

Malachi: Return to Me
Service is not a Weariness
Malachi 1:11-14



2024.12.29
Sermon 3 of ?

1. Intro

1.1 Last week was Christmas

1.1.1 Jesus' birth is the 2nd most important historical event

1.1.1.1 Superseded only by Easter

1.1.1.2 His second coming will be #1

1.1.2 Last week: Jesus came for you!

1.1.2.1 He came for you!

1.1.2.2 You were lost, and He came for you

1.1.2.3 Jesus said he came for the lost and the sick

1 John 4:9

⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

1.1.2.4 By love and His sacrifice, we have life

1.1.2.5 When discussing salvation, we often focus on life

- It's important - we have to know death vs life

1.1.2.6 There are more aspects to our salvation

1.1.2.7 We are not saved to become subjects of some overlord

1.1.2.8 We are adopted into His family, made heirs and children

John 1:12-13

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

1.1.3 During christmas, my family gathered

1.1.3.1 Christmas Eve with Jamie's family, Christmas day with mine

1.1.3.2 Both celebrations were bustling

1.1.3.3 We both have large families

- Kids running around
- Weird uncles making off-color jokes in front of the kids

1.2 Peter and Paul both talk about being built into a spiritual house

1.2.1 Thinking about the family I've been adopted into

1.2.1.1 Revelation 19 talks about "marriage supper of the Lamb"

1.2.1.2 All believers will gather to celebrate

1.2.2 My salvation is very personal, only I can make the choice to submit my life/will to Christ

1.2.3 My inheritance is corporate

1.2.3.1 We are brothers and sisters

1.2.3.2 We inherit the kingdom of God and rule and reign within it

1.3 Lord of Hosts

1.3.1 We talked about this phrase last time

1.3.2 God of Armies, great host

1.3.2.1 Usually speaking of angels, but not exclusively so

1.3.3 God of the many, many believers who will celebrate with Him at the feast

1.4 Let's read **Malachi 1:11-14**

1.5 Pray

2. Message

- 2.1 God's Word is so amazing
 - 2.1.1 In judgment, God always gives hope
- 2.2 **Malachi 1:11**
 - 2.2.1 This verse is interesting on many levels
 - 2.2.2 Different translations give a different tense to the verb - notice italics
 - 2.2.2.1 **Look at the NLT translation**
 - 2.2.2.2 This approach is also used in the RSV and Message
 - 2.2.3 People have used this to come up with weird things
 - 2.2.4 Some suggest that in light of v10, God is now accepting sincere pagan ritual
 - 2.2.4.1 Mental gymnastics
 - 2.2.5 This verse is used by pantheists
 - 2.2.5.1 The universe as a whole is a divine entity
 - 2.2.5.2 All people are part of that entity
 - 2.2.5.3 No matter who they worship, or what they do, they go back to being with it
 - 2.2.6 Neither of these approaches are acceptable

John 14:6

⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- 2.2.7 One scholar said this verse is either rhetorical or a "monotheistic fantasy"
 - 2.2.7.1 Meaning it was absurd and arrogant to think that someone, somewhere was worshipping their God
- 2.2.8 I will let the Bible tell me what it means

Revelation 7:9a

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...

- 2.2.8.1 Every nation, tribe, people, and tongue
 - 2.2.8.2 These groups change, over time people and languages cease to exist
 - 2.2.8.3 In Malachi's time, someone somewhere was worshipping God rightly
- 2.2.9 The language in this verse makes it clear that it is prophetic
 - 2.2.9.1 Yes, someone somewhere is worshipping
 - 2.2.9.2 This verse says "in every place"
- 2.2.10 Malachi is prophesying of the millennial reign of Christ
 - 2.2.10.1 This is the hope God reveals in the midst of His judgment
 - 2.2.10.2 Everywhere on the earth will worship God
 - 2.2.10.3 The Jews should find comfort in this, it is through them the Messiah will come
- 2.2.11 Incense was emblematic
 - 2.2.11.1 Symbolized the rising of worship and prayers to God
 - 2.2.11.2 Revelation mentions angels holding censers of incense which are the prayers of saints
- 2.3 **Malachi 1:12a**
 - 2.3.1 What is it? - something other than God Himself
 - 2.3.1.1 God Himself cannot be minimized

Deuteronomy 32:4

⁴He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.

