

A LIFE OF WORSHIP: HONOR GOD!

MAY 19, 2024

WORSHIP

How Great Thou Art,
O How Great, You are My
King (Amazing Love), When
I Look Into Your Holiness,
Unbroken Praise

WELCOME

Have you ever “loved”
someone in your life to whom
you never expressed your
love to in either words or
action?

WORD

MALACHI 1:1-4 (READ UP TO THE END OF MALACHI 2)

The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi. ² “I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have You loved us?” “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob; ³ but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.” ⁴ Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”; thus says the LORD of hosts, “They may build, but I will tear down; and men will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom the LORD is indignant forever.” ⁵ Your eyes will see this and you will say, “The LORD be magnified beyond the border of Israel!”

How do we define worship? Worship is our proper response to who God is, what He has done, what He continues to do, and what He will do in the future. Proper response will not happen if we have a low and distorted view of God. Do we really know God personally? HONOR comes from a Hebrew word – CHABOD, which means it has “weightiness”, value, and worthy of glory. The book of Malachi is one of the Post-Exilic Books of the Old Testament written when the people have gone back to the land of Israel, but their hearts were not yet fully restored to God. It was written to prepare them for the coming of Jesus; it will teach us how to restore a life of worship. In Malachi’s time, people were so insensitive to spiritual things. Several questions are posed in the book (**1:2, 1:6, 1:7, 2:17, 3:7, 3:13, 3:18**) because people were totally ignorant about their sins! Similar to the church of Laodicea – people who are neither cold nor hot, believing in God, but not really loving God (**Revelation 3:15-17**). Are we lukewarm like these believers? Are we still excited to worship the Lord? Their root problem was self-sufficiency, they were no longer dependent on the Lord.

This message was an oracle (a burden) that God brings to the people through His messenger Malachi (**Malachi 1:1**). It begins with the most important reality: **I HAVE LOVED YOU** – and that is the key to restoring a life of worship. To HONOR God and live a life of worship:

BELIEVE GOD LOVES YOU

What you believe to be true about God is the most important thing (A.W. Tozer), if you have wrong thinking about God, you will find it hard to love, obey, and trust Him completely. The problem is, we are not fully convinced about God’s love for us. When God told them “**I have loved you**”, with an everlasting love (**Jeremiah 31:3**) it shows that God knows everything about us and extends His lovingkindness to us. How did God show this to His people? God responds to the question: He loved Jacob, and “**hated Esau**” (**Malachi 1:2-3**). The Bible uses this language in a comparative sense (see **Luke 14:6** for another example); it emphasizes contrast. If we focus our love for other things, it reduces our capacity to truly love God with all our hearts. If we do the latter, it increases our capacity to love others too! God told Rebekah that her younger son one will become the favored one, and the older one (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob) (**Genesis 25:23**). This is what Malachi was talking about – even before Esau and Jacob can do anything, God already made an unconditional choice. **God’s love is unconditional, uncoerced, undeserved, & unmerited!**

Malachi 1:3 proclaims the future of Edom (Esau’s land) – we must be reminded that both Israel and Edom were sinners, and both deserved judgment from God. But for the Israelites, there was a promise of restoration, but the Edomites have ceased to exist. To understand God’s love for us during times of trials, we should not judge God based on circumstances, but judge our circumstances based on who God is.



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BRING GOD YOUR BEST

Worship is a by-product of what you believe about God. The problem was that not only were the people unaware of God's amazing love, but also, their worship of Him was not their best (**Malachi 1:6-10**). They choose the lame, blind, and sick animals to offer to the Lord. Their offering was not pleasing to God. God even rebukes their feelings during worship – they find serving and worshipping God as something boring or tiring (**v.13**). Is God happy with our offering of worship to Him? What does it mean to give God your best? It means to do what God wants us to do. God established some ground rules for their offering (**Leviticus 1:2-4**) and has theological implications. It symbolizes the principle of substitution – sin is so serious, and it cannot be paid for by good works. The animal sacrificial system is a picture of the coming of Christ. The book of Hebrews tells us (**Hebrews 10:4,11-14**) – Jesus is the one sacrifice we all need! **1 Peter 3:18** tells us about the principle of substitution. We ought to give God our best. Today we don't need to offer animal sacrifices, so in response to what Jesus did, we do as **Romans 12:1** tells us – to present our bodies as “**living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God**” – and this is our spiritual service of worship! Ours is not just a religion, it is a relationship with God, and He deserves the best.

BE CONSISTENT IN YOUR PRIVATE, PUBLIC, & FAMILY LIFE

There must be no hypocrisy in our worship of God. In **Malachi 2:1-2**, the rebuke was spoken to the priests, and God cursed even their blessings, because they “are not taking it to heart”. Our life must be consistent – public life, private life, and family life. Malachi reminds them of their value as priests (**Malachi 2:7-8**), and for us today, Peter reminds us in **1 Peter 2:9** that we are also a royal priesthood, chosen as God's own possession. The problem with these people in **Malachi 2** was that they have corrupted their lives. **Malachi 2:13-14** tells us the wrong things they were doing: corrupting their own marriages, divorce, and choosing to give in to their union with foreign women who worship other gods!

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 reminds us of how great God's love is for His people. He gave us the boundaries “by design”, since He knows what is best for us. You need to surrender your all and believe God loves you, bring your best to Him, and be consistent in your life – living a life that pleases God. The power for us to do that is through Jesus Christ alone!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

How has God expressed His love for you? How will you respond to His love?

2. Setting It Right.

What is your “best” that you can bring to God as offering of praise?

3. Living It Out.

How do you live a life of worship consistently in your relationships with others?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people around you and around the world to sense God's amazing love that is available for them through Jesus Christ. Express this love to your family, friends, at school, at work, to the poor and suffering you encounter daily. Honor God and share Jesus to them, the greatest proof of God's love for us.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. PRAISE GOD for the release of hostages so far! Continue to pray for the release of the remaining ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends..

MEMORY VERSE

MALACHI 1:2

“I have loved you,” says the Lord. But you say, “How have You loved us?” “Was not Esau Jacob's brother?” declares the Lord. “Yet I have loved Jacob...”