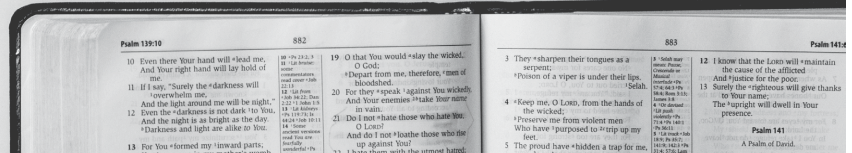


Words of Truth

In the Heavenly Places: A Study of Ephesians



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Be Strong in the Lord Caleb Aldridge, Hackleburg, AL

Strength is defined as the capacity of an object or substance to withstand great force or pressure. There are many places where strength can be had. One could be trained to be physically or mentally strong, but the Christian is to be spiritually strong. Our passage comes from Ephesians 6:10, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might." Strength is obviously a good thing, but to be spiritually strong can be difficult. How do we accomplish such a command as this?

Paul commands the brethren at Ephesus to be strong. From the literal definition we used earlier, Paul tells them to withstand the pressures and the great force that life brings upon them. The problem with so many today is that when it comes to withstanding the pressures of life, they strive to do it all themselves. As people, we like to feel as if we are in control of situations and problems and have solutions, or at least can find solutions to resolve the issues at hand. But what happens when the problems become larger or shake us to our core? What happens when we face persecution that we cannot escape or issues that are far beyond our control?

Paul commands the Ephesians to have strength, but he also tells them where that strength should come from. For the Christian, our source of strength should be our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. The strength that comes from Him is like no other. We are speaking of strength in times of great trials, pain, and difficulty. Times when the world would just give up because they have nothing to rely on. You see, no matter how strong we are, we are limited in our strength, and there is always something out there that is stronger than we are. However, if we confide in the one who has strength without measure and who cannot be overtaken, we can get through even the most difficult times.

I am reminded of what David said in Psalm 27:1, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" When one is strong in the Lord and relies on Christ's might instead of his own, there is nothing that can defeat him. One thing that I often try and say at services is simply this, "If we follow the Lord and find our strength in Him, there is nothing and no one that can remove us from Him... the only way that we are removed is when we choose to leave on our own."

The question for all of us today as we ponder this verse is, "Where does my strength come from?" If you find that you rely on your own strength instead of Christ's, make a change. You will not be able to overcome alone.

Chosen and Redeemed

Michael Jackson, Muscle Shoals, AL

It is easy to be self-centered when reflecting on salvation. After all, we are all definitely concerned with “what’s in it for us!” And, I might add, it would be unhealthy for us not to yearn for “every tear to be wiped away” and for there to no longer be “any mourning, or crying, or pain” (Rev. 21:3-4). However, Paul seems to give us a healthy perspective for reflection in Ephesians 1:3ff. For Paul, the fact that we are blessed is a testimony related to God (commentators differ on whether Paul means to say “Blessed is” God [simple statement of fact] or “Blessed be” God [indicating an exhortation to readers]), but either way, the sentiment is the same). Praise God for our blessings! In fact, Paul says that God blessed us with every spiritual blessing. However you take the meaning of that phrase, it forces us to recognize our Father for all he has done for us.

Particularly in view here for Paul is the concept of God’s choosing of us in Christ. This, Paul is saying, is one of God’s great spiritual blessings that lead to God’s praising. The fact that we were chosen “in him (Christ)” is important. The focus here for Paul is on Christ’s involvement in the choosing. Our “being chosen” is dependent upon our relationship to Christ; thus, “being chosen in him before the foundation of the world” means that God knew from the beginning that he would send Christ to make it possible for us to be accepted. This is experienced as an individual blessing for sure! However, in view here is the blessing as viewed as a work of God in Christ for all believers. We are afforded it only because we are “in him.”

God is also worthy of praise because of the purpose for which he chose those in Christ: to be holy and blameless before him. He chose us in him to be blameless before him. The phrase that occurs next, “in love,” can be taken one of two ways- (1) that’s the way we are to be blameless, or (2) it goes with the phrase that follows (God predestined us to adoption “in love”). It’s tempting to view Paul here as saying that God chose us to be “blameless in love.” We are all familiar with the Bible’s teaching regarding love as preeminent.

