

Minor Prophets
Malachi
Lesson 4

Text: **Malachi 2:1-9**

Intro: Chapter two is a continuation of Chapter 1, God is still addressing the priest about their attitude. Attitude is usually the problem with our failures in service to God. We like the priest think our service is laborious, or contemptible, or simply not worth it. God is attempting to speak to the attitude of the priest. I would imagine there would be some that would say to the Lord, Well, I am doing the service you require, I preform the sacrifices, I clean the temple, I do my duty. But the do it halfhearted. God does not want half halfhearted service, He wants our whole heart. Speaking aboutour service, **Ephesians 6:6** “Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; ”

I. God's Warning to the Priest,

A. Despise not the Calling of God,

i. Service contains Two Parts,

- a) First, “If you will not HEAR” and second, “If you will not RECIVE”
 - hearing is more than just the transmitting of audible waves form one place to another.
 - It is about transmitting a message, but, it is even more than that, it is about
- b) it is about understanding, receiving the message.
 - How many times have we been in trouble, because we have taken and heard but not listened?
- c) The priest were hearing the word,
 - they preformed the sacrifices and did the work,
 - but they did not hear and receive the word. They tried to make sacrifices that painted Jesus as a tainted offering for sin.
 - When they offered lamb, or blind sheep, they were obeying part of the law, but not the whole law.
- d) This is where using our own judgment and not the word of God can lead us astray.
 - I would think that most of us could justify the same thing the priest were doing,
 - after all, why kill the best sheep, and keep the wounded one for sale or to eat?
 - We do not bring sheep to the Lord now, but what we bring to the Lord, is it the best, or is it the lame, blind, leftovers?
 - Do we offer the Lord the best part of our lives, or what is leftover?
 - Do we serve the Lord as long as there are no better offers on the table?
 - As this passage states, this is a warning to the priest,
 - but in the Church Age, the bible says...
 - **I Peter 2:9** “But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”
 - He goes on to say you were once in darkness, but now called to the light,
 - Peter is referring to Christians.

ii. The Curses,

- a) Curse your blessings
 - in fact, God said He had already done this,
 - Remember **Haggai 1:5-7** “Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts;

Consider your ways.⁶Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes.⁷Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.”

b) Corrupt your seed

- Have you ever planted something that didn't come up?
 - Once I planted corn, and it rained and rained so much I thought it would rot the corn seed in the ground, but the corn did come up, but it made little ears of corn, they were corrupt.

c) Spread dung on your face

- this is an interesting one,
- First notice it says “Solomon's Feast” Not my feast.
 - God would not take credit for the actions of man.
 - Solomons feast were often marked by abundance.
 - So the dung left by the sacrifices would be great, and guess whose job it was to clean it up? The priest.
- So the priest would under the law (**Ex, 29:14**) would carry the dung outside the city to be burned.
 - And the Lord was saying you will be treated as the dung, someone will carry you in like manner. In the process making the priest ceremonially unclean.
 - Now I may go out on a limb, in the New Testament Church, the pastors have lost a lot of the reverence they once had, and people treat them with as much contempt.

iii. The Priest had forgotten their privilege to serve the Lord,

a) the covenant God made with Levi, the tribe of Levi was to be the priest,

- **Genesis 49:5-7** “Simeon and Levi *are* brethren; instruments of cruelty *are in* their habitations.⁶O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.⁷Cursed *be* their anger, for *it was* fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.”
 - the background of this is, Simeon and Levi' sister was taken advantage, so in retaliation they went to the men of Hamor and Shechem and told them if the men would be curcumsied they would allow them to dwell together. After the men did this, the two took swords and went boldly into the city and killed them. Not only did they kill them, but they took all the spoils of the city including the livestock, children and wives.

b) The tribe of Levi had no ground to stand on to expect God to bless them, and to use them.

- But God in His Grace called Moses and Aaron to serve as priest and appointed the tribe of Levi as the priestly tribe.
 - It is neat to note that part of their punishment is they would be scattered in Israel, and true to God's calling there were need for priest all over Israel.
 - God can use our past to bless our future if we will allow Him to.

c) The priest had went form being a throwaway child, to a blessed tribe, but despised their calling.

- **Numbers 25:10-13** “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,¹¹Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I

consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.¹² Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace:¹³ And he shall have it, and his seed after him, *even* the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel. ”

- They considered it a job and not a calling, it was labor and not a privilege.

iv. They have caused many to stumble,

a) The priest were to know, keep, and give out the Law, **vs.8**

- the first duty of the priest is to learn the ways of God.
 - We must seek to learn the things of God,
 - David pleaded with God to teach Him his ways, to Hide His word in His heart that he might not sin against Him. (**Psalm 119**)
 - For the New Testament Christian,
 - **II Timothy 2:15** “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ”
- The next duty was to keep it,
 - there is a word for someone who will teach a standard of God without keeping it themselves, Hypocrite.
 - The priest were to apply the law to their own lives first.
 - In the service it use to be, before a duty officer or any other could stand a soldier out for inspection, they had to be presentable at 4.0.
 - the idea is the same, how can we tell others what is wrong, if we have fault ourselves.
 - **Matthew 7:3-5** “**And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**⁴**Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**⁵**Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.**”
 - first take care of self, then you can help your brother.
 - The third thing was to teach it,
 - their teaching was multifaceted,
 - they taught using the scripture, they taught using the feast, they taught using the sacrifices,
 - and each time they diluted or perverted the service they taught the wrong message.

b) because of their insincere service others saw it and despises the service.

- After all, if it is up to man to make the decision, and you bring a \$100 dollar sheep and offer it, and you notice the next guy brings a \$10 dollar sheep, and gets the same thing, don't you loose respect for the office?
 - I see this in our immigrant situation, First I think we should be a nation with tall fences and wide gates. But to give aministry to the illegal immigrants, and still expect the others to work on their naturalization papers is to lower the value of the service.
- **Vs.9** says they have been partial in the law.
- **II Samuel 12:14** “Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, ...”
 - How many today have brought shame to the ministry of Christ because of disobedience? Because of a bad perspective on Service the Lord?