

**Emmanuel Baptist Church**  
**June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**Malachi 2:1-16 – “Jesus, The Faithful Priest: The Covenant Keeper”**

**I. Introduction**

Good morning, As always it is a great honor and privilege to be entrusted with the preaching of God’s Gospel. It is my hope this morning as we go through the text that you would hear the gospel and in hearing that you would believe to the good of your souls and to the glory of God.

Further, I do want to wish a happy Father’s Day to all of the Father’s in the room. Brothers, my prayer for you is that God the Father, would grant you grace to walk worthy in this very important role and that you would be well-pleasing to Him and a blessing to your family. And, to everyone in the room, the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment says to honor your father and mother. May we this day and everyday be careful to obey that holy commandment, and remember that Jesus says, if you love me keep my commandments.

Well, this morning, we are going to be continuing in our study through the book of Malachi and so I do invite you to turn with me to Malachi chapter 2. Our text this morning will be verses 1-16. The title of today’s sermon is “Jesus, the Faithful Priest: and we are going to look at how He is the Covenant Keeper”

Let us read the Word of God which is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We’ll begin in verse 1 and read down through verse 16

*Read the Text*

Thus, the reading of God’s Holy and Infallible Word and His people said: AMEN!!

Let us pray and ask God’s blessing on His Word as it is preached: “Holy Father, as we have just read your Word we have been confronted with the reality that you do not tolerate sin. Father, help us to be brought to a clearer understanding of the sinfulness of sin. Lord, do not allow us to think lightly of sin... would you grant us the grace of conviction for our sin, but also Lord I would pray that as we contemplate your Holiness and your hatred of Sin that we would also be reminded that in Your great love you provided a Savior on our behalf... One who was sinless, who perfectly kept every jot and tittle of your Holy Law, and Lord grant us the assurance that if we be united to Him by faith that we shall be forgiven of our sin and counted righteous in your sight. And Father I do pray that as we contemplate our Conquering Savior that we would cry out with the angels and with the spirits of just men made perfect - “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” Father, may your Son be magnified this morning, and it is in His name we pray... Amen!”

## II. Recap of Last Week

Well, this week we are picking up where we left off last week, and I wanted to take just a few moments to:

1. Remind you of the theme of the book and the goal of this sermon series
2. Reorient you to the Historical Context of the book of Malachi
3. Recap from last week God's plan to address the spiritual condition of his covenant people
  1. *Remind you of the overarching theme of this book and the goal that I am seeking to accomplish in this short series*

Last week we stated that the whole of the Bible is one story telling one glorious message of God's redemptive and covenantal love for His people in Christ. That's what the Bible is about. The whole of the Bible is telling that one glorious message, and therefore the very essence, the very warp and woof, of the Faith that has been once and for all delivered to the saints is the message of God's redemptive and covenantal love for His elect people in Christ. And understanding this, dear ones listen... this isn't just for preachers and teachers... this is for all of us... we must understand that in all of our study of the Scripture that this overarching message must be the controlling factor in our understanding of what we are reading. Dear ones, my desire is that you would be looking for God's Redemptive and Covenantal Love for you in Christ on every page of Scripture. That is absolutely essential.

2 Timothy 3 makes it clear that the Scriptures are able to make a man wise unto salvation, but how do the scriptures make a man wise unto salvation? ... only in so far as they reveal the Person and Work of Christ... If you would read the Scriptures in a way that would profit your soul you must have one great aim and that is to find Christ in the text... Jesus once said to the Pharisees –**“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me”**. The proper way to read the Scripture is to see the Covenant of Grace, that is the way of salvation, being offered to you by way of believing in Christ. And thus, it follows that you can do all the exegesis and study of a text that you want and you may even glean much insight from that endeavor but if you do not find Christ in the text then you've missed it. It would be like searching for that pearl of great price and only being left with oyster and shell. And so my desire in this sermon and in every sermon that God would allow me to preach in my life, is that I would find Christ in the text and show Him to you. For He alone can save.

Spurgeon once famously said: No Christ in your sermon, sir? Then go home, and never preach again until you have something worth preaching.”

