

## Love the One You're With – A Call to Faithfulness

Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave.

Martin Luther

### BREAKING FAITH WITH ONE ANOTHER

Wrong-headed thinking:

What I do only concerns me and only affects me.

All that matters is that I'm okay with God.

My actions don't affect my worship.

The immediate problem:

### WHEN GOD DOESN'T HEAR OUR PRAYERS

The Lord is the witness ...

The vows you said at your wedding didn't say what your spouse would do for you.

Marriage is not easy or fair.

Marriage vows should properly focus on

honesty,  
faithfulness,  
submission,  
and diligence

Post a guard around your heart

When you post a guard you are attentive, watchful, prepared for the unexpected, and primed for action.

Breaking faith can take many forms (1 Cor 13:4-7 – revised reading)

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (NLT) REVISED

<sup>4</sup>Unfaithfulness is impatient and unkind. It is jealous, boastful, proud <sup>5</sup>and rude. It demands its own way. It is irritable and keeps a record of being wronged. <sup>6</sup>It insists on always being right and is upset when truth proves it wrong. <sup>7</sup>It gives up, loses faith, loses hope, and doesn't put up with much of anything.

### THE PROBLEM WITH FAILURE TO THRIVE (DIVORCE OR HATRED)

It does violence to the one we should protect.

Married or single, was there an issue that especially affirmed, challenged, or troubled you? Take a moment to jot it down. If you are married today, how do you rate your faithfulness (not your spouse's)? What are you going to do to post the guard around your heart to abandon or avoid unfaithfulness?

**Small Group Homework**  
**For the week of November 15, 2015**

**Getting to know you**

1. What's the funniest or most disastrous thing you have seen happen at a wedding?

**Going deeper**

2. If you can remember, think back over the vows you have heard at weddings. What are some of the elements that were included in those vows? Jot down the practical responsibility to which the individuals pledged themselves in common language.

Read Hebrews 2:1. While the author spoke of doctrinal issues, how do you think the drift principle applies to marriage and vows?

**Hebrews 2:1 (NIV)** We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

In your experience, what are some of the reasons that people drift from the promises and intent that they had when they said those vows?

3. How serious is breaking faith to the covenants we have made? Read the following passages and comment on the effects of unfaithfulness, whether physical, emotional, or behavioral.

**Proverbs 5:15–23 (NIV)** Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. <sup>16</sup> Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? <sup>17</sup> Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. <sup>18</sup> May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. <sup>19</sup> A loving doe, a graceful deer— may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love. <sup>20</sup> Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man's wife? Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman? <sup>21</sup> ***For your ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all your paths.*** <sup>22</sup> ***The evil deeds of the wicked ensnare them; the cords of their sins hold them fast.*** <sup>23</sup> ***For lack of discipline they will die, led astray by their own great folly.***

**1 Peter 3:7 (NIV)** Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

**Malachi 2:13–14 (NIV)** Another thing you do: You flood the LORD’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favor on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. <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.

We know the spiritual reason why this is; it is God’s way of getting our attention. From a personal standpoint, can you think of reasons from your own experience or the experience of others why unfaithfulness leads to a breakdown in our relationship with God? How is our spiritual life when our relational life is in crisis?

4. Think about the reverse reading we considered in 1 Cor 13. What are some areas you have most trouble with?

**1 Corinthians 13:4–7 REVERSE READING. THE CONCEPT OF LOVE HAS BEEN REPLACED WITH UNFAITHFULNESS.** *Unfaithfulness is impatient and unkind. It is jealous, boastful, proud<sup>5</sup> and rude. It demands its own way. It is irritable and keeps a record of being wronged.<sup>6</sup> It insists on always being right and is upset when truth proves it wrong.<sup>7</sup> It gives up, loses faith, loses hope, and doesn’t put up with much of anything.*

5. We talked about posting a guard around our heart and not being unfaithful; in fact, God repeats himself for emphasis. We talked of qualities of a guard:

Attentive, watchful, prepared for the unexpected, and primed for action

If you’re married, jot down some ways you might post a guard in relation to your own marriage. If you’re not, think in terms of general faithfulness in relationships.