When Paul says that God predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ to himself (1:5), he is

simply restating the same truth of the previous verse. God chose us in Christ, or in other words, predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself. There is certainly a lot of worthiness in studying the nuances of the biblical concept of predestination throughout Scripture. In this case, it is important to note that Paul’s focus is not on the individual but on the distinction between the group of those who are “in Christ” and those who are not. The metaphor of adoption is particularly touching as a way of understanding the special relationship of those chosen by their Father.

It might be asked, “Why did God choose Christ, and consequently, those in Christ, to be adopted?” All human exploration of this fundamental question will only lead to one rational conclusion: “because he wanted to” (1:5b). “It’s my pleasure” is sort of a byline in today’s customer service culture. It is often used to express that the act of service being performed isn’t one of compulsion but rather one of voluntary intention. Paul says that God’s choosing of us is in accordance with His own pleasure. It should humble us to the point of worship (1:6). This passage about what God has done for us includes the constant reminder that it all results in praise back to God.

To further illustrate the place of Christ in this whole scheme, Paul says that “we have redemption through his blood” (1:7). While it has been rarely interpreted that this phrase isn’t a metaphor, this is certainly not the typical view of commentators. Most view this phrase as a metaphor taken from the picture of a slave being freed by the payment of a ransom. If the metaphor is pressed too literally, it becomes challenging to assign every aspect of the metaphor to the situation of Christ (much like the challenge that comes when trying to find every aspect of a parable to be something that should be understood literally). We might best sum it up by saying that Christ freed us from the power of something to which we were captive by doing what was required to cause that freedom. The fact that we are chosen comes at a cost- one which Christ was willing to pay.

God's Masterpiece

Mark Howell, Jasper, AL

Paul's words in Ephesians 2:1-10 are as profound and pertinent as any words ever penned. They succinctly encapsulate man's desperate dilemma and God's divine design to deliver him from his disastrous destiny. This narrative reveals a perfect plan that transforms a dying delinquent into a marvelous masterpiece crafted by the hands of a caring Creator!

The opening verses paint a vivid picture of man's somber state. Paul addresses those "who were dead" (2:1). Physically, they were alive, but spiritually, they were deceased. Paul declared these were "dead in trespasses and sins" (2:1). He makes it clear they were in this condition because they had been living not for good but for evil—they walked "according to the course of this world" (2:2). Like the majority of the world, they had followed "the prince of the power of the air"—Satan (2:2). Their activities consisted of fulfilling their fleshly lusts and doing whatever their sin-sick mind could contrive (2:3).

Having presented this grim portrayal, Paul introduces a pivotal conjunction, "But God" (2:4). With these two words, a majestic metamorphosis is made possible. Through God's infinite wisdom and because of His "rich mercy" and "great love," He made it possible for a new life in Christ to be had (2:4-5). The contrast of human depravity with divine mercy divulges an enchanting illustration of God's unfathomable love. In this love, the transformation unfolds, breathing life into the spiritually dead and offering salvation as an undeserved endowment.

This new life is offered through the grace of God (2:5). Paul unequivocally affirms that one who is saved is saved by grace. As he will explain in his subsequent words, this is not solely by the grace of God, but it is surely because of it. Without God's grace, there is no other path from death to life. It was God's eternal plan that sinful humanity be saved through the offering of His Son (cf. Eph. 3:8-12).

As Paul continues, he acknowledges a dynamic interplay between God's grace and man's faith. He affirms that one who is saved is saved by grace through faith (2:8). In this affirmation, we can know beyond any

doubt that God and man have a part in humanity's salvation. God has extended His grace as can be observed by what God has done for mankind through Christ (2:7). But man must be a willing and active participant in receiving this grace. This is where faith enters the plan. Many have been deceived into thinking that faith is a mere mental exercise. James attests a rather obvious conclusion when he writes, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24).

Some might strenuously object to the previous conclusion by noting what is said in v. 9: "Not of works, lest anyone should boast." A thorough investigation and proper interpretation reveals no contradiction between Paul's and James' teachings. Summarily speaking, in Ephesians 2:9, the works of which Paul writes are those done that would merit one's salvation. Man can never earn salvation. One cannot do enough good deeds in an entire lifetime that would atone for a single sin. Conversely, James speaks of works done in obedience to God, without which one cannot be said to even have faith (Jas 2:18). In illustrating his point, James mentions Abraham's offering of Isaac. James asks, "Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" (Jas. 2:22).