Well, as we come to this study of the book of Malachi my goal is to show that this book contributes to this overarching Scriptural theme of God's Redemptive and Covenantal Love in Christ by showing that God's Covenant of Grace originates in the Love of the Father and that the conditions attached to His gracious covenant are not dependent on the weakness of fallen men but rather on the Covenant Keeping Christ resulting in the everlasting blessing of all those united to the Christ by faith.

And I want to try and accomplish this goal by preaching the following 4 sermons from this book:

1. (God's Electing Love) - Malachi 1
2. (Jesus, the Faithful Priest)– Malachi 2
- 3 (God's Covenant Faithfulness) – Malachi 3
4. (The Blessing of the Covenant) – Malachi 4

## ***2. Reorient you to the Historical Context of the book of Malachi***

Last week I sought to show that Malachi was a prophet sent to the nation of Israel approximately 100 years after they had returned from Exile. Further, we were reminded that although Israel was back in the promised land and had rebuilt their temple and had rebuilt the city, they were still a people that were under the thumb of the Persian Empire.

And because they were still a weak nation under the rule of the Persian Empire and many decades had passed the people of Israel began to lose hope that God was going to fulfill the promises that He made. Promises such as the ones made in Jeremiah and Amos which promised that God would restore the fortunes of His people Israel. It is so important for us to grasp, this context... you see Israel had thought that God was going to make them into a great nation, and not just restore them to their former glory, but that he would expand their glory and make them into the greatest nation on the earth. Well, the truth is they weren't wrong in thinking this, they just didn't understand the way that God was going to bring it to pass, nor did they understand the nature of God's special redemptive covenantal Kingdom.

And so, in many ways the people of Israel in Malachi's day were a disaffected people... they had begun to lose faith that God really did love them and that He would be faithful to His past promises. And so, Malachi, confronts a people skeptical of God's promises and therefore indifferent to live in the light of those promises and to worship and serve the Lord with all their hearts. (\* good lesson for us today... are we indifferent to live in the light of the promise of eternal life?)

## ***3. Recap from last week, looking at how God in chapter 1 of Malachi addressed the awful spiritual condition of His covenant people Israel.***

### **A. Exposing their sin**

Last week, we looked at how God exposed the sins of the nation and the sins of the priests in particular. We looked at how God highlighted that the sins of Israel were especially heinous in light of God's special electing love for them. They were a people that were disdainful and spurning the very covenant love of God. They were a people that despised the holiness of God as evidenced by callous indifference to keeping the Ceremonial Law of God as prescribed to them on Mt. Sinai. In chapter 1 verse 13 we see the attitude of the priests regarding the Ceremonial Law of God – **they said that this Law was a weariness and they snorted at it.** And last week we looked at how it was remarkable that God did not wipe off the face of the earth for arrogantly committing capital crimes against the Lord by despising what He regarded as Most Holy.

## B. Prophesying to expand and magnify His grace

In addition to this, we saw that although God severely rebuked the sins of Israel in chapter 1, He also gave glimpses into His plan to do something remarkable. He gave glimpses into the reality that His plan to address the issues of a nation that was largely apostate was not to bring an end to His covenant people but rather to expand and magnify His gracious dealings with His covenant people. We saw in verses 11 and 14 that the amazing and gracious plan of God was to extend His special electing love beyond the borders of Israel to all the nations of the earth, and that in the process of doing so He would institute a New and better Covenant that would be perfectly suited to accomplish the gracious redemptive purposes of God that find their genesis in eternity past within the very Trinitarian Love and Decree of God Himself.

Brothers and sisters if that doesn't cause your hearts to well up with joy, you might need to check your spiritual wrists to see if you have a pulse!

The God we serve is a God of Unbending Holiness, and at the same time He is a God of mind-boggling grace.

Well with these things in mind let us turn our attention back to chapter 2.

### III. **The Abuse of the Covenant of Levi (Vs 1-9)**

Our passage today can be divided fairly neatly into 2 sections. Verses 1-9 address the Abuse of the Covenant of Levi by the Jewish Priests and verses 10-16 address the Abuse of the Marriage Covenant in Israel.