- 2.3.1.2 Pastor said last week God doesn't need us to defend Him
- 2.3.1.3 He is holy (set apart), eternal, and perfect no matter what anyone does
- 2.3.2 So what is it that the priests have profaned?
 - 2.3.2.1 Look back at v11
 - 2.3.2.2 He says twice "My name shall be great"
- 2.3.3 It isn't God, but God's name
 - 2.3.3.1 His reputation in the world - how the world views Him
 - 2.3.3.2 The people's testimony and witness of His greatness
 - Not His greatness, but the people's display of it

2.4 **Malachi 1:12**

- 2.4.1 They claim that the altar is defiled!
 - 2.4.1.1 What? How? Oh wait... verse 7
- 2.4.2 They defile God's altar, then complain that it's defiled
- 2.4.3 Their disdain for the sacrifices is repeated from verse 7 as well

2.5 **Malachi 1:13a**

- 2.5.1 Literally to puff air
- 2.5.2 The priests have grown weary of service to God
 - 2.5.2.1 Not the first time this complaint has been raised

Isaiah 43:22-24

²²“But you have not called upon Me, O Jacob; and you have been weary of Me, O Israel. ²³You have not brought Me the sheep for your burnt offerings, nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices. I have not caused you to serve with grain offerings, nor wearied you with incense. ²⁴You have bought Me no sweet cane with money, nor have you satisfied Me with the fat of your sacrifices; but you have burdened Me with your sins, you have wearied Me with your iniquities.

- 2.5.2.2 Isaiah writing during the time of King Hezekiah
 - Northern Kingdom taken by Assyria
 - Assyria threatening the Southern Kingdom
- 2.5.3 God says - you're weary of me?
 - 2.5.3.1 No, I'm weary of you
 - 2.5.3.2 In Malachi 2, God will communicate that He feels much the same way
- 2.5.4 This isn't the same kind of weariness that we read of in Isaiah 40
 - 2.5.4.1 Beautiful section about God being our strength
 - 2.5.4.2 When we wait on Him and rest in Him, He works
- 2.5.5 This is arrogance - weariness meaning boredom, burden, nuisance

2.6 The priests have grown weary of service to God

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.

The priests and people retained the traditional form of worship, but they denied the power of God.

- 2.6.1 Stand here and wag our fingers at the Jews in Malachi's time
 - 2.6.1.1 We should be more introspective than that
- 2.6.2 In many ways, the church is weary
- 2.6.3 Not just our generation, but all generations
- 2.6.4 There are attributes of the Christian life that Christians grow weary of
- 2.6.5 I do not want to do God's things without the Spirit of God empowering it
 - 2.6.5.1 In fact, that's offensive to God

2.6.5.2 We see that clearly here in Malachi

2.7 I want to spend a minute talking about these things

2.7.1 Thing we are called into as christians that most view as a weariness

2.7.2 4 things - 1 personal, 2 public, 1 in between

2.7.3 First - **Church**

2.7.3.1 Preaching to the choir, but the church - the body of Christ - weary of going to church

2.7.3.2 So many christians just won't do it, or if they do they have a list of complaints

- Excuse after excuse after excuse

2.7.3.3 There are estimated to be about 400,000 churches in USA - pick one

- Don't like that pastor's teaching? Try the next one
- Don't like their music? Try the next one
- Don't like their children's ministry? Try the next one
- Better yet - don't like their music/teaching/children's - get over it!

2.7.3.4 Find a bible believing/teaching church, then stay there

2.7.3.5 Far too many people are online congregates now

- More convenient, can sleep in, don't have to worry about my kids

2.7.3.6 You are denying the power of God in your life

- Denying the power of Christ's resurrection

2.7.3.7 Our inheritance in Christ is not personal, but corporate

2.7.3.8 We were adopted into God's family, now brothers and sisters

2.7.3.9 Turning to the worship service itself too

- Some churches, pastors, elders, deacons, ministry leaders lead a weary service
- Follow the liturgy of tradition, but it is dead inside
- You can see it in the congregates ("and also with you")
- This does not please God
- The gathering of the church should be joyous, full of life and life giving

2.7.4 Second - **Baptism**

2.7.4.1 The person being baptised is rarely the problem here

2.7.4.2 Someone being baptised should be celebrated

2.7.4.3 I see a few problems with how most baptisms go

2.7.4.4 One: barely anyone shows up to see it and celebrate with them

- Another church thing to go to,

2.7.4.5 Two (my experience): an emotional thing to try to get as many baptised as possible

- I barely remember my baptism - can't tell you which summer camp it was
- My mom wasn't there, we didn't talk about it
- It was there one moment and gone the next

