

A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft

10240 – “When Marriage Is a Multiple Choice Test”

Malachi 2:13

April 10, 2026

There are few words that strike fear into the heart of a student like the word “test.” Now, I’m informed that some are to be feared more than others. For example, an essay test is a 10 on the anxiety scale. You have to know your stuff. True and false, well, that’s not as bad. And multiple choice, oh man, that seems to be especially popular among students. See, there’s the right answer right in front of you; just pick the right one. Now, occasionally multiple choice tests are complicated by those confusing words: All of the above, or none of the above, which makes it a little tougher. Actually, academic tests are pretty good preparation for the real test that you take for the rest of your life.

I’m Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“When Marriage Is a Multiple Choice Test.”**

Now, when you go into training on how to counsel people, one of the first things they’ll tell you is to ask this question when you’re counseling someone, “What are all your options?” And I’ve often done that when I’ve tried to help someone...to list all of the choices that they have in a given situation. So, get your multiple choices right in front of you. It’s especially good advice when it’s your marriage that’s being tested. And, by the way, every marriage is tested some time or another.

Maybe it happens in all those expectations you had, or suddenly confronted with the reality and what you expected him or her to be, or what you expected marriage to be. Well, reality is almost always different. And maybe that’s hitting you.

There’s conflict that doesn’t seem to be resolved. Maybe there are secrets about your spouse that you never realized before like you do now. Maybe you’ve been very wounded by this one who’s closest to you. Or communication is like totally broken down. Maybe your mate is very busy and you’re very lonely. Maybe you’ve even been violated by the ugliness of unfaithfulness. But when your marriage is hurting, what are your choices?

Well our word for today from the Word of God is in Malachi chapter 2, beginning in verse 13. “Another thing you do...” God says, “...you flood the Lord’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because He no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, ‘Why?’ It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you’ve broken faith with her. Though she is your partner—the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the Lord made them one? Do not break faith with the wife of your youth. “I hate divorce”, says the Lord God.” Now, in a world where divorce is considered one of your multiple choices,

God says, "I hate divorce." He doesn't say, "I hate divorced people." He says, "I hate divorce."

One of the most important choices my wife and I ever made was this: Divorce is not and never will be one of our options. You know what effect that has in a marriage? All your energy goes into fighting for your marriage. It's like a house you know you're going to stay in for the rest of your life. You put all your energy into making that one work and fixing it up. None of your energy should be converted into considering a divorce possibility. As soon as you acknowledge that possibility, you make it much more likely.

Now, there are a lot of multiple choices: To pray in faith that God will change things, to seek counsel, to talk to other couples, to schedule time to talk it through, to fight it through, to admit you've been wrong, to choose to forgive. But it strengthens that marriage to eliminate ending that marriage as an option.

Now, while the Christian world opens the door wider and wider for believers to choose divorce, God hasn't changed. He still hates divorce. Again, not divorced people. When marriage becomes a multiple choice test, use every choice there is to fight for your marriage. And don't divert energy into how to end it. Jesus' first miracle was at a wedding, and He's still doing marriage miracles.

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