

life groups

Bad Worship
Malachi 1:6-14
September 29, 2019

Sermon Summary

Malachi wrote to people living in Jerusalem about 100 years after the end of the Babylonian exile. The Temple had been reconstructed, worship had been restored, and the people believed all was good with God. The truth, however, is that the Israelites were just as corrupt as before the exile. They placed their hope in the rebuilt city and wall, as well as restored Temple worship, but they weren't living faithfully with the Lord. In fact, their worship of God was distorted and bad. In the opening chapter of Malachi, the Lord engages in a dispute with the people and explains how their worship was bad. From the Lord's interaction with the people we learn how we might also be offering the Lord bad worship.

Diving Into The Message

1. Worship should be an intimate and respectful encounter between God and His people. The Israelites of Malachi's day, however, didn't respect the Lord and weren't encountering the intimacy in worship the Lord desired. Malachi, quoting the priests, said, "*the table of the Lord is to be despised.*" The table they spoke of was symbolic of the intimacy they should have experienced. What did the Lord say the people were doing to disrespect the intimacy of worship God desired?
2. What are acts you have witnessed, or maybe even committed, that can disrespect the Lord in worship, both private and public, and miss out on the intimacy God desires, while making worship a ritual?
3. What are some concrete preventative steps we can take to ensure **corporate** worship doesn't become routine? What are some concrete preventative steps you can take to ensure **private** worship doesn't become routine?
4. Not only were the people of Malachi's day offering bad worship to the Lord through their actions, but even their attitudes about worship were disrespectful. What attitude about worship did the Lord highlight?
5. What are some ways today people demonstrate the same faulty attitude about worship? Please be specific.
6. What would be a good test we can take that would ensure we have the proper attitude about both private and corporate worship?
7. What is one take-away from today's message and how will you apply it to your life to ensure you aren't offering the Lord bad worship?

Prayer Action

1. God alone is worthy of and the recipient of our worship. Take a few moments to identify character traits of God that make Him worthy of worship and praise Him.
2. Pray God would put together just the right teams for our upcoming Mexico and South Asia mission trips. The Mexico trip has been moved to December, and the South Asia trip is in danger of being canceled due to rejected visa applications. Pray God "fast-tracks" the reapplication process.