

Series: Sermon in Song

Glory to His Name – Psalm 29:2; Malachi 1:6

Introduction: The songwriter E.A. Hoffman has given us the great hymn that says: *Down at the cross where my Savior died, Down where for cleansing from sin I cried, There to my heart was the blood applied; Glory to His name.*

But tonight, I want you to turn to Mal. 1:6 where we find a complaint of God. It has to do a people who were guilty of not ascribing to the Lord the glory due to His name.

Malachi 1:6 - 2:9 deals primarily with the priest's failure to live up to their responsibilities. The prophet Malachi holds no punches as he condemns the sinfulness of these Spiritual leaders and calls for repentance on their part. Why? Because:

The Priesthood was a HIGH office. The Priests were the spiritual leaders of the people. The people looked to them more than they did the political leaders.

It was also a HOLY office. They stood between God and man. They were mediators between God and man. They offered the spiritual sacrifices and carried out the divine functions of the sacrifices and Temple.

Because of their high and holy office, and because of the fact that they were corrupting the office, Malachi condemns them and challenges them. In vs. 6, we see that they were not giving God the glory due to His name. Let's notice three things in this verse. First we see that we have:

1. A Special Relationship with God.

In vs. 6, we see a two-fold relationship described that each believer has with God. It describes a special relationship that God's children have with their Lord. First:

A. We Are Sons of God.

This relationship with God as His sons is expressed throughout the Bible. We read in **Exodus 4:22 (NIV)** "*Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son,'*" We also see the same thought in **Duet. 32:6 (NIV)** "*...Is He not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?"*

What a special relationship this describes! We are the sons of God. We read in **John 1:12 (NIV)** "*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*"

On April 1, 1954, in La Fayette, GA, I was born physically into the Skates family. On August 14, 1964, at the Waterville Baptist Church between La Fayette and Trion, GA, I was born spiritually and became a member

of God's family. I've had an earthly birth and I have had a heavenly birth. I have been born of woman and I have been born of God. I have been born of the flesh and I have been reborn of the Spirit.

When I think about being a son of God I feel like the little adopted boy. The kids at school teased him because he was adopted. He came home crying one afternoon and when he told his mother that his friends were making fun of him because he was adopted, his mother told him, *"Son, years ago, me and your dad wanted children real bad. But we found out we could not have any children on our own. We went down to the hospital and looked at all kinds of babies: big babies, little babies, fat babies, skinny babies, pretty babies, and even ugly babies. Out of all of them we picked you."* That seemed to satisfy the boy.

The next day at school when they began to tease him he answered, *"There was a day when mom and dad went down to the hospital. They looked at little babies, fat babies, skinny babies, pretty babies, and even ugly babies, and out of all them, they picked me. But when you came along your mom and dad had to take what they got."* Folks, we have a special relationship with our heavenly Father because we're His kids. But there's more. We also see that:

B. We Are Servants of God.

Being a servant of God is also a special relationship we have with God. *"What's so special about being a servant"* you ask? Being a servant doesn't sound like a whole lot of fun does it? Servants are supposed to be obedient and submissive. The truth is, being a servant of God, like being a son of God, is also expressed in the Bible. We read in **Exodus 3:12 (NIV)** And God said, *"I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."* Also in **Exodus 9:1 (NIV)** *"Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, so that they may worship me."*

The word *"servant"* speaks of one who had been purchased and owed his life to his master. Therein lies the beauty and specialness of our being servants of God. We have been chosen to be sons but bought as servants. Bought from what? We have been bought from the bondage of sin. We don't owe allegiance to Satan who wants to destroy us anymore. We now owe our allegiance to the One who wants to set us free, make us whole, and give us an abundant life. Our service to Him is in effect a thank-you to Him for all He has done. **Romans 6:22 (NIV)** says, *"But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life."*

We have not only been made the Sons of God, but also the Servants of God. We have a special relationship and as well a special responsibility. We are not only loved by God as his son, but used by God as His servant. But we also see in this verse:

2. A Serious Rebuke by God.

God says in vs. 6, “*If I am a Father, where are the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?*” says the Lord Almighty. *‘It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.’*” They had a special relationship with God but a sacrilegious regard for God. Their relationship with God was real but not relevant.

First:

A. It Was A Relationship That Was Dishonored.

God says to them, *“If I am your Father, why have you not honored Me? If I am your Master, why have you not feared Me?”* God was telling them that they had not honored Him as sons and they had not feared Him as servants.

