

May Teaching Series

WORSHIP THAT DISPLEASES GOD

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Key Scripture

Malachi 1:6-14

¹⁰ "Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you" says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION:

- The prophet Malachi is the last of the Old Testament prophets.
- He writes at a time when the Israelites have returned from exile to their homeland, the temple is rebuilt, and the walls of the city have been restored under the leadership of Nehemiah.
- You would think that everything was grand. But it wasn't. People were going to the temple, they were offering their sacrifices, they were performing their rituals . . . but God was not being honored.
- In our first two messages on the book of Malachi we focused on the greatness of God's electing love (1:1–5) and The Careless Worship of the Priests of Israel (1:6–14).
- God denounces deviant worship.

I. The Source of Careless Worship

1. It comes from the failure to feel and see the greatness of God's sovereign love.
"I have loved you, says the Lord."(v.2)
2. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?'

II. The Charge of Despising the Name

⁶ "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.

- This is a very serious charge.

- The word “despise” means to look down on something as if it is worthless, to despise or treat with contempt.
- And the “name” in the Old Testament refers to the Lord himself, his person and his works.
- "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?'

III. The Charge Explained

A. Their Action (v8)

⁸ When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

- The Lord said through the prophet that they were offering on the high altar defiled food.
- The charge was that what they were offering to God did not measure up to the standards
- They were supposed to bring sacrifices that were perfect--healthy animals, without any blemish at all.

There are at least three standards for sacrifices in Scripture:

1. Give the best
2. Give to God first
3. Giving should cost something

B. Their Attitude (v12-14)

¹³ And you say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously," says the LORD Almighty.

- We despise his name by doing His work in a careless manner.
- When we get bored with our ministry.

Three Symptoms of Wearisome Worship:

1. Poor Preparation
2. Half-hearted Participation
3. Improper Motivation

IV. The Inevitable Consequences

- God’s Displeasure... I have no pleasure in you.(v10c)
- God’s Rejection ... Nor I will accept an offering from your hands(v.10d)
- God’s Curse...“Cursed is the deceiver who has in his flock an acceptable male [sacrifice], and offers to God a blemished thing”(v.14)

LESSONS FOR US TODAY

1. It is really easy to lead in worship or preach sermons or teach Sunday School or serve the Lord in any capacity with wrong motives.
2. As God's people, we are often blind as to how we dishonor Him
3. Honoring the Lord means giving Him the best of our lives.
4. Your gift reveals your estimate of the one to whom you offer it.
5. If you're bored with worship or with serving the Lord, you've lost sight of the glory and majesty of God.