

Title:                    **A MESSAGE YOU  
DON'T WANT TO HEAR**

Text:                    Malachi 1:1-14

Subject:                *Our Unworthiness of God's Approval*

Date:                    Sunday Evening — June 14, 2009

Tape:                    Malachi #6

Readings: *Joe Blakely and James Jordan*

Introduction:

The title of my message today is **A MESSAGE YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR**. Before I read my text, let me introduce my message with a hymn written by John Newton more than 200 years ago.

I asked the Lord, that I might grow  
In faith, and love, and every grace;  
Might more of His salvation know;  
And seek more earnestly His face.

Tw'as He who taught me thus to pray,  
And He, I trust has answered prayer;  
But it has been in such a way,  
As almost drove me to despair!

I hoped that in some favored hour,  
At once He'd answer my request;  
And by His love's constraining power,  
Subdue my sins--and give me rest!

Instead of this, He made me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart;  
And let the angry powers of hell  
Assault my soul in every part!

Yes more, with His own hand He seemed  
Intent to aggravate my woe!  
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,  
Blasted my gourds--and laid me low!

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<sup>1</sup> Redeemer Baptist Church Conference — Louisville, KY  
Saturday Morning — June 13, 2009

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“Lord, why is this!” I trembling cried,  
“Will you pursue your worm to death?”  
“This is the way,” the Lord replied,  
“I answer prayer for grace and faith.”

“These inward trials I employ,  
From self and pride to set you free;  
And break your schemes of earthly joy,  
That you may seek your all in Me!”

If the Lord will enable me to do so, I want to blast our gourds, lay us low and break every remnant of pride in our hearts, that we may look to Christ our Savior and find our all in Him. Turn with me to Malachi chapter 1. Malachi. Malachi's name means — “God's Messenger.” He was, like Haggai and Zechariah, a prophet sent of God to speak in His name, as His voice, to the children of Israel after they returned from the long years of Babylonian captivity. During the days that Haggai and Zechariah preached in Jerusalem the temple was being rebuilt. When Malachi came on the scene, the rebuilding of the temple was complete, the sacrifices had resumed, and the ordinances of divine worship had, to all outward appearance, been restored.

But things were not as they appeared. As we read this chapter together, do not read it as a message God gave to the children of Israel and their priests 2500 years ago. If you do, you may as well not read it at all. If you read Malachi's message that way, it will be to you nothing but a sad piece of history, telling about people who died long ago. — This is God's message to you and me, “*the Israel of God,*” his chosen “*royal priesthood.*” I say to you, as Malachi said to the priests of his day, — “*And now, O ye priests, this message is for you*” (2:1). Let's begin at Malachi 1:1.

(Malachi 1) The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. (2) I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, **Wherein hast thou loved us?** Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, (3) And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. (4) Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The

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border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. (5) And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.

(6) A son honoureth *his* father, and a servant his master: if then I *be* a father, where *is* mine honour? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, **Wherein have we despised thy name?** (7) Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, **Wherein have we polluted thee?** In that ye say, The table of the LORD *is* contemptible. (8) And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

(9) And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts. (10) Who *is there* even among you that would shut the doors *for nought*? neither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

(11) For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

(12) But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD *is* polluted; and the fruit thereof, *even* his meat, *is* contemptible. (13) Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness *is it!* and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought *that which was* torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.

(14) But cursed *be* the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I *am* a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.

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In the light of this solemn, solemn word from our God to us, I want to make four observations. These four observations are things by which the Lord God has reproved my own heart, broken the gourds of my own joy and laid me low. If the things I have to say do not apply to you, I apologize for wasting your time and hope you will forgive me. — But I suspect that you will not be able to escape without deep wounds that are well deserved, wounds that I pray the Lord will make and heal by His grace, —

That you and I might grow  
In faith, and love, and every grace;  
Might more of His salvation know;  
And seek more earnestly His face.

1. **No matter what we do or what we fail to do, God's sovereign, eternal purpose of grace in Christ shall be accomplished, God's elect shall be saved and the Triune God (Father, Son and Holy Ghost) shall be glorified in and by all things, especially in the salvation of His people** (vv. 5 and 11; Isaiah 45:20-25).

(Malachi 1:5) And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.

(Malachi 1:11) For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

(Isaiah 45:20-25) Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

(22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.