First let us consider verses 1-9 which Address the Failure of the Priesthood in Israel to keep the Covenant of Levi.

#### **Vs 1-3**

The first 3 verses contain one of the most graphic rebukes that God gives in Holy Scripture. These verses are a continuation of the blistering rebuke that God was delivering to the priests in chapter one. As blistering as this rebuke is, we must understand that God's response here to the state of the Jewish priesthood is not just in response to the priests of Malachi's day. You see, God is a patient God, over and over again God reveals Himself in the Old Testament as a God who is Slow to Anger.

For 2 centuries God had been warning and rebuking the Jewish priesthood. In Jeremiah God described the priesthood as shepherds who were **“destroying and scattering the sheep of God's pasture”** and he pronounces a woe upon them, that is He solemnly warns that He will curse those who do this.

In Ezekiel's day he gives a similar rebuke to the priests or shepherds in Ezekiel 34. If you would turn with me to Ezekiel 34

Notice vs 1-6

**1**The word of the LORD came to me: **2**“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? **3**You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. **4**The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. **5**So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; **6**they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

And then notice God’s prophecy of what He will do in response to these wicked shepherds in verse 10:

**10**Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

And so, we see here that God is going to bring an end to this. He is not going to allow this to continue unabated forever.

But as we’ve noticed in Malachi already, when God pronounces judgment He also reveals His gracious purposes.

Notice in Ezekiel 34 verses 15 and 22 -24

**15**I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD.

**22**I will rescue<sup>e</sup> my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. **23**And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. **24**And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.

Now, this is an interesting prophecy by Ezekiel. Ezekiel made this prophecy several hundred years after King David died... and so the clear reference here is that Jesus, the Son of David, will be the one who will ultimately be the Shepherd or Priest to the people of God.

So, when we come back to Malachi 2, we see God doing something similar as to what He has done in both Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We see him rebuking the priests of Israel once again, but here in Malachi we see that there is a sense of finality in God’s address to the priests. It is as if God is saying, I have been a God slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but now I’m done... He says in verse 2 if you will not listen then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessing, and then in the same verse he says **“Indeed, I have already cursed them.”**

This serves as God’s last word of rebuke before He sends forth both the forerunner and the Son of David Himself in the New Testament, who will truly be a faithful priest and shepherd to the people of God.

**Verse 4** – In verse 4 we see that God makes it known that the command that He has just uttered in verses 1-3 will come to pass for it is founded upon God’s covenant made with Levi, that is with the tribe of Levi, which of course we know is the tribe of the priests in Israel.

Last week we talked about how Israel as a whole was a recipient of the special electing covenantal love of God and thus for Israel as a whole to despise that love by saying “How have you loved us” was a great sin in the sight of God.

But this week as we narrow our focus on the Jewish Priesthood, we see them doing that exact same thing.

The tribe of Levi was specially chosen or elected by God. This tribe was set apart from all the other tribes. It was this tribe of Levi that God made a covenant with, and they were given the special and holy tasks of overseeing the meeting place of God with His people, they were given the tasks of representing the people before God, they were given the holy tasks of teaching and instructing the people in the ways of the Lord and thus they were to be messengers of the Lord, they were given the tasks of overseeing the sacrificial system which was God’s appointed means of maintaining peace between Himself and His people, and they were promised by God that as they were faithful in these holy duties that God would ensure that they would be provided for, thus receiving both life and peace from God Himself.

Thus, because the Levitical Priesthood was despising God’s special electing and covenantal love in choosing them to serve as Priests, they were guilty of heinous sin in the sight of God. And because of this God says to them, “I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it.

### **Verses 5-7**

This leads us to verse 5-7. In these verses God lays out what the Priests were supposed to be doing by looking back to those who served faithfully. I think here there is especially in view the tribe of Levi as a whole at the occasion of the great sin of the people worshipping a Golden Calf in Exodus 32. If you remember this event, when Moses came down from the mountain and had saw that the people had broken loose against God in their idolatry... Moses said “Who is on the Lord’s side?” and it was the sons of Levi who came and stood with Moses and as a result of their fear of the Lord and their faithfulness to Him, Moses says to the sons of Levi in that same chapter “Today you have been ordained to the service of the Lord”

There is also the occasion in Numbers 25 when Phinehas the grandson of Aaron turned back the wrath of the Lord by spearing the man and the pagan woman who was with him who were defiantly despising the One True God. In response to this we read in verses 10-13 of Numbers 25:

[10](#)And the LORD said to Moses, [11](#)“Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. [12](#)Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, [13](#)and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the

covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel.”