As the sons of the Father they had not **reverenced** God. The word *“honor”* means *“glory.”* As their Father, God was worthy of and deserving of honor and glory, but they had deprived God of these. As sons they had not reverenced God.

As the servants of the Master they had not **respected** God. The word *“fear”* means *“to respect.”* As their Lord and Master God deserved respect, but again this was withheld. As servants they had not respected God.

Their treatment of God was highly disrespectful and dishonoring. Yet, sometimes, we treat God the same way. As His sons we dishonor Him when we don't worship Him as our Father, and as His servants we disrespect Him when we don't work for Him as our Master. We're like disobedient children and rebellious teenagers. Under the law God made it clear that a son was to honor his father (Ex. 20: 12 *“Honor your father and your mother”*). This was a command, not a request. In fact, it was a capital crime for a child to dishonor their father or mother.

Also a servant was to respect his master. A servant was under obligation to be submissive and obedient. Do you think that God expects anything less from we that are His sons and servants? No! We are to love Him, live for Him, and be loyal to Him. To give Him anything less than is a dishonoring of the relationship we have with Him! Second:

B. It Was A Revelation That Was Despised.

A name to us is mostly a way of identifying or addressing someone. But in those days a name was much more. A name represented the essence of one's being.

I heard about one guy who appeared before a judge to have his name changed. The judge said, *"I see here that your name is Tom Stinks. I understand why you would want to change your name. What would you like to have it changed to?"* The man said, *"Joe Stinks."* A name doesn't always have much meaning to it.

But God's name was actually a revelation of Himself. For example, you find the name *"The Lord Almighty"* found in verse 4,6,8,9,10,11, and 14. The word for *"Almighty"* is *"sebaoth"* which is used throughout the OT. It was used of Israel's armies. It was used of the Sun, moon, and stars. It was also used of the angelic hosts of heaven.

The name appears to have originated in the time of the Judges as a designation of the Lord as the commander of the armies of Israel. The name was a revelation of God that He was the Lord of all armies, a Lord of triumphs.

All of God's names reveal something about His person, nature, attributes, and His relationship to His people and the world. In vs. 12, Malachi is saying, You profane my name with your actions. The word *"profane"* means *"to regard with contempt."* It literally means, *"to raise the head disdainfully."* It is to hold a thing as worthless.

Think about Esau. He despised his birthright. He took it lightly. He didn't honor it, and thumbed his nose at it. God was saying, *"You have taken lightly Who I am. You must consider Me as worthless and needless in your life."*

Now before you think that sounds like something only heathen people would do, consider this; we are often guilty of the same. Sometimes we live our lives as if God is not important, needed, or relevant. When we go on our merry way, do our own thing, and live our lives like they belong to us, with no thought of God, no time for God, no turning to God, we are saying, *"God, you really don't mean that much to me."* I remind you of Ps. 29:2. We are to *"Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;"*

We have a special relationship with God, but if we don't honor His Name, we will receive a serious rebuke by God! But finally, notice the people's response to God. It's:

3. The Sad Response to God.

The people said, *"How have we shown contempt for your name."* Literally, they were smirking and saying,

“*What do you mean we have despised Your name?*” They couldn’t believe they were guilty of such a thing. Their response reveals a couple of things about their spiritual condition. First it reveals:

A. A Hard Heart. Their hearts were dull and hard. Their conscience was seared. They were like the Pharisees we read of in Mark 3:5, who had tracked Jesus down and sought to trap Him, and even to kill him. Mark says that Jesus was “*deeply disturbed by their hard hearts.*” How it must have grieved the heart of God as He saw them and listened to His own people. But their response also revealed:

B. A Hypocritical Heart. They were not willing to accept responsibility. They were unwilling to acknowledge their sin and treatment of God. As far as they were concerned, they had done nothing wrong and said so. They claimed to be one thing and lived another.

Conclusion: What do your words and actions reveal about how you treat God? Do the things you do and say bring glory to His Name or to they degrade His Name? Would you be proud to take God where you went last night? Would you be embarrassed to let God hear some of the language you’ve spoken? Would you want God to know what you’ve uttered under your breath about somebody this week?

As Christians, we have a special relationship with God. We’re His children and His servants. And as our Father and Master, God has the right to discipline His children and reprimand His servants when we treat Him with disrespect and do not bring honor and glory to His name.

Don’t let it come to that. May we always be found bringing glory to His name.