



**“WHEN WE REALLY WORSHIP”
MALACHI 1:7—2:9**

WHY ARE WE HERE THIS MORNING? WHY DO WE COME TO CHURCH? WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE? WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT FROM US? IS OUR WORSHIP PLEASING TO GOD OR REPUGNANT TO GOD? THE TRUTH IS, IT CAN BE EITHER. IT DEPENDS ON THE ATTITUDE AND THE ACTION OF THE WORSHIPPER.

WORSHIP IN MALACHI’S DAY HAD BECOME REPUGNANT TO GOD BECAUSE OF THE ATTITUDE WITH WHICH THE BELIEVERS APPROACHED WORSHIP AND BECAUSE OF THE ABUSES INTO WHICH THEY HAD FALLEN.

THE PROPHET SUGGESTS HERE IN THIS PASSAGE THE ELEMENTS OF REAL WORSHIP. REAL WORSHIP IS:

I. WORSHIP IN WHICH GOD IS HONORED

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF WORSHIP IS TO HONOR GOD. THE FACT THAT HIS CONTEMPORARIES WERE NOT HONORING GOD WITH THEIR WORSHIP WAS THE REASON FOR THE PROPHET’S CONDEMNATION (2:2). THE MOST COMMON WORDS IN BOTH THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS STRESSED THE IDEA OF HONORING GOD AS THE PRIMARY ELEMENT IN WORSHIP.

PEOPLE COME TO WORSHIP FOR MANY REASONS, BUT THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE REASON IS TO GIVE HONOR AND PRAISE UNTO GOD!

II. WORSHIP IN WHICH MAN IS HELPED

IN REAL WORSHIP, WE ENTREAT GOD’S FAVOR THAT HE MAY BE GRACIOUS UNTO US(1:9). WORSHIP IS NOT ONLY DESIGNED TO MEET THE DEMAND OF GOD BUT ALSO TO MEET THE NEED OF MAN. NO MATTER WHAT WE ARE GOING THROUGH, WORSHIP IS THE MEANS BY WHICH GOD HELPS US. IT IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE LORD TO SPEAK TO US, AND FOR US TO SPEAK TO HIM.

III. WORSHIP IN WHICH SACRIFICE IS HEIGHTENED

ONE OF THE SIGNS OF THE DECADENCE OF WORSHIP IN MALACHI’S DAY WAS THE POLLUTED SACRIFICES WHICH THEY WERE OFFERING TO GOD(1:13).

EVERY TRUE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE DEMANDS A RESPONSE ON THE PART OF THE WORSHIPPER. IF WE ARE NOT FEELING A COMPULSION TO GIVE, NOT ONLY OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS, BUT ALSO OF OURSELVES, THEN WE HAVE NOT TRULY WORSHIPPED. REAL WORSHIP IS AN ENCOUNTER WITH GOD IN WHICH WE ARE COMPELLED TO RESPOND IN SOME TANGIBLE WAY TO HIS GRACE IN OUR LIVES.

WE SHOULD WORSHIP TO HONOR GOD, TO HELP OURSELVES GROW, AND TO STIMULATE OUR RESPONSIVENESS TO THE GOD WHO’S CHILDREN WE ARE. THAT’S REAL WORSHIP!