And so, I don't think we can isolate the Covenant of Levi here to any one particular man, but rather this covenant was made with the Levitical Priesthood. And in this Covenant they were chosen for a special role to uphold the Glory and Honor and Holiness of the Name of God while at the same time they were to be a blessing to the people of Israel by teaching them to honor, worship, and obey the One True God.

In verse 7 we see a summary statement of what the Levitical priesthood was supposed to be. “For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord.”

### **Verses 8-9**

Now we turn our attention to verses 8-9 and here we clearly see that the point of this section is that God has convicted the Priesthood with the sin of breaking the Covenant of Levi.

He says “You have turned aside from the way. (You have deviated from the stipulations of this covenant). And in doing so... God says to these priests: “You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi.”

What an absolute crushing pronouncement of guilt. It's one thing to be guilty before the Lord for personal sin... it is another to be guilty of sin that has caused others to stumble (In fact Jesus will say it would be better for a millstone to be tied around your neck and you be cast into the sea than to cause one of God's children to sin)

And then in verse 9 we have the consequence of their sin pronounced upon the Priests by God who is the Just and Holy Judge. He says: “**And so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction.**”

Now, I'm not done with this section we will come back to it at the end, but I want to move forward and lay out the second section quickly which is the Abuse of the Marriage Covenant in verses 10-16, and then after doing that I want to draw out 2 points of application from each section and then conclude with a statement on how to study the Scriptures in a way that is most profitable to our souls.

## **IV. The Abuse of the Marriage Covenant (Vs 10-16)**

In these verses we have in verse 10 a summary statement which is a rebuke from God and then in verses 11-16 - 2 examples are given to drive home the point made in verse 10

### **A. The Summary Statement (verse10)**

First the summary statement: Let's read verse 10 – “Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?”

What's the point being made here? Well, there is some debate here, as to whether the word father is referring to God or whether it is referring to Abraham. The way the ESV renders it lends itself

to the view that it is referring to God as Father, although I can see arguments for both views. Nevertheless, I don't think either view greatly impacts the meaning here. The point here I think is this: it is saying... that as God's covenant people, Israel was bound by God to be faithful to one another according to His Law.

We see this worked out in the second part of verse 10 it says: "Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers."

In other words: God is saying to the people of Israel: "Because I am your Covenant God, Because I am your Creator and Judge, and because you are my people, you must relate to your fellow man appropriately as those who must give an account before me... and I have this against you... You are not doing this... you are not being faithful to one another, you are sinning against one another and consequently sinning against me.

## 2 examples:

Malachi then gives two examples of how the people of Israel are not being faithful in their human relationships by focusing on the most precious and fundamental of all human relationships, which of course is the marriage covenant.

### **Example 1: Intermarriage with Pagan Women (verses 11-12)**

In verses 11 and 12 we see that there were men in Israel who were marrying pagan women and thus directly breaking the covenant God made with Israel. Deuteronomy 7:3 says it directly and plainly "Do not intermarry with them" the them being the daughters of pagan nations. Again, we see an example of the people of Israel seeming to open up the Law of God and instead of saying how can I be careful to obey this Law, saying how can I break this, Law. Now, I am going to come back to why this is such a big deal in a few minutes Lord willing.

### **Example 2: The Unjustified Divorcing of One's Wife (verses 13-16)**

But let's move to the second example of Israel's abuse of the Marriage Covenant found in verses 13-16. Here the issue is plainly the unjustified divorcing of the wife of one's youth. We know that God makes legitimate allowances for divorce in certain circumstances such as if one party commits adultery. But that's not the kind of divorce that is going on here. I think verse 16 explains what was going on quite well. (**Now I do need to pause here because this is a verse that is translated differently depending on what translation you might have.**) Many translations will say that God hates divorce and that he also hates the man who covers his garments with violence.

