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Great Is Thy
Faithfulness

Faithfulness, Malachi 2:10-16

Serving God With or Without Vision

- William Booth was greatly stirred by the needs of the poor of London and realized that most churches were doing nothing to reach the “undesirables” —drunkards, morphine addicts, prostitutes, and the poor. He set out to reach them with what he called the 3 S’s: soup, soap and salvation. Thousands were saved among those that most churches had no interest in reaching. Booth gave his life for the cause of reaching others.

Serving God With or Without Vision

- In his 80s, Booth's work began to be hindered by blindness. He briefly lost his sight and then recovered it, but later he lost his vision permanently. His son Bramwell came to bring him the bad news that he would never see again. Booth replied, "God must know best, Bramwell. I have done what I could for God and the people with my eyes. Now I shall do what I can for God and the people without my eyes."

Serving God With or Without Vision

- William Booth was faithful to the call of Christ upon his life and his circumstances did not change that
- It did change the way he went about fulfilling his call but not his faithfulness to the call

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- It began with the word – **wholeness**
 - **John 10:10 NLT**, “10 The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- We began studying Malachi and added the words - **honor and respect** to God Almighty
 - **Malachi 1:6 NLT**, “6 The Lord of Heaven’s Armies says to the priests: ‘A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. If I am your father and master, where are the honor and respect I deserve? You have shown contempt for my name!’”
 - Wholeness can only become real in your live when we learn to honor and respect God Almighty

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Last week we added the word - **holiness or being “set apart”**
 - **1st Peter 1:16 NLT**, “16 For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’”
 - Not just do holy things but be holy

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- As we move through Malachi the next word to add is **faithfulness**
- Faithfulness –
 - lasting loyalty and trustworthiness in relationships, especially marriage and friendship
 - the fact or quality of being true to one's word or commitments, as to what one has pledged to do, professes to believe, etc.

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Faithfulness –
 - the fact or quality of being dedicated and steadfast in performing one's duty, working for a cause, etc.
 - the quality of adhering to fact, a standard, or an original

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Faithfulness is one of God's core characteristics
 - He doesn't just do faithful things; He is faithful just as He is love
 - **Lamentations 3:22-23 NLT**, "22 The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. 23 Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning."

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Faithfulness is one of God's core characteristics
 - **Deuteronomy 7:9 NLT**, "9 Understand, therefore, that the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands."

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Faithfulness is one of God's core characteristics
 - **1st Corinthians 10:13 NLT**, "13 The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure."

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, it should not surprise us then that this is to be one of our core characteristics as well
 - As defined by God
 - As with holiness we are called to be faithful, not just do faithful things
 - When is faithfulness most likely to be challenged?

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, it should not surprise us then that this is to be one of our core characteristics as well
- **Galatians 5:22-23 NLT**, “22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Israel had lost their honor, respect, and faithfulness to God
 - They were also blaming God for it
 - Much like Adam in Garden after sinning

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Israel had lost their honor, respect, and faithfulness to God
 - **Genesis 3:11-12 NLT**, 11 “Who told you that you were naked?” the Lord God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”
12 The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

We have been adding some seldom used words to our daily Christian lives

- Since God is faithful, He sends a prophet to call their attention to this and warn them of the discipline coming if they fail to reignite their honor, respect and faithfulness to Him and their covenant with Him

Scripture

- **Malachi 2:10-16 NLT**, “10 Are we not all children of the same Father? Are we not all created by the same God? Then why do we betray each other, violating the covenant of our ancestors?”

Scripture

- **Malachi 2:10-16 NLT**, 11 Judah has been unfaithful, and a detestable thing has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem. The men of Judah have defiled the Lord's beloved sanctuary by marrying women who worship idols. 12 May the Lord cut off from the nation of Israel every last man who has done this and yet brings an offering to the Lord of Heaven's Armies.

Scripture

- **Malachi 2:10-16 NLT**, 13 Here is another thing you do. You cover the Lord's altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings and doesn't accept them with pleasure. 14 You cry out, "Why doesn't the Lord accept my worship?" I'll tell you why! Because the Lord witnessed the vows you and your wife made when you were young. But you have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows.

Scripture

- **Malachi 2:10-16 NLT**, 15 Didn't the Lord make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard your heart; remain loyal to the wife of your youth. 16 "For I hate divorce!" says the Lord, the God of Israel. "To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty," says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. "So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife."

What is the purpose of creation?

- **Psalms 19:1-4 NLT**, “1 The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. 2 Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. 3 They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world.
- Mankind, being a part of creation, was also created to proclaim the glories of God Almighty in a way the heavens cannot

What is the purpose of creation?

