



## GROWTH GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. How did God speak to your heart during the message?
2. What is a Priest? In what ways are believers priests?
3. How did God curse the blessings of the priests?
4. Even in their sin God wanted to bless the priests. What does this say about the nature of God?
5. What is it about God that brings awe to your heart?
6. How can you help others in their walk with God? What will cause others to turn away from God?

### Answers to blanks

Distinction  
Statement  
Warning  
Disciplining  
Four  
Awe  
Glorifies



# THE BOOK OF MALACHI

## Principles for the Priests

**Text:** Malachi 2:1-9

Malachi is confronting a priesthood that is mired in religiosity, which means they were going through the motions but lacked true devotion and a love for God. There was a lot of empty rituals but their heart wasn't in it. The spiritual leadership of the day lacked an awe of God.

**Important** \_\_\_\_\_: The priesthood of Israel has nothing to do with Roman Catholicism today. In fact when reading the New Testament God calls you and I as believers, a royal priesthood (**See 1 Peter 2:9**).

**As we read these next few verses you must realize that God is speaking to us.** We live in a day of apathy towards the worship of God and obedience to His commands. God is our master and father and we ought to respect Him.

**See 2 Timothy 3:1-5 - He made a very important** \_\_\_\_\_ **at the end.** In the last days people will act religious but reject the power that can actually make them holy and righteous. There will be external religiosity but no power. No power to sustain a marriage, to break addictions, to raise godly kids, to live holy lives unto God.

## 1. A \_\_\_\_\_ to Wicked Priests (Malachi 2:1-4)

**God declares that He has and will continue to curse their blessings.** The people were blessed and didn't know it. **They were blessed and had no clue.**

The heart is so important with God. Guard it for out of it are the issues of life - everything flows from it. **How's your heart this morning?**

**This dung was the waste and end-trails of the sacrificial animal** and it was to be removed before the offering was burned on the altar. It was to be taken outside the city gates and burned outside the camp. They were removed because they were unclean.

See **Exodus 29:14**

**God is saying to his priests here that if you don't change your heart** and have some respect, passion and honor for the things I have called you to do and to be in this world then I will see you as this despicable waste product - this dung. You are in danger of being taken out with the garbage. **You are in danger of being declared unclean and being removed** to the place of burning garbage.

**God makes it clear why He is \_\_\_\_\_ the priests. God is very good to explain his punishment to His people. His goal in discipline is for our profit - not our humiliation.** Those who have raised or have young children in the home know and remember that one of the most important things we can do when disciplining is to make sure our kids know why. Nothing can frustrate a kid more than when they are disciplined and don't know why.

God is not doing this because He is just frustrated and angry. **He cares about restoration. The heart of the Lord is to bring you back so the relationship can be blessed.** That is why God said early I have cursed your blessing. I want to bless you but you have taken the blessing out of my hand.

## 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Qualities of a Priest (Malachi 2:5-9)

God plainly lays out what he desires from the priests and remember you and I are priests. God is going to tell us how He wants us to be towards a lost and dying world.

**God says my agreement called for reverence** and they revered my name and stood in awe of my name.

### 1. Priests should be in \_\_\_\_\_ of God

One of the key characteristics of a Christian is that we should have an awe of God.

### 2. Priest should know and speak the truth (God's Word)

We are in the world but not of the world. Therefore, we will get into conversations with the lost. **Are they hearing the truth of God's word or are they hearing a reflection of your time spent into the world** and your worldly wisdom which is foolishness to God?

See **John 17:17** and **Psalm 19:14**

### 3. Priests should live a life that \_\_\_\_\_ God

What does the world see when they see your life?

### 4. Priests help others to walk with God

God says in verse 6 that they did turn many away from iniquity.

See **Psalm 51:13**

**Instead of leading people in the truth** and helping them walk with God, the priests were causing others to stumble. What a shame when we as believers trip up those around us. God rebukes them and tells the priests I will make you despised and humiliated in front of all the people.

See **1 Samuel 2:30**

## **NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATION:**

See **1 Peter 1:13-17**