I don't know much about the Hebrew language, although I do hope to take Hebrew 1 in the Fall so maybe I'll learn how to handle these translation issues better in the future... but in looking at the context I do think that the ESV translation does a good job of capturing the issue.

Notice verse 16 – there it says "For the man who does not love (or hates) his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So, guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."



What this translation is saying is that God is rebuking the men of Israel who are divorcing their wives because of hate, because of the lack of love... God is saying that if a man does this, he covers his garment with violence which I take to be a figure of speech meaning that a man who unjustly divorces his wife has defiled his character... He is to be regarded as a wicked man. He is to be regarded as a covenant breaker. And so, God says guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless lest you defile yourself with this great wickedness.

## **V. Application of the Text**

Now I think we have at the very least done a basic grammatical/historical exegesis of the text. We have looked at 1. The Abuse of the Covenant of Levi by the Priesthood, and 2. The Abuse of the Covenant of Marriage by the Israelite Men. We have at the very least stated what the text has said.

Now, if I were to leave off right here, I would be guilty of failing to preach these texts. If Spurgeon was to hear this sermon and I stopped now he would say go home and don't preach again until you have something worth preaching.

And so, now that we've heard the content of Malachi 2:1-16; we must now ask the question: So what? Okay you've told me that the Priests in Malachi's day were breakers of the Covenant of Levi and you've told me that the men in Malachi's day were breakers of the marriage covenant.

Well, what does that have to do with us sitting in this room some 2,400 years later?

Well brothers and sisters these texts have much to do with us today and I want to draw out for you 4 applications of this text and how we can profit from them today.

### **Practical Applications**

First, I want to draw out of the text a practical application from each passage.

#### **A. First let's look at verses 1-9:**

What can we learn from this passage that has bearing on us today? Well, I think we can learn many things but perhaps the most immediately practical application is that verses 5-7 serve as a picture of what an elder or pastor in the context of the New Covenant church is to be like. Horatius Bonar, a presbyterian minister from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has written a wonderful little booklet entitled "The Faithful Minister of the New Covenant" and this work is an exposition of Malachi 2:5-7 as it applies to what a pastor ought to be. In that work he lays out the reality that the covenant, of which the pastor ministers, is one of life and peace. As the pastor preaches the gospel, he is preaching a message that brings eternal life and peace with God for those who will receive the message in saving faith. Further he makes the point that a faithful pastor is one who fears the Lord and one who stands in awe of the Name of God. The faithful pastor is who has true instruction in his mouth... listen to this excerpt from this little work that expresses the heart of a faithful pastor when it comes to preaching truth:

"We must preach Him wholly, we must preach him fully, we must preach him truly. We must not merely beware of denying Him, but we must beware of setting Him forth imperfectly, or even

with cold exactness, as if unwilling to commend His worth by any expression of our esteem or love: We must not merely refrain from marring His beauty, but even from hiding or defacing the very hem of his garment... It must be a crime needing both repentance and forgiveness, in the eyes of the God of truth, to set forth amiss the character or work of Him who is TRUTH itself... It can be no trivial injury done to souls, when we testify amiss of Him who is “the way, the truth, and the life”, the “door” the access, “the new and living way” to the Father’s house, of Him who is the sinner’s hope, the sinner’s surety and substitute, the sinner’s peace, the sinner’s high priest and advocate above. Oh! How infinitely momentous, that, in all that pertains to Christ, and His Work for sinners, “True instruction should be in our mouths and no wrong must be found on our lips.”

The point here I think is clear... Ministers of the New Covenant are held to a high standard, higher even than the standard of the Covenant of Levi

Further in verses 5-7 we see something of the character that is required for a minister of the New Covenant. In Verse 6 the pastor must walk with God in peace and uprightness and his manner of life coupled with his true instruction should turn many from iniquity. For the lips of a pastor should guard knowledge and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord.

So clearly, we can see from this passage that an application that can be applied to us today is that the high calling of the pastor is to be a servant used by God to bring life and peace to all who would trust in Christ.

