



Study Notes

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Lesson 3: Honor the Lord

Malachi 2:1-9

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The priests, the spiritual leaders of the nation, have failed and as a result, the nation is going further and further away from God. Read James 3:1-2. Why does James warn against becoming teachers? Read also Luke 12:41-48. What will be required of those who teach? Read also Matthew 18:1-6. If one causes another to sin, especially one who has humbled himself before God, what does Jesus Himself say about that person? Why is this a big deal?

Read John 15:1-10. How will we know whether we are part of Christ? Where does the fruit that Jesus is talking about here come from? How is God glorified? What should we abide in, if we truly are His?

Read James 2:1-9. How seriously does God take the sin of showing partiality? How does this add to the sin of the priests of Malachi's time?

Read James 2:14-17. What example does James give demonstrating a lack of true faith? Again, what was going on in Malachi's time that might reflect this same problem?

Read through Titus 1:5-9. Paul is giving Titus instructions for selecting elders. What qualifications of an elder are necessary? How do these qualifications contrast with the priests in Malachi?

Look at the following examples of leaders who failed in their role. What reaction do we see from God?

Eli's Sons: 1 Samuel 2:12-17, 2:22-25, 2:27-36.

Ahab, King of Israel: 1 Kings 16:29-34, 18:17-19, 20:38-43, 21:1-7, 21:15-24

Manasseh, King of Judah: 2 Kings 21:1-15

As you spend time today with God, consider your leaders, especially in light of Malachi and Titus 1. Do your pastors and elders continually encourage and demonstrate a desire for holiness and sanctification? Do your pastors share the hard truths of Scripture as well as the "feel good" passages? Remember, your pastors and elders will be held to a higher standard, so be in prayer for them.

Then read Ephesians 5:6-16. Remember, you have a responsibility to know these things for yourself, not to rely on a pastor or teacher to know this for you. While your leaders will be held to a harder standard, you are responsible for your own growth in the Lord.

Be wise. Ask God to help you to discern what truly is pleasing to Him. Be careful not to take part in shameful, secret things, because that is no longer who you are.

Thank God for the change He has given to you in your life, in your desires and in your affections, to love Him more than the sin you once loved. Ask Him to continue to help you to grow in your understanding and discernment so that you may not be led astray by anyone's empty words.