Continuing on, Paul lays bare a profound truth tied to what we have just noted. He writes, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (2:10). God also predetermined the good works men must do to be pleasing to Him. Because of this, Paul calls Christians God's "workmanship." This term refers to the handiwork or craftsmanship of God. It conveys the idea of a masterpiece or a work of art. How is this so? To answer, one must take a look at the passage as a whole. The passage begins with a stark portrayal of human depravity, highlighting the desperate need for divine intervention. The grace of God, depicted as a dynamic force, breathes life into the spiritually dead. What a transformation from death to life! What a masterpiece from the mind of the Almighty!

The Blessing of Unity

Philip Goad, Russellville, AL

In a world that is divisive in a plethora of unhealthy ways, what a blessing it is for our Lord to have declared that unity would be a hallmark of his church. The world divides people based on wealth and status; we've all heard of the lower, middle, and upper classes. The world divides the educated from the uneducated and based on the kind of work people do, white collar versus blue collar. A person may be referred to as being from either the right or wrong side of the tracks. Even more tragic, our world has a history of dividing people based on skin color, and there are still some cultures where the person who happens to be born female will face oppression.

On the other hand, consider what God designed his church to be. Beyond the offer of salvation, the reality of a united body of Christians may be one of the most attractive things the Lord's church offers to lost people who are weary of life in such a divisive world. As God's family, the Lord's church is to be a place of camaraderie rather than competition, of sharing rather than suspicion, and where everyone wins together as opposed to the "winners versus losers" model so prevalent today. God has designed the Lord's church to be a place of unity and peace – and hard work, a place where the rising tide of unified service lifts everyone up together.

Because of all that's at stake, we should be thankful that God inspired Paul to record the teaching we find in Ephesians 4:1-3, "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, ³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (NASB95). In explaining to his readers how they should live, Paul helps us understand how to maintain "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Consider some key learnings from this text.

First, it is important to understand that unity is something the Lord calls us to maintain; it isn't something we create. It's easier to respect the task God has called us to when we recognize that the phrase "the unity of the Spirit" includes the reminder that God has established

unity, and it belongs to him. Avon Malone stated, "Practical unity is essential because organic unity is a reality." In other words, the church must maintain and demonstrate unity because God established unity when he added us to the body of Christ! Are people still very different after obeying the gospel? Absolutely! Yet in the context of Ephesians, this exhortation to unity is rooted in the fact that obedient Jews and Gentiles had been united in the body of Christ (Ephesians 2:16). Is practical unity" sometimes challenging to maintain? Absolutely! But just because a God-given task may be difficult to achieve doesn't mean our obedience to it is optional.

Another key learning from this text is that Paul reveals some attributes that must be present within each Christian if unity and peace are to be maintained. It could be viewed as the Lord's inspired formula for success. Humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance are the marks of how we do life together within the family of God. Just as blood families function well when the lives of family members possess these attributes, so it is with the blood-bought church family. In the end, it's about being selfless rather than selfish. For any congregation of God's people where unity has been compromised, selflessness among some is undoubtedly missing. Imagine what God could accomplish through his church if every member of God's family became less concerned about having his way!

By inspiration, Paul seemed to understand the difficulties we would experience in maintaining unity. In a similar way to his use of Jesus as the illustration of selflessness in Philippians, Ephesians 5:1-2 records Paul's inspired plea for the church at Ephesus to imitate God and Christ by living lives marked by selflessness and love. Again, it may not always be easy to maintain the unity God established, but each of us must be committed to doing all we can to ensure success. Why? Because of our mission, the work we've been left here to accomplish. Jesus stated, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:32, NASB95). God forbid that a lack of unity on our part would ever compromise the drawing power of the cross!

Living as a New Creation

Scott Baggett, Glen Allen, AL

Paul's goal is for all Christians to walk together in unity. When that unity is achieved, there is peace to be enjoyed. David, whose life could be characterized by a great deal of disunity, penned, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" In Ephesians 4:1-7, we find a plea for unity and a listing of the truths necessary for Christian unity to exist. Next, there is a plea for each of us to become part of the unified body, though we bring and utilize differing talents and abilities found in vv. 8-16. In vv. 17-24, Paul asks his readers to change their walk because Christ changed who they are. This is accomplished through abandoning ties to personal desires, heritage, and education (or lack thereof).

