Malachi – Reconnect with the Teaching of God's Word

Leaders are often held to a higher standard than others. This is also true in the Scriptures where we see God often reserves his strongest judgements upon the leaders of his people. This is a pattern that is throughout the Old Testament that extends into the New. Have you ever wondered why? Just what it is about being a leader of God's people that incurs his greatest anger?

In this session, we will look at God's rebuke of the priests of his people. As we go through this session, we will see why God has a higher standard for them, and along the way we will learn about what God is passionate about for his people.

Launch

1) Why do you think leaders in any sphere are generally held to a higher standard compared to the rest of us?

Reconnecting with the Teaching of God's Word

Read Malachi 2:1-9

2) Who are Yhwh's warnings for? (v1)

    a. What is supposed to be their role in Israel? (cf. Lev 10:9-11, Mal 2:7)

3) What did Yhwh threaten to do if the priests did not listen or resolve to honour his name? (v2-5, 9)

4) What was in the mouth of the priests? (v6)

5) What ought the lips of the priests be doing? Why? (v7)

6) What did these priests do? (v8-9)

7) Why do you think Yhwh cares so much about the priests persevering and teaching the knowledge of Yhwh faithfully to his people?

a. Read a few stanzas of Psalm 119 to get an idea about the importance of God's word. Based on that, revise your answer to question 7 if necessary.

8) Based on what you have learned in this passage, what then should God's leaders be doing for his people today? (cf. Heb 13:7-9, 2 Tim 4:1-4)

a. What are some destructive false teachings have you encountered or heard yourself? What about them that are so destructive?

b. What do you think you should do if you encounter false/bad teaching in Subi Church?

9) Conversely, what are some of the blessings of receiving solid biblical teaching? (cf. Psalm 119)

10) How can we as Christians discern between false and true teaching of the Bible? (cf. Acts 17:10-11)

11) While not everyone will be called to be a regular teacher of God's word, all Christians will have to teach God's word either to ourselves or to others at some point in our lives. What are some practical steps that we can take to make sure that we are on the right track?

God's word is a light unto our path. Psalm 119 gives us a delightful and joyful description of God's word. It is a tremendous blessing to our lives when we know and obey God's statutes. That is why God is angered when his priests are not teaching and persevering his word rightly. False/wrong teaching not only profanes God's name, but it also brings misery upon his people. It is *unloving* of the priests to be robbing the people of God's blessing through their false teachings. That is why God pronounces such strong judgements against them. It is not because God is capricious, but rather it is out of *love* for his people.

The leaders of God's people are charged with a similar responsibility today. The author of Hebrews calls his readers to obey their leaders because they teach God's word to them. That is the primary role of the leader in the church. It would be *unloving* of them if they spend all their time getting distracted by other things, because they are neglecting blessing the people through teaching God's word.

However, that responsibility does not solely lie on the leaders. Because of what Christ has done for us, every Christian is now can be considered a priest for we have direct access to the throne God (Heb 4:14-16)! We all have the tremendous blessing of reading God's word for ourselves in our own language. This is also how we can discern between true and false teaching – by searching God's word.