2.7.4.6 Three: infant baptism

2.7.5 Third - **Communion**

2.7.5.1 We take communion to remember Christ's sacrifice until His return

- It casts our mind back to our salvation
- Forward to the fulfillment of all promises

2.7.5.2 This one gets caught up in the liturgical traditions of certain churches

- They do it weekly and they grow weary of it
- Not saying don't do it that often, I'm saying human nature is to get bored with stuff

- 2.7.5.3 Communion is supposed to be a powerful time of confession, knowledge of forgiveness through sacrifice, hope in the eventual fulfillment of promises
 - Instead we get impatient because it made service run 10 minutes extra
- 2.7.5.4 We don't do it nearly often enough
 - Not necessarily as a church, but as individuals
 - The church leads us in it once a month, you can do it more often
 - I grew up in a church where I have no memory of ever taking communion
 - There's too many people, it's impossible to coordinate - it is weary to figure out

2.7.6 Fourth - **Daily Reading of the Word**

- 2.7.6.1 Wish I could stand here and tell you I'm perfect at this one
- 2.7.6.2 I could make every excuse for why I missed this day or that
- 2.7.6.3 There's no excuse - it has become a weariness for most christians
 - Too tiresome, too much time

2.7.6.4

2.8 **Malachi 1:13b**

- 2.8.1 As in verse 8, God repeats His charge that they bring unworthy sacrifices
 - 2.8.1.1 Included here is the "stolen"
 - 2.8.1.2 Could be actually stolen animals
 - 2.8.1.3 Could also be translated as "torn"
 - Animals that were attacked and are no longer good in the flock

Exodus 22:31

³¹ **"And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.**

2.9 **Malachi 1:14a**

- 2.9.1 Seems similar to the last verse, an important difference
- 2.9.2 A vow is a voluntary obligation
 - 2.9.2.1 Up until now, talking about required sacrifices

Leviticus 22:19

¹⁹ **...you shall offer of your own free will a male without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats.**

- 2.9.2.2 The people enter into this contractual agreement, then rob from God
- 2.9.2.3 They do this to their own judgment - cursed be the deceiver

Ecclesiastes 5:5

⁵ **Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.**

2.10 **Malachi 1:14b**

- 2.10.1 God reminds them of why they ought to respect their role as priests
- 2.10.2 His reputation should be upheld in all the earth
- 2.10.3 God has made it clear in His Word that He is not some far off deity though

Isaiah 57:15

¹⁵ **For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."**

- 2.10.3.1 He says it time and again, His desire is to dwell with us
- 2.10.3.2 Not lowly, compromised
- 2.10.3.3 To draw mankind into deep, intimate, communion with Him
- 2.10.3.4 To bring us into the high and holy place
- 2.10.3.5 Inviting us into His presence

3. Closing

3.1 There is a stark contrast made in the Bible about the relationship between man and God

Jeremiah 7:13b

¹³ **...I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer...**

3.1.1 God calls to us, again and again

3.1.1.1 Both believing and unbelieving

3.1.1.2 He makes Himself known, and He wants to draw us into something beyond our imagination

3.1.2 We walk around totally unaware of His calling

3.1.3 Here are just a few verses from the opposite perspective

Psalms 66:19

¹⁹ **But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.**

Psalms 18:6

⁶ **In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry came before Him, even to His ears.**

Psalms 145:18

¹⁸ **The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.**

Psalms 34:17-18

¹⁷ **The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.** ¹⁸ **The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.**

3.1.4 When we cry out to Him, He is there

3.1.5 When He calls to us, we ignore Him

3.2 God's heart is that we would respond to Him with the same love which he has bestowed on us

Romans 12:1

¹ **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.**

3.2.1 It is reasonable that we should serve God with our bodies - performing service unto Him

Romans 12:2

² **And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

3.2.2 The world would have us think that this is drudgery

3.2.3 But living as a sacrifice to Him will prove His perfect will

3.2.3.1 That living according to His Word is not a burden, the opposite in fact

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

3.2.4 We are specifically told to not try to do it on our own!

3.2.5 He calls us into a family so that we will keep each other from growing weary

3.3 Paul, at the end of the letter to the Galatians, gives this command

Galatian 6:9-10

⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

3.3.1 Losing perspective is a snare ready to catch us all

3.3.2 It leads to backsliding and apathy

3.3.3 God knows we are prone to it, that's why He warns us against it and provides to us the body of Christ

3.4 Pray