

WORTHLESS WORSHIP

Malachi: Factors Fighting Against My Faith

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⁶ The Lord of Heaven's Armies says to the priests: "A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. If I am your father and master, where are the honor and respect I deserve? **You have shown contempt for my name!**

"But you ask, 'How have we ever shown contempt for your name?'

⁷ "You have shown contempt **by offering defiled sacrifices** on my altar.

"Then you ask, 'How have we defiled the sacrifices?'

"You defile them by saying the altar of the Lord deserves no respect." ⁸ When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn't that wrong? And isn't it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor, and see how pleased he is!" says the Lord of Heaven's Armies.

⁹ "Go ahead, beg God to be merciful to you! But **when you bring that kind of offering, why should he show you any favor** at all?" asks the Lord of Heaven's Armies.

¹⁰ "How I wish one of you would shut the Temple doors so that these worthless sacrifices could not be offered! **I am not pleased with you,**" says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, "and I will not accept your offerings.

Malachi 1:6–10 (NLT)

CHARGE 1: Their worship had become worthless.

"When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. Abel also brought a gift—**the best portions** of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected." (Genesis 4:3–5, NLT)

"This is the message that the Lord gave Malachi to tell the people of Israel. The Lord says to his people, **"I have always loved you."** But they reply, **"How have you shown your love for us?"** (Malachi 1:1–2c, GNB)

"I want your constant love...I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me." (Hosea 6:6, GNB)

"He is a God who is **passionate about his relationship with you.**" (Exodus 34:14b, NLT)

**WORSHIP IS THE PASSIONATE PURSUIT AND EXPRESSIVE LOVE
FOR THE GOD WHO LOVES AND PURSUES YOU!**

What Can Cause Our Worship to Become Worthless?

1. Our **PRIORITIZATION**: When weekly worship is easily **DISCARDED**.

*“In everything you do, **put God first**, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.” (Proverbs 3:6, The Living Bible, Paraphrased)*

2. Our **PREPARATION**: When we fail to **PREPARE OUR HEARTS** for an encounter with God.

*“If only you would **prepare your heart** and lift up your hands to him in prayer!” (Job 11:13, NLT)*

“[Do] not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not prepare its heart And whose spirit was not faithful to God.” (Psalm 78:8, LSB)

***“You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”** (Mark 12:30, NLT)*

God wants me to love Him...

1. **PASSIONATELY** “with all my heart”
2. **PERSONALLY** “with all my soul”
3. **PERCEPTIVELY** “with all my mind”
4. **PRACTICALLY** “with all my strength”

3. Our **PARTICIPATION**: When we only **WATCH** a performance rather than **WORSHIP** a Savior!

*“Jesus replied, “The time is coming, ma’am, when we will no longer be concerned about whether to worship the Father here or in Jerusalem. For it’s not where we worship that counts, but **how we worship**—is our worship spiritual and real? Do we have the Holy Spirit’s help? For God is Spirit, and we must have his help to worship as we should. The Father wants this kind of worship from us.” (John 4:23–24, The Living Bible)*

***“Sing to the Lord,** all you godly ones! Praise his holy name.” (Psalm 30:4, NLT)*

“Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord! Praise the Lord!” (Psalm 150:6, NLT)

4. Our **PERSONALIZATION**: When we **LISTEN** but don’t **OBEY**.

*“But **don’t just listen to God’s word**. You must **do what it says**. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.” (James 1:22–25, NLT)*

NEXT STEPS

Reading Plan – Costly Worship

Series Action Step: 3rd BASE