Now we turn our attention to Ephesians 4:25-32. Paul illustrates how these changes manifest and how those changes help toward the goal of unity. In high school, I was a member of the marching band. My instrument of choice was the alto sax. The saxophone was invented by a Belgian inventor and musician named Adolfe Sax. He intended to create an instrument that would produce beautiful music. The music it produced could be blended with the sounds of many other instruments in a band or orchestra. At times, it could provide support; at other times, it could take the lead. However, I assure you that he did not have excavation in mind when he made this instrument. Yet that was how I decided to use it one day on the marching field during a period of boredom. I removed the reed from the mouthpiece and began to dig a trench around my feet by swinging the horn upside down by its bell end. In order for it to be useful again in its intended purpose, there was a need for cleaning and some repair.

Like my saxophone, you and I have an inventor. That inventor or creator is God. According to Genesis 1:26-27, God created us in his image and after his likeness. He designed us to function in ways that bring unity and honor him as our creator. Paul begins with the tongue in vv. 25 and 29. The Bible identifies this small member as one of our most difficult to control. The tongue was created to speak truth in love. It was created to give compliments, tell of forgiveness, correct wrongs, and proclaim the glory of God. Yet many of us turn it

upside down and "dig trenches." We tell lies, spread gossip, pervert the Scriptures, and refuse apologies or forgiveness. We must keep our purpose in mind. We are all created by God and belong to him, but we also belong collectively to one another. We were created for unity.

Next, Paul addresses our prideful mind. Our mind was created to reason, to reflect, to operate our bodies, and to experience feeling. Sometimes, we rewire our reflexes or reactions to inputs and feelings so that we lack control over ourselves. Peter encouraged his troubled readers not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing (1 Pet 3:9). But when we experience stress, especially considering the fiery trials that Peter's readers were enduring, it is easy to lose control. Paul said he kept his body and brought it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27). My uncontrolled anger pushes people away, inflicts pain, and only serves my selfish intentions. It also gives the devil space or a place. That place is between me and others. It separates me from God and my fellow man. It violates the top two commands.

Speaking of the devil, there is an old adage that idle hands are the Devil's workshop. From the beginning, God has intended for mankind to work. God gave man work in the garden before sin entered the world. Paul identifies our hands as needing to be put to the proper use so that we have unity. The thief who stole is specifically mentioned in verse 28. He is told to work and earn the things he receives. But the one who robs another outright is not the only possible thief. Paul says that we should not work to serve our own interests. We also work to help those in need. Jesus brings the meeting of the needs of others into view when considering the judgment scene in Matthew 25. We are thieves when we have this world's goods, see our brother in need, and have no compassion toward him (1 John 3:17).

We grieve the Holy Spirit because of our disunity, our perverse use of our bodies, and our ignoring of the teaching that the Spirit supplies.. Paul calls us to be recreated or restored to our original purpose of glorifying God by all of us being connected with each other in unity. May God bless us as we become what he intends us to be.

Armed for Faithful Service

Justin Guin, Editor

A story is told about a boy who had to deal with a bully at school. Each day he encountered the other young man in the hall, and the bully would demand his lunch money. After a few weeks, the boy grew tired of this routine and asked his mother if he could take karate. The young man was involved in many other things, and the mother told him he would have to pay for lessons. He went to the first one, and it cost \$5.00 per class. While he enjoyed it, he did the math and concluded it was much less expensive just to pay the bully, so he gave up karate.

Many people deal with Satan this way. They resolve to equip themselves to defeat him, but growth requires sacrifice and the cost seems too much. It is easier to deal with the consequences of sin than ridding its influence from their lives. You cannot resign yourself to being defeated by Satan. He is a bully that demands everything in your life, and the spiritual price is high (Rom 6:23).

God prepares you to walk by faith and live worthy of the gospel. With God's help, you can stand against the schemes of Satan. In Ephesians 6:10–20, God lists the resources he provides to strengthen you. Being suited with God's armor supports you as you stand against the schemes of Satan designed to weaken your faith.

The Ephesian Christians were familiar with the uniform and equipment of a Roman soldier. Using this metaphor, Paul explains how God strengthens you to obey his word. The purpose is to fortify you to stand against the assaults of Satan. Notice how many times the word "stand" occurs in this text (vv. 11, 13, 14). A Roman soldier never deserted his post, and when their legions did not break rank, they were almost an impenetrable force. The armor is comprehensive, leaving nothing exposed.

