



Connection Group Participant Guide

October 17, 2021

Malachi 2:1-9

Teaching Point 1. O priests – The message was primarily for the priests. They were supposed to be the spiritual leaders of the people. As such they were expected to set a good example. And because they were the leaders, they were even more culpable than the rest of the Jews. God holds leaders responsible for how they use their position to influence others.

Application: Whenever we are given responsibility over others (as parents, teachers, Bible study leaders, church leaders, etc.) we should take that responsibility seriously. Who are you a leader over? In what area can you intentionally set a good example for them to follow?

Teaching Point 2. If you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name – Here in Malachi, God gives the people of Israel a warning about what will happen if they don't honor Him. With this warning, God is giving them another chance. He didn't immediately send punishment as soon as they stopped honoring Him. Instead, He warned them, reminded them, pleaded with them. He gave them second and third chances to change their behavior. Note that God doesn't promise nor is He required to give us multiple chances before judgment. Neither does He always do this. But many times He does do this because He is patient.

Application: Write down how you plan to give God the honor He deserves this week.

Teaching Point 3. Verse 7 shows us that God expected the priests to instruct the people. As His messengers, it was their job to teach the people the things of God. Being in awe of God and His holy character, they were to pass on this awe and reverence to the rest of the people. Their lives were to be a light and a model. Their words were to be beacons of truth. It was their responsibility to act as the truth keepers for their nation. When the peoples turned away from God or forgot His commands or miracles on their behalf, the priests' job was to remind them of this and pull them back to God again.

Application: Today's world is in great need of this type of spiritual leader. Evil is being celebrated as good. Good is being derided as evil. Culture and popular opinion slip farther and farther from God and His truth. We need to stand strong as a light, giving God's message of truth to whoever will hear it. This message of truth must not be watered down or changed to fit with changing times because God's truth never changes. Those who stand for truth will be increasingly mocked, derided, and perhaps persecuted. That is the responsibility that we must take. Are you willing to take up that burden? Are you willing to stand up for truth no matter the consequence? What is one way you can stand up for the truth in the coming week?