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(23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. (25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

2. **Our great God and Savior, our Father, our Master is a great King, and deserves the best of all things from us.**

- Sons ought to honor their father.
- Servants ought to reverence their master.
- Our God deserves the very best from us: The Best Praise — The Best Service — The Best Devotion — The Best Worship.
- He deserves the best because of who He is.
- He deserves the best because of all He has done for us. — Election — Redemption — Adoption — Forgiveness — Preservation
- He deserves the best because He has done all the wonders of His grace for such things as we are!

3. **The Lord God our Savior, our great King deserves the best of everything from us; but He usually gets our leftovers!**

(John 7:7) The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

(1 John 1:10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

We seek to assure ourselves of our interest in Christ and seek to soothe and pacify our consciences, calling our leftovers sacrifices, worship and service to the Lord! **The fact is...**

- The only people who think they are righteous are the unrighteous. Those who are righteous before God know that they have no righteousness of their own.
- The only people who think they do good works are those self-righteous people who can do nothing good. Those who actually do serve God never imagine that they have done anything good.

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Here are ten charges laid against you and me in this chapter. How I wish I could escape them; but escape them I cannot. If you can, I'm thankful, very thankful, but I cannot escape even one of these ten charges.

- a. In verses 2-5, the Lord God charges us, His chosen people, with **despising His electing love**, despising it in that we constantly fail to truly appreciate it.

(Malachi 1:2-5) I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was* not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, (3) And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. (4) Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. (5) And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.

- b. You have **despised my name**, the Lord says, in verse 6. — How so?  
 c. You **offer polluted bread** on my altar (v. 7). — When? — Where? — How  
 d. You **say the table of the Lord is contemptible** (v. 7). — When did we say that?  
 e. You **offer to me that which is worthless** to you: The Blind — The Lame — The Sick (v.8).  
 f. You **would not even shut the doors** of my house or **kindle a fire** on my altar, if you did not get something out of it (v. 10).  
 g. You have **profaned my name** (v.12). — How?  
 h. You say, with regard to the worship of God's name — "**What a weariness is it!**" (v. 13).  
 i. You have **snuffed at** the great privilege of worshipping at my altar (v.13). — How have we snuffed at it?  
 j. You **bring to me, for a sacrifice of gratitude, praise and adoration that which costs you nothing**, that which is torn and lame and sick and of no value, sacrificing to me as a vow of reverence and devotion a corrupt thing (vv. 13-14).

As I look over these past 43 years, since the Lord God saved me by His grace, these 43 years in which I've tried to worship, serve and honor Him, I

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have to confess to my shame, the whole of it is less than nothing. My best attempts have been horribly corrupted with evil! All is but dung, a pile of filthy rags! God says, “*Offer it now unto thy governor. Will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?*” (v.10). The obvious answer is “No.” But blessed be His name, our God is not a man whose favors men earn!

(Malachi 1:9) And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

Yes, He will be gracious to us, though we deserve nothing but His contempt and the fury of His unmitigated wrath. Yes, the Lord our God still accepts us, and even accepts our poor attempts at honoring Him, because He regards our persons in the Person of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus (Ecclesiastes 9:7-10).

God will never accept, He will never be honored by, He will never receive the polluted bread of our polluted hands. But, blessed be His holy name forever, our acceptance with our God and the acceptance of our sacrifices and service to Him, His acceptance of our praise and thanksgiving, His acceptance of our devotion to Him is in His Son (1 Peter 2:5).

(1 Peter 2:5) Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

We offer Him His Son; and God accepts us (in the totality of our lives) in His dear Son!

(Ecclesiastes 9:7-10) Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. (8) Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. (9) Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. (10) Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

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He cast off the nation of Israel for far less evil than we have committed; but the Lord has not and will not cast off His chosen. “*Your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel*” (v. 5).

(Malachi 1:11) For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

4. **Inspired with gratitude, constrained by His love and overwhelmed by humility before His throne of grace, let us, from this day forward, offer our God our best.**

Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Christ Jesus.

(Romans 12:1) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

- Do what you can for the Savior.
- Do what you can for the glory of God.
- Do what you can for your brethren.
- Do what you can for the cause of Christ.



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- Do what you can for the furtherance of the gospel.
- Never count the cost.
- Never offer God that which cost you nothing.
- No more leftovers!

I titled this message **A MESSAGE YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR**; but I hope the Lord has given you grace to hear and grace to want to, for Christ's sake.

(1 Corinthians 10:31) Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Amen.