The first piece of armor is the "belt of truth." For a Roman soldier, this probably referred to the leather apron that protected the upper legs during a battle and held the weapons needed for warfare. Fastening one's belt signifies the readiness a Christian needs for action. This piece of armor is no leather belt. Instead, it is described as "truth," and truth holds everything together. It is the foundation of faith (Rom. 10:17), and when you submit to it your convictions are in agreement with God's revelation. A Christian's life is to be a "pillar and buttress of truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

The second piece of armor is the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate protected all of the vital organs of a soldier. Pursuing righteousness is having the moral strength to submit to God's standard of living (Rom. 6:13). It protects the heart from becoming alloyed with evil influences. Unrighteousness has no place in a Christian's life.

The third piece of armor is the shoes that are ready with the gospel of peace. What does this mean? It could have two possible interpretations. First, it could refer to having a firm footing. Faith in the gospel is the bedrock on which you stand (cf. Matt. 7:24–27). Second, it might relate to the

testimony one's life has regarding the gospel (Eph. 4:1; cf. Phil. 1:27). The gospel prepares you for godly living.

The fourth piece of armor is the shield of faith. The Roman shield was a sizeable oblong-shaped shield that was usually two feet by four feet. It is made of wood or heavy metal and coated with leather. The soldier dipped it in water so it could extinguish flaming arrows. Like a shield, faith protects you as you walk by it (2 Cor. 5:7). Satan's deceitful schemes do not toss you to and fro (Eph. 4:13-14). You trust steadfastly in the love, grace, and mercy of God. You seek, live, and teach his word (Ezra 7:10).

The fifth piece of armor is the helmet of salvation. In the first century, a helmet was made of animal skin and strengthened with bronze and other metals. It was had a horsehair crest at the top and had a visor to protect the face. Salvation provides hope for the future (1 Thess. 5:8). It also provides confidence for today. The Scriptures repeatedly give assurance of forgiveness and victory over sin (Acts 22:16; Col. 1:12; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 17:14).

The sixth piece of armor is the sword of the Spirit. Paul identifies this as "the word of God." It is the only offensive piece of equipment, and you must learn how to wield it effectively (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15). How can we go on the offensive with the word of God? Through teaching, as godly living comes from learning and teaching sound doctrine (Eph. 4:14; cf. Titus 2:1). During times of temptation, it vital to have a grasp of Scripture. When Jesus encountered temptation, he relied on the word of God to defeat Satan's attempts (Matt. 4:1-11). Satan's oldest scheme is to undermine God's instructions (cf. Gen. 3:1). Resolve not to fall for his oldest trick in the book.

What is the point of putting on the whole armor of God? Being suited with God's armor strengthens you to stand against Satan's schemes designed to weaken your faith. As Paul concludes this letter, he focuses on the need to have endurance. Notice Ephesians 6:18, "Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints." (ESV) These pieces of armor, along with prayer, produce enduring faith. Someone rightly suggested that before your day begins, pray for God to equip you with each piece of armor. These resources enable you to withstand any evil you might encounter.

Editor's Note: Beginning in 2024, *Words of Truth* will be moving to a quarterly publication. You will receive it in January, April, July, and October. Thank you for your continued support and be praying for the continued success of *Words of Truth*.

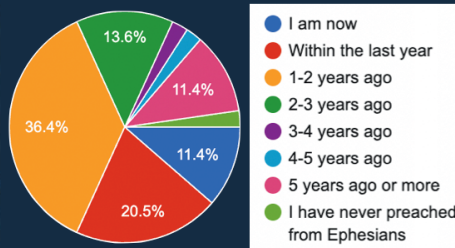
PREACHING MATTERS.

IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES - A STUDY OF EPHESIANS

Ephesians is a monument to Inspiration of the Scriptures. No man could have on his own written such a comprehensive examination of the glorious riches of God's inheritance for His People, a more complete compact on the church of the Lord, and a guidebook for living in relationship with Him and with each other.



