

A Good Steward of God's Gift

Malachi 1:13-2:9

Introduction:

- A. Every believer has been given a spiritual g_____ or ability
 - 1. God o_____ it
 - 2. We are s_____ of it and are to use it wisely
- B. God had entrusted the Levites with the office of the priesthood
 - 1. They were p_____ stewards
 - 2. This passage has some principles that will aid us in being good and wise stewards of the gift God has given each of us.

Exercise it in God's strength (1:13 - 2:3)

- A. How did the priests view their responsibilities?
 - 1. As t_____ (1:13) – it is the same Hebrew word used in Num 20:14 to refer to the hardships of slavery in Egypt.
 - 2. They viewed God as a taskmaster rather than a great K_____ (1:14)
- B. What was the Lord's response to the priests' laxness?
 - 1. He would c_____ the priestly blessings (2:2)
 - a. The reason - they did not take God's word to h_____.
 - b. An example: their declarations of f_____ would mean nothing.
 - 2. He would r_____ (KJV – corrupt) their physical descendants (v. 3a).
 - a. The sentence in the Hebrew text literally reads, *I will s_____ your seed.*
 - b. The meaning – the priestly line will be scattered everywhere.
 - 3. He would make the priestly office like m_____ - the people will not take their office seriously.
- C. Application
 - 1. When you do not depend upon the Lord in exercising your gift:
 - a. You are making it y_____ work instead of God's.
 - b. You are c_____ the task
 - 2. It takes spiritual s_____ to do spiritual work – 1 Pet 4:11 (...*whoever serves, serve in the strength that God supplies*).
 - 3. Examples of doing things in your own strength
 - a. Having a “h_____ to” attitude – you view your responsibility as burdensome instead of a privilege (teaching, giving, counseling, helping)
 - b. F_____ on a gift that is NOT yours
 - 1) Jms 1:3 warns, *Let not many of you become t_____*

- 2) 1 Cor 12:14-18 shows the s_____ of wanting and/or trying to be a different part of the body.
4. How to exercise your gift in God's strength – see Col 1:29 (striving according to God's power)
- View your gift as being from God – 1Pet 4:10a (*as each one has received a spiritual gift*) – this will keep you from becoming p_____.
 - View your gift as an instrument of God's g_____ (1 Pet 4:10b – *employ it in serving one another as good steward of the manifold grace of God.*) – you are not working for God but God is working through you.
 - Exercise your gift in proportion to the f_____ that God has allotted you (Rom 12:3).
 - The apostle Paul did not take the roll of an apostle until _____ years after his conversion (Gal 1:15-19)
 - An elder in a church is not to be a n_____ convert (1Tim 3:6)
 - A millionaire who has been given the gift of giving is not to rob others (who may not have that gift) from their giving.

Utilize it in God's honor (2:4-9)

- A. Malachi 2:4-7 speaks of a c_____ that God had made with Levi because he revered God's name and gave true instruction.
- This is not speaking of the person of Levi, but of the t_____
 - The account of this is found in Numbers 25.
 - Many Israelites joined with the daughters of Moab in the w_____ of Baal.
 - The Lord ordered that all the idolaters be ex_____
 - While judgment was being made before the public, an Israelite took a Midianite woman, in full view of all, into his tent to commit a_____.
 - The priest Phinehas went out with a s_____ and kill the adulterers.
 - God praised Phinehas for having a righteous jealousy and s_____ the remaining executions.
 - God made with him and his offspring a covenant of p_____ and of a perpetual priesthood.
- B. Malachi applies this illustration
- What a priest should be like (2:7)
 - His lips *should p_____ knowledge*

- b. He is a m_____ of the Lord by giving people God's instruction.
- 2. The Lord charges the priests of Malachi's day with three sins (2:8,9)
 - a. They gave w_____ instruction
 - b. They caused many to s_____ into sin because of that wrong instruction (v. 8)
 - c. They showed partiality by p_____ people
- C. Application:
 - 1. Motives to watch out in exercising spiritual gifts
 - a. To bring a_____ to yourself (pride)
 - b. To build our self-_____
 - 2. Motives to focus on (1Pet 4:10,11)
 - a. We are to bring attention to G_____ - *that in all things [spiritual gifts] God may be glorified.*
 - b. We are to s_____ or build-up one another – *employ it [your gift] in serving one another.*

Conclusion:

- A. You have been entrusted with at least one spiritual ability.
- B. Prayerfully consider your part in the body.
- C. Look over the list where you might fit and submit to any training that may be needed (see handout)
- D. Start using your gift if you have not already.