship those idols even when the Holy Spirit convicts you of the sin you are in?

Read Romans 1:18-23. According to this passage, is there such a thing as an atheist? Why or why not? Why is God’s wrath revealed against all unrighteousness? What demonstrated their foolishness, while they claimed it was their wisdom?

As you spend time with God today, ask Him to help you to see any area in your life that is or has become an idol for you. Ask Him to help you to see it for what it is and ask Him to help you to give up whatever you need to give up to honor Him first. Read Philippians 4:10-13, and ask God to help you, like Paul, to be content in whatever circumstances you are in. Paul knew that, with God’s strength, he could do all that God required of him, regardless of how much food he had or how comfortable he was. Ask God to help you to rest on His strength as you seek to honor God above all.