- The majority of our proclamations come as a result of what we do, how we live, how we respond but also what we do not do
- Our glory proclamation is able to be observed not so much by our words, but through our faithfulness
- God brings up three areas where Israel was severely lacking in faithfulness and are areas we can easily slip into today

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- I've used the word "covenant" several times this morning and this is also a word we do not usually use today
 - Covenant - binding or establishing a bond between two parties

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- I've used the word "covenant" several times this morning and this is also a word we do not usually use today
 - It is more and deeper than a contract
 - A contract depends on established laws to holding the sides accountable
 - A covenant depends upon the individual hearts

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- Israel had been unfaithful to the covenants established in their lives
 - **Malachi 2:10 NLT**, “Are we not all children of the same Father? Are we not all created by the same God? Then why do we betray each other, violating the covenant of our ancestors?”

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- We live in a broken, selfish, abusive, faithless world
- Mistreatment of others is a serious problem in our modern society
- Unscrupulous would be a word that describes our world

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- In July 1996, a woman from Albany Georgia was killed and her daughter injured when a bomb exploded in Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park
 - Someone saw this on the news and knew they were out of town and robbed their home

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- How we treat others and respond to others, reveals much about our character and our relationship with God
- We as born-again children of God are in this world but because of Jesus we no longer belong to this world
- We have been freed in Christ Jesus to live as a citizen of His Kingdom

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- **John 18:36 NLT**, “36 Jesus answered, ‘My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world.’”
 - Citizens of my kingdom do not respond like citizens of an earthly kingdom

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- **Galatians 6:10 NLT**, “10 Therefore, whenever (every time) we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.”

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- **John 13:34-35 NLT**, “34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other (*Be faithful to each other*). Just as I have loved (*been faithful to*) you, you should love (*be faithful to*) each other. 35 Your love (*faithfulness*) for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

How we are faithful to our covenant responsibility toward others, especially other believers

- Wholeness can only come into our lives when we begin seeing others through the eyes of Jesus and responding to them in faithfulness as citizens of God's Kingdom

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- Did not Jesus call His sacrifice on the cross a new covenant secured by His blood
 - Every born-again child of God is in covenant with God just as much, if not more so, than the children of Israel

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- Salvation is not only on God's side of the equation
 - God provided the restoration to our broken relationship with Him
 - God has promised complete and total forgiveness of our sin debt when we come before Him through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus in brokenness
 - This is God's side of the covenant

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- One place our side is found in **Matthew 7:24-27**
 - Jesus told the story of the wise man who built his house upon a rock and likened to this man anyone "who hears these sayings of mine and does them"
 - In his covenant there are things for us to hear and do
 - Your part, and your choice, is to submit to God, put all your faith in him, and obey him

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- Israel had been unfaithful on their side of their covenant with God
 - **Malachi 2:11 NLT**, “11 Judah has been unfaithful and a detestable (*treacherous, disloyal*) thing has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem. The men of Judah have defiled the Lord’s beloved sanctuary by marrying women who worship idols. 12 May the Lord cut off from the nation of Israel every last man who has done this and yet brings an offering to the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- What is our side of our salvation
 - **Matthew 22:37-39 NLT**, “37 Jesus replied, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

How we are faithful to our covenant with God

- What is our side of our salvation
 - **2nd Corinthians 3:16-18 NLT**, “16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.”

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- **Malachi 2:13-14 NLT**, “13 Here is another thing you do. You cover the Lord’s altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings and doesn’t accept them with pleasure. 14 You cry out, “Why doesn’t the Lord accept my worship?” I’ll tell you why! Because the Lord witnessed the vows you and your wife made when you were young. But you have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows.”

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- **Malachi 2:16a NLT**, “16 “For I hate divorce!” says the Lord, the God of Israel.”
 - Literally it means “For I hate the sending away!”
 - Please notice it does not say, “I hate divorced people!”
 - **Malachi 1:16b NLT**, “To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- Your marriage to your spouse is also a covenant relationship with God Almighty
 - **Malachi 2:15 NLT**, “15 Didn’t the Lord make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? Godly children from your union.”

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- Phrase, “Keep the endgame in sight”
 - Endgame - the late or final stages of any activity
 - Students keep the endgame in sight as you prepare for life beyond high school
 - Buying a house to fix up and sell
 - Making our marriage work

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- **Malachi 2:16c NLT**, “So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife.”
- **Proverbs 4:23 NLT**, “23 Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.”

How we are faithful to our marriage covenant

- **Psalms 141:3-4 NLT**, “3 Take control of what I say, O Lord, and guard my lips. 4 Don’t let me drift toward evil or take part in acts of wickedness. Don’t let me share in the delicacies of those who do wrong.”
 - **Verse 3 NLT**, “Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”
 - Set a guard over my anger, pride, lust, fear, envy, hurried life, faithlessness....

Faithfulness to God will lead you to live a life “set apart” for God’s glory

- Being “set apart” for God will lead to honor and respect for God
- Honor and respect for God will lead to wholeness

Be Faithful In The Little Things

- A young preacher once approached Dr. F. B. Meyer and asked how he could one day become as influential and well-known as Dr. Meyer.
 - Dr. Meyer responded, “Don’t waste your time waiting and longing for large opportunities which may never come. But faithfully handle the little things that are always claiming your attention.”

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