

Malachi: A Conversation With God #4
Will You Be My Priests?
Malachi 2:1-9
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1 John 5:1-5 – “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

I. Being a priest in today’s messed up world.

1. Jesus is the Final and Ultimate Priest.

Hebrews 7:23-27 – “The *former* priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.”

Hebrews 9:11-12 - “...Christ appeared as a high priest of the good to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Hebrews 9:15 – “For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”

Hebrews 9:28 – “...so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.”

2. The New Testament never describes church leadership as priests.

Ephesians 4:11 – “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”

3. All followers of Christ are now priests.

1 Peter 2:9 – “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood...so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Revelation 1:6 – “He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

4. As priests we are now proclaiming the Kingdom of God and it's King.

Luke 4:43 – “But He said to them, ‘I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.’”

Mark 1:14-15 – “...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”

Mark 16:15 – “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’”

V.A. Demant

Tell people only what they must do, and you will numb them into despair; you will turn the gospel into a shabby replica of the world's ...nagging moralism, with its oceanfuls of good advice.

But tell them who they are, of their dignity as made in the image of God, and that their sins are wicked perversions of their nature; . . . tell them that the world with all its horrors is still God's world, though its true order is upside down;

tell them that they can do all things through Christ, because in him all the powers of their nature are directed to fruition . . . and you will help to revive hope in this dispirited generation.

Luke 24:32 – "Did we not feel our hearts on fire as he talked with us . . . and explained the scriptures to us?"

II. Characteristics of a faithful priest:

1. Possesses life and peace.
2. Passion for God's glory.
3. Listens to and teaches God's word.
4. Walks in righteousness and justice.
5. Turns others from death.
6. Fights for the truth.

Faith Sheet

Transformation Verse (February) - *...do not grow tired of doing what is right.* 2 Thessalonians 3:13

Main Themes:

~ The Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate and final priest, which means all followers of Christ can walk with godly confidence. (Hebrews 7:23-27, 9:11-15)

~ As priests of God's Kingdom we have the great privilege to be used by the Lord to connect people to the King of Kings. (1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6)

#1 - Reviewing This Past Sunday Malachi: A Conversation With God #4 Will You Be My Priests? Malachi 2:1-9

1. Read Malachi 2:1-9. Discuss Sunday's message with someone.
2. How do you know if the Lord is directing a leader? What characteristics do you look for and desire to see?
3. Do you see yourself as a priest of the Lord, and also how do you see yourself growing in this area?
4. What are some characteristics needed to strengthen our willingness to go to the world as priests of the Lord and proclaim with our lives and words that Christ is risen? (Matthew 9:12 and 36, Romans 1:16, 10:14-15, 1 Cor. 1:18, 2 Timothy 2:10)
5. John White states that much of the professing church has become a "respectable" people and not a loving, dangerous sword-wielding people. We are no longer on mission to see the world changed. He says, "*Yet the price we have paid for our respectability is a far bigger one than the past generations paid for their faithfulness, for we have lost God's smile and are too blind to recognize it!*" Discuss this quote and pray.

2- Preparing for Next Sunday Malachi: A Conversation With God #5 Will You Be Faithful? Malachi 2:10-16

1. Read Malachi 2:10-16.
2. What is communicated about God and people? (10)
3. How have the Israelites been unfaithful? (11)
4. What will be the result of their continual unfaithfulness? (12)
5. Summarize verses 13-16 in your own words. What reasons does the text give on why God hates divorce?
6. If you still suffer from the damage of divorce, please read Psalm 103 and receive His word to you.