

MALACHI – GIVING GOD YOUR BEST #3

“Setting Your Hearts Right!”

Text: Malachi 2:1-9

The priesthood was not getting it done. They were corrupt, causing many to stumble, they lost the respect of the people and weren't giving God their best. It boiled down to a matter of the heart. It was time for the priests to take a serious look that at themselves and repent. Perhaps, we need to take a look at our hearts and make sure that we are giving God our best! There are many things Malachi brings to the attention of the priests that should be true of every believer in Christ. Today we will take a spiritual EKG.

#1. SERVING GOD REQUIRES HAVING YOUR HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE, vv. 1-3

- A. The priests must listen or else, v. 1
- B. Their hearts are poisoned, v. 1
- C. They aren't honoring God's name, v. 1
- D. They are under God's curse, v. 2
- E. Their descendants will be rebuked, v. 3
- F. God will spread the offal on their faces, v. 3

#2. SERVING GOD REQUIRES FOLLOWING GODLY EXAMPLES, vv. 4-5a

- A. God's admonition was corrective, v. 4
- B. God blessed the Levites for their zeal (Ex 32:25-29)
- C. God established a lasting covenant with Levi, v. 5
- D. God set apart the Levites as priests (Deu 10:8-9)
- E. God blessed Phineas with a covenant of peace (Num 25:12)
- F. God blessed Phineas for his zeal (Num 25:11)
- G. God gave them a covenant of life and peace, v. 5

#3. SERVING GOD REQUIRES A PROPER RELATIONSHIP, v. 5b

- A. He revered God
- B. He stood in awe of God's name
- C. His heart was in the right place

#4. SERVING GOD REQUIRES A COMMITMENT TO THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD, v. 6

- A. Servants must offer true instruction
- B. Servants must be not teach falsehoods

#5. SERVING GOD REQUIRES PERSONAL PIETY, v. 6b

- A. He walked with me in peace
- B. He walked with me in uprightness
- C. He turned many from sin

#6. SERVING GOD REQUIRES REPRESENTING GOD CORRECTLY, v. 7

- A. They preserve knowledge of God's word
- B. The people seek instruction from them
- C. They are God's messengers

#7. SERVING GOD REQUIRES EARNING THE RESPECT OF THE PEOPLE, vv. 8-9

- A. They turned from the way, v. 8
- B. They have caused many people to stumble, v. 8
- C. They violated the covenant with Levi, v. 8
- D. They are despised & humiliated by God before the people, v. 9
- E. They have shown partiality in matters of the law, v. 9

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Malachi 2:1-9

And now this admonition is for you, O priests. ²If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name," says the LORD Almighty, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me. ³"Because of you I will rebuke your descendants; I will spread on your faces the offal from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it. ⁴And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue," says the LORD Almighty. ⁵"My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. ⁶True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin. ⁷"For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from

his mouth men should seek instruction-- because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty. ⁸But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi," says the LORD Almighty. ⁹"So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law."

Numbers 25:11-13: "Phineas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. ¹²Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. ¹³He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites."

Exodus 32:26-29: So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. ²⁷Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.'" ²⁸The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. ²⁹Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the LORD today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day."

Deuteronomy 10:8-9: At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister and to pronounce blessings in his name, as they still do today. ⁹That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their brothers; the LORD is their inheritance, as the LORD your God told them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- #1. Why is it important to do a heart-check in our walk with the Lord?
- #2. What are the covenant blessings? (Deu 28)
- #3. What are the covenant curses? (Deu 28)

#4. Their descendants will be affected in what way(s)?

#5. Read Exodus 32:26-29 and discuss your conclusions about the passage?

#6. Read Numbers 25:11-13 and discuss your conclusions about Phineas.

#7. Read Deuteronomy 10:8-9 and discuss the privileged position of the Levites.

#8. Describe the covenant of life and peace. (v. 5)

#9. Describe the role of a priest / pastor from v. 7.

#10. Why is it necessary for the priesthood or pastorate to have the people's respect?

#11. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE ARE BACK TO OUR NORMAL SCHEDULE

Tuesday night Bible Study at 6:30

Wednesday night prayer meeting at 6:30. Access by clicking the zoom link on the home page of the website.

WE ARE MAKING GREAT PROGRESS

We have made some breakthroughs in the quality of the sound you are hearing as we do the music, thanks to DJ and Tyle. Johanna has been instrumental in making improvements to our zoom service. It is our goal to provide you with the best possible service that we can. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for financially supporting the ministry of Hillcrest Church. You can give online at the church website or mail your check to the church.

- Give to the general fund (our operating expenses)
- Give to the elder's fund (to assist those in financial need)
- Give to the Great Commission fund (for the missionaries of the CMA)