Over 70% of Preachers Surveyed have preached a series from Ephesians in the last two years



Outside of the church in Jerusalem, there would be little doubt that the congregation at Ephesus was the highest profile one in the 1st Century. The church there is mentioned or related to within as many as 10 of the books of the New Testament. In addition to Paul, Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos, Timothy, were all there (and if the 2nd Century Christian writer Irenaeus is to be trusted, John and Mary would have been there too).

Yet by the time John receives the Revelation the church was in dire straits having "abandoned the love you had at first." All the toil, endurance, standing for right, would not counter that.

Perhaps there is a warning here. It seems some congregations today are so concerned about not giving shelter or space to a false teacher or teaching that they have forgotten to let the love of and for Jesus in.

It is possible to be so vigilant about the one that we forget the other. Let's be sure that true love for the Lord is in each of His churches.

A Word of Encouragement THE PREACHER & EPHESIANS

Learning & Living. The Word & the Walk. Philosophy & Practice. When our brother, Paul met with the elders of the Ephesians Church he spoke of how much he cared about them. He reminded them that he had not kept anything from them that wasn't from God. When he wrote the Ephesian letter his message is clear, concise, and balanced.

The first three chapters are steeped in doctrine. The last three are highly practical. He begins with what we need to know and concludes with how we are to put it into practice in our lives. In chapter one he tells us over and over again about our position as Christians. The phrase "in Christ," is mentioned at least twelve times. Preachers today would do well to preach from Ephesians chapter one, what it looks like to be in Christ.

In Chapter two, he gives several, "formerly, but now" statements. While we are not to dwell on the past, we must never forget what and where we were before we came to be in Christ. A great sermon or even series of sermons can be preached on the five characteristics of what life was like before Christ, found in verse twelve.

Chapter three our preacher explains the mystery that he had alluded to in chapter one. It is a beautiful exposition of the manifold wisdom of God and how He made it possible for all mankind to be saved.

Chapters four through six are highly practical. Paul discusses life in the Church (chapter four), life in our family (chapter five and the first part of chapter six), and life in our daily battle with Satan (chapter six).

My dear brothers, preach the themes and ideas from this great letter regularly. It will ground your people, and it will create a greater desire in all of us to live every day of our life for King Jesus.



The Words of Truth

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Q & A WITH MARK POSEY

QUESTION: Please explain why God hates divorce, according to Malachi 2:10-16.

ANSWER: Consider a few facts: First, God hates divorce and says so in Malachi 2:16. Second, God does not hate divorced people. God's love is extended to the sinner and the saint (John 3:16). Third, while God hates divorce, it is not the only thing God hates (Proverbs 6:16). Fourth, while God hates divorce, He does not forbid all divorce (Matthew 19:9). Therefore, why does God hate divorce?

1. Because divorce violates His perfect plan for His highest creation. Marriage is for one man and one woman, united permanently in a relationship of commitment. Divorce was never in the original blueprint for the home. Not only is this implied in the Genesis account, but Jesus clearly states it in Matthew 19:9.
2. Because divorce involves the breaking of a covenant. The concept of a solemn covenant is at the heart of Malachi (2:14-16). The marriage covenant's symbol was a spiritual covenant between God and His people. All marriages involve reciting vows- promises of commitment before God and man.
3. Because He loves people and does not want them to suffer the pain that divorce inevitably produces. Divorce is ugly. Even under the best of circumstances, it causes great pain. When a husband and wife get married, they become one flesh (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6), which is the essence of marriage. When they divorce, the flesh is torn apart, and there's no painless way to tear flesh. God knows that, and that's why He hates divorce.
4. Divorce dramatically affects children, even when both parents love them. They suffer in silence as they become the unintended victims of the separation. The hurt caused during childhood can last into adolescence and even adulthood. The scars left by bitter and angry parents, or when one parent abandons the family or moves away, can be severe and sometimes never fully heal.
5. As Christians, we should follow God's example and hate divorce. We must reject it as an option to solve problems in marriage, except in cases of unrepentant adultery, which Jesus specifically addressed in Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:9. However, some people may view divorce as a solution for all issues in marriage, which is not the Christian approach.

Marriage is like a garden. Neglect it long enough, and it will become a jungle, complete with lions, tigers, and snakes; however, tend it well, it will produce a bountiful harvest of delicious fruit for a lifetime.

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The words of *Truth*

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Justin Guin, Editor



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is sent free to all upon request.

If you would like to submit an article you can send it to our editor at jsbguin@gmail.com

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