### **B. Secondly let’s look at verses 10-16**

In this passage there are two very clear and practical applications that we must apply to our lives today.

The first is that as believers we are not to marry outside of the Lord. We are not to be unequally yoked. If you are a follower of Christ, you ought to marry one who is likewise a follower of Christ. We have some young people in here this morning who aren’t married yet. Listen to the commandment of God... do not marry outside of the Lord for to do so is wicked in the eyes of God, and it will bring much heartache in your life.

The second application also has to do with marriage. If you are married you must not divorce your spouse for any reason not allowed by God. The common reasons that so many people give today: we have irreconcilable differences, I don’t love them anymore, we aren’t compatible, these are not valid reasons for divorce. Brothers and sisters who are married... the text I think makes it clear that God is the one who brought you together in marriage... notice verse 15 “Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union.”

What’s the point of this verse? It is to remind married couples that God is in your marriage... He brought you together and therefore “What God has joined together let not man separate”.

Dear ones... God has given you your spouse... you are commanded to love your companion and your covenant partner... do not hate your spouse and by doing so defile yourself before the Lord.

Beloved, we live in a time where divorce is common and celebrated, and things are stacked against you culturally when it comes to being faithful to the spouse of your youth... So, Guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless!

### **Gospel Applications**

Now, I still haven't preached this text. If I were to stop here, I would be failing in my calling as minister of the New Covenant. If you remember at the beginning of today's message I said, my desire in this sermon is that I would find Christ in the text and show Him to you. For He alone can save.

So now let us find Christ in the text...

#### A. First from verses 1-9

Let's turn our attention back to verses 5-7. And I want to remind you of what God prophesied in Ezekiel 34... If you remember when we read that text God's plan to address the failures of the Jewish Priesthood is that he would make His Servant David to be the shepherd of the people. Well as we look at verses 5-7 of Malachi 2 it is clear that what Malachi is doing is pointing forward to Christ, who would be that Faithful Priest who would bring life and peace to all those in covenant with Him.

Jesus in His Covenant Faithfulness is the Giver of Life:

Acts 3:15 says that Jesus is the Author of Life, Jesus speaking of Himself says that He is the Life, and in John 17 Jesus says that the Father has given the Son authority to give eternal life. Dear ones, Jesus in His Covenant Obedience Has Won Life for all those who trust in Him. Do you see that? If you are a Christian, rejoice in Christ who is your Life today, and if you aren't a Christian, turn to Christ and live.

Jesus in His Keeping of the Covenant is the Giver of Peace:

Isaiah calls Him the Prince of Peace, Paul calls Him the Lord of Peace who gives peace, and Jesus Himself said to His disciples before His death: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Dear ones, would you have peace with God, then turn to Christ in faith, and receive from His omnipotent hand a peace that surpasses understanding.

Truly Christ is the Mediator of a Covenant that brings eternal life and a peace with God that can never be taken away.

Further, true instruction was in his mouth and no wrong was found on his lips.

The Father speaking of His Son at the Transfiguration said "This is My Beloved Son, Listen to Him" Dear ones would you listen to the Son today. True instruction is in His mouth... and He says "come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." As Peter rightly said in John 6 – when Jesus asked if they would turn away from him like the other disciples, Peter said "Where shall we go... you have the words of eternal life" Dear ones, would you sit at

the feet of Jesus and listen to His teaching... for there never was a teacher like Him, for He teaches as one who has all authority.

And not only is true instruction found in his mouth... there was no wrong found on his lips: 1 Peter 2:22 –“He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth”. Christ will never lead you astray... He will never cause to stumble by His instruction. Follow Him, for in following Him is the only way to eternal life.

Further, Jesus walked with God in peace and uprightness... He was that faithful High Priest who knew no sin... He was the Righteous One and He has turned a multitude no man can number from iniquity and he has led many sons to glory. Dear ones, if you are trusting in Him today, He will lead you to glory as well.

For through Him we have been brought near to God, we have been granted access into the Holy places by the blood of Christ, therefore brothers and sisters let us draw near in full assurance.

