

“You Exhaust Me!”
Sermon Reflection Questions
March 14, 2010
Malachi 2:17, Unlocking the Old Testament

We only have a few weeks left until we finish our Old Testament series. Today we look at the very last book of the Old Testament, the book of Malachi. We will then pick up some of the remaining books in the next several weeks until we are finished with our series. This last book is about the ministry of the prophet Malachi to the Jewish people and after Malachi speaks to them around 400 B.C. God is officially silent until just before the time of Jesus. Of course, God would have been working in the lives of people individually; however, God doesn't speak corporately to the world until the coming of Jesus. Malachi is a tough, fair letter because God brings out some significant concerns and complaints. As we will see, God's frustration with the Israelites is rooted in the fact that they are calling good what is evil and judging God for not executing His justice. The Israelites are so persistent in this that God tells them that they are exhausting Him.

1. How can being persistent be a positive, as well as a negative quality?
2. Who is the most persistent person you know? And how have you seen this persistence be a good and bad thing in their life?
3. Read Malachi 2:17. God proclaims that the people have “wearied or exhausted” Him. This seems like a contradiction to what we know about God- we know He doesn't sleep or that we certainly can't make Him tired as perhaps our children make us tired. So how are we to think about this idea that the people of God “wearied” Him?
4. The people wearied God for two reasons. The first was that they called what was evil good and that the Lord delighted in what was evil. They were in a sense not only justifying evil behavior, but saying that God was actually rejoicing in that evil behavior. Read also Isaiah 5:20.
 - a. As you skim over the book, or remember from the message, what were the things that the people were justifying and calling good?
 - b. In what way do you see the surrounding culture doing the same thing?
 - c. In what way do you see Christian culture doing the same thing?
5. The Israelites also wearied God because they were complaining that God wasn't bringing about His justice and wrath against the surrounding culture.
 - a. Where are times you have wanted to see God execute His justice to those who have “deserved it”?

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- b. What does Romans 9:19-29 say about why God delays His wrath?

 - c. In light of why God delays His wrath, how should our attitude change toward those whom we would love to see “get what is coming to them”?
6. God reminds His people about His character and how He will accept those who come to Him in repentance in Malachi 3:1-7.
- a. What does God promise to those who had wearied Him if they will now come and seek Him?

 - b. What part of your life do you need to put more clearly under the Lordship of Jesus Christ?