

**it's complicated**

**A Relationship Series**



# DIVORCE

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



<sup>10</sup> Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another?

<sup>11</sup> Judah has been unfaithful. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the LORD loves by marrying women who worship a foreign god.

Malachi 2:10-16

<sup>12</sup> As for the man who does this, whoever he may be, may the LORD remove him from the tents of Jacob—even though he brings an offering to the LORD Almighty. <sup>13</sup> Another thing you do: You flood the LORD’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favour on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

Malachi 2:10-16

<sup>14</sup> You ask, “Why?” It is because the LORD is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

<sup>15</sup> Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

Malachi 2:10-16

<sup>16</sup> “The man who hates and divorces his wife,” says the LORD, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the LORD Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.

Malachi 2:10-16

In the Bible, God is depicted as a covenant-maker.  
In this intimate relationship we reciprocate as  
either covenant-keepers or covenant-breakers.

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



Whenever we read the Bible, we should be able to  
see our own reflection in its pages

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



We see the success in establishing Israel and God's covenant relationship from Genesis to Deuteronomy

We see the struggle in maintaining Israel and God's covenant from Joshua to 2 Chronicles

We see the separation in Israel and God's covenant relationship from Isaiah to Malachi

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



<b>God says:</b>	<b>Israel says:</b>	<b>God concludes:</b>
I have loved you	How have your loved us?	You have doubted me
You have despised me	How have we despised you?	You have shown contempt by defiling worship
You have turned against me and your wives	Why do you accuse us?	You have committed adultery
You have wearied the Lord with your words	How have we wearied the Lord?	You have caused injustice by celebrating evil as good
Return to me and I will return to you	How have we robbed you?	You have robbed me by withholding tithes and offerings
You have spoken arrogantly against me	What have we said against you?	You have said it is futile to serve God



# 1) Faithlessness (vs. 10-11)

<sup>10</sup> Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another?

<sup>11</sup> Judah has been unfaithful. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the LORD loves by marrying women who worship a foreign god.

Malachi 2:10-11

Faithlessness is a set up for moral failure

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



When a Christian does not marry a Christian, he or she becomes vulnerable to both the temptation of physical adultery and spiritual adultery

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



If we divorce from God, we are more likely to  
divorce in our marriage

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



Faithlessness is also a desecration of the  
sanctuary of the Lord

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



“<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

## 2) Unfaithfulness (vs. 12-15)

<sup>12</sup> As for the man who does this, whoever he may be, may the LORD remove him from the tents of Jacob—even though he brings an offering to the LORD Almighty. <sup>13</sup> Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favour on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

Malachi 2:12-15

<sup>14</sup> You ask, “Why?” It is because the LORD is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. <sup>15</sup> Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

Malachi 2:12-15

# 3) Faithfulness (vs. 16)

<sup>16</sup> “The man who hates and divorces his wife,” says the LORD, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the LORD Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.

Malachi 2:16

“<sup>16</sup> “I hate divorce,” says the GOD of Israel. GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies says, “I hate the violent dismembering of the ‘one flesh’ of marriage.” So watch yourselves. Don’t let your guard down. Don’t cheat.”

Malachi 2:16  
(The Message)

## A) Justifiable Divorce

## i. Adultery

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Matthew 5:32

“I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries.”

Jeremiah 3:8

This means that God has actually experienced  
justifiable divorce!

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



The main idea is that God hates divorce unless it is for justifiable reasons

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



If we were redeemable, then our marriages are  
redeemable

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



The main idea is that God hates divorce unless it is for justifiable reasons

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



<sup>12</sup> Go, proclaim this message toward the north:  
“Return, faithless Israel,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will frown on you no longer, for I am faithful,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will not be angry forever.

Jeremiah 3:12-14

<sup>13</sup> Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the LORD your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,” declares the LORD. <sup>14</sup> “Return, faithless people,” declares the LORD, “for I am your husband.

Jeremiah 3:12-14

For your Maker is your husband— the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. <sup>6</sup> The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit—a wife who married young, only to be rejected,” says your God.

Isaiah 54:5-8

<sup>7</sup> “For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. <sup>8</sup> In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD your Redeemer.

Isaiah 54:5-8

## ii. Desertion

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



<sup>15</sup> But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

1 Corinthians 7:15

## B) Unjustifiable Divorce

[We do] violence to the one [we] should protect.

Malachi 2:16

# Unjustifiable divorce is self-harm

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



i. Love Issues: We are no longer in love

Divorce indicates that our words no longer have weight

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



ii. Money Issues: We cannot agree about our finances

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



Modify your money management before you  
modify your marriage

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



### iii. Communication Issues: We are no longer communicating

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

James 1:19

## iv. Intimacy Issues: We are struggling to be intimate

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



The dissatisfied are those who have another  
standard of comparison

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



v. Expectation Issues: We are not living up to each other's expectations

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



It is virtuous to learn how to defer to your spouses preferences

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



Jesus wants us to enter marriage with the  
commitment of finishing marriage

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



## C) Extreme Cases

If you or your children are ever in position where you fear your safety or experience abuse, as hard as it is, you must temporarily separate from your spouse

it's complicated

A Relationship Series



<sup>10</sup> To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. <sup>11</sup> But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:10

Paul permits separation on the following terms:

- The individual separates agreeing to remain unmarried
- The individual hoping for the marriage to be reconciled



## D) Justifiable Remarriage

<sup>39</sup> A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:39

# Rev. Billy Graham

(1918-2018)



**it's complicated**

**A Relationship Series**