Brothers and sisters, the point of this text is clear... Jesus is the Faithful Priest. Jesus is God’s plan to bring about his gracious redemptive purposes... And so no matter what you get out of the text this morning if you don’t see Christ in the text you have missed the text... you must see Christ as the Faithful Priest, as the Faithful minister of the New Covenant... and you must trust in Him believing that His blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. If we are covered by the blood of Christ we have been granted both life and peace, for the blood of Christ purifies and sanctifies us forever. Amen!

#### B. Second from verses 10-16

Well now let us quickly look at verses 10-16, I know the sermon is long, but we are finding Christ in the text.

So, Where is Christ in this text? ...

I think we see Christ in this passage both as the Faithful Husband and as the Godly Offspring

If you remember this passage was dealing with the failures of the Israelite men to be faithful husbands. But we know that Christ who is the Husband of His Bride the church is not like these faithless men. Christ is the true husband and as it says in Ephesians 5. Christ loves His bride the church. He loves His Bride so much that He gave Himself for her in both His perfect life and substitutionary death. Dear ones... the point here is clear... if you would be saved you must be united to this Christ who gave Himself for the church... and you must submit yourself to Him and be washed and sanctified by His Word so that Christ would present you to Himself on that great day of the wedding feast of the Lamb... listen to the words of Revelation 19:6-8

“Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God

the Almighty reigns.

<sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,  
 and his Bride has made herself ready;  
<sup>8</sup>it was granted her to clothe herself  
 with fine linen, bright and pure"

Dear ones, blessed is the one who is invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb... the only way for that to happen for you is that you be counted among the Bride of Christ, which requires that you repent of your sins and trust in Christ for salvation.

And then finally, let us look at how we see Christ pictured for us in the Godly Offspring.

Verse 15 says that what God was seeking in faithful marriages was godly offspring. What is the significance of this statement? Is it that Christian couples would produce godly offspring? Well, I'm not going to debate that, it is clear from Scripture that we are to raise our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that is crystal clear... but is that the primary focus of this verse? I would say no. In the context of the Old Testament, we see time and time again that there is the theme of the Offspring shot throughout... This is the reason for the careful genealogies which are recorded over and over again in the Old Testament...you see God promised after the Fall that the seed or offspring singular of the woman would crush the head of Satan... Abraham was promised that through his offspring, singular, all the nations of the earth would be blessed...

You see what was going on in the day of Malachi was that as a result of the Jews abusing the marriage covenant, they were in a very real way threatening the covenant promises of God... men who went after pagan women were cutting off the godly line, they were cutting the line of Abraham off... likewise men who were unjustly divorcing their wives were also in effect cutting the line of Abraham off...

But God in His sovereign providence and mercy, did not allow for that line to be cut off... He preserved that line... read the genealogy in Matthew 1 sometimes and see the amazing providence of God in preserving the line of the Messiah... and as Galatians 3 makes plain... Jesus Christ was that Godly Offspring promised all the way back in the Garden...

Dear ones, once again no matter what you get from the text, you have to see Christ... in this text we see that even this rebuke against the Israelites for their abusing of the covenant of marriage was ultimately the gracious hand of God preserving the line so that His Son in the fullness of time would be born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons. Would you have salvation? Then you must be united by Faith to that Godly Offspring, to that Seed of the Woman, that God graciously promised all the way back in Genesis 3:15.

## **VI. Conclusion (Christ and His Gospel as the Primary Focus)**

Well, in conclusion the main point that I wanted to make for you this morning was this:

Christ and His Gospel is the Primary Focus of the Message of Scripture...

When you read the Scriptures, you must train your eye to look for Christ...

Do we need practical principles to live by? Absolutely, I don't want to miss that...

But as we've studied Malachi 2 today... if I allowed you to walk out of here and all I told you was that pastors need to be faithful and you need to be faithful in your marriages then I would have failed you.

First and foremost, you needed to see Christ from this text, and in seeing Him you need to turn to Him in faith.

He is the Faithful Priest, He is the Faithful Husband, and He is that Godly Offspring promised in Genesis that would crush the head of Satan and in so doing bring many sons to glory. Let's pray.