

Malachi

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[0 : 00] With the Lord's help this evening, I will direct your attention to the book of Malachi, the second chapter, and I will read the fifteenth verse, though my attention is particularly directed to one sentence.

Malachi, chapter 2, the fifteenth verse. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit?

And wherefore one, that he might seek a godly seed? Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit? And wherefore one, that he might seek a godly seed.

Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. The sentence that is principally in my mind is that he might seek a godly seed.

[1 : 25] The circumstances prevailing in the day of this prophecy were sad.

Religion was very low. And even in the professing church, there was a great mixture, and things had reached such a low ebb that the importance of pure worship had been virtually lost sight of.

The consequence of this was that, to put it in a vulgar term, anything would do for God.

Now, how true the situation may repeat itself in the present day. And therefore, we need to be deeply concerned that we have a right reverence of God, and a right and proper desire after holy things.

The remonstrance was here with the priests and with the people. There is a very close connection between the priests and the people, between the ministers and the congregation.

[2 : 56] The ministers' walk and conversation can have a very deep effect on the people, and likewise, the people's walk and conversation can have a very deep effect upon the minister.

It is therefore of great importance to both of us, that we should be concerned to walk in the fear of God.

It was the desire of the psalmist to walk in the fear of the Lord all the day long. If we are blessed with this inmost desire, and are favoured with its outcome, sure it will be, then we may indeed hope that the day of prosperity may be with us.

The day of prosperity in the church of God can never be connected with a day wherein there is a willingness even to consult in small things to cast him down from his excellency.

It is when the people are blessed with a desire to thirst after God and godliness, that prosperity prevails in the church of God.

[4 : 19] I was reading in an account just recently of a woman in the church of England reviewing the situation earlier in her life. And at that time, she remarks that ten-minute sermons were the order of the day so that not only the people, but also the parson himself could be off to seek sensual pleasures.

But as godliness improved and was brought about in the later part of her life, so she observes that the people were glad for the sermons to extend to an hour and more because their thirst after God and godliness had been greatly increased.

I felt as I read it that there is a great deal of thought that we might have upon that point. There are those that would wish for shorter discourses.

Whilst we would ever remember the weakness of the flesh, yet, must we not also say that those who wish a discourse to be quickly got over are those that are most worldly-minded and have least desire after the things of God.

When your soul is spiritually minded, when your heart is blessed with the blessing of God, then, I'm sure, you will be witness to this, that the service could never be too long, even though it was long.

[5 : 58] You will remember that on one occasion, the apostle Paul was so moved in his preaching that he preached until midnight. There are times, you know, when the servants of God would feel the power of the Spirit upon them and to continue preaching until midnight.

And the people were there to listen. And the people were there in those days because they were moved with a hunger and thirst after the things of God. And there was no desire to terminate the service even at the appointed time.

Nevertheless, we are well aware of the importance and necessary requirement of a certain amount of regularity and formality insofar that there are other things to be considered.

We remember the words of the Savior when he said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

Now, what the Lord is speaking about here is really spiritual adultery. We notice in the 11th verse, Judah hath dealt treacherously and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem.

[7 : 28] For Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved and hath married the daughter of a strange God. Can we perceive that in the, that happening in the present day?

Are there those that in their early days of profession indeed loved the Lord? I think it was against the church at Ephesus that the Lord said that he had one thing against them and that is that they had left their first love.

They had left their first love. we need to examine ourselves in these matters in order that we may come before God and confess our sins in the matter.

Oh, how grateful a thing it is for any person to, to leave the first love, the first love of Christ.

One almost comes to the conclusion upon hearing some people's conversation that it is the ordinary course of events that brought the hymn writer to, to write where is the blessedness I knew when first I loved the Lord but is it not a reason for a deep consideration as to why this blessedness has departed?

[8 : 57] You know it is not the Lord that has departed from us so much as it is the Lord that the us that has departed from the Lord. We are reminded in this very same chapter for the Lord the God of Israel said that he hateth putting away, he hateth putting away, what about this in respect to the church of the living God?

how do we feel even in respect to those who we believe love the Lord and may appear in the face of the church to be guilty of some matter or other?

Now how do we feel? Do we feel that we should deal with the matter in a hard and legal spirit or if we have to deal with the matter will it be in the spirit of which the Lord himself evinces when he says he hated putting away oh if it were possible for some means of recovery to be made no undoubtedly in respect to the church of God the bride of Christ there can be no final putting away there is no divorce you know with respect to Christ and his church it is for this reason that divorce is always to be spoken against the purpose of marriage is to set forth the marriage of Christ and his church in the Ephesians this our attention is particularly drawn to this point and so there is a cleaving of a man to his wife so there is a cleaving of

Christ and to his church well now in the words of our text and did not he make one that is they too shall be one flesh they shall not be twain any more did he not did not he make one yet had he the residue of the spirit that is the excellency of the spirit the wonder of the spirit the rightness of the spirit in making one there is so much in the word of god that speaks to us concerning the close union which exists between christ and his church between every individual member of his body and himself that unity is as closely knit as the unity between the father and the son and the holy ghost in the triune godhead and wherefore one that he might seek a godly seed a godly seed now we would look as god may help us and we need the help of god to deal rightly with this subject that he might seek a godly seed look at several points in respect to this godly seed in the first place we shall find that it is a seed which god has set apart know ye not that the lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself there are many seeds which are sown but there is a godly seed we may look at the parable of the wheat and the tares well the wheat is generally regarded as being a godly seed but then there are the tares from whence come they they're not planted by god but the lord said an enemy has done this and they are planted by the devil a godly seed but the godly seed are still a separated seed know ye not that the lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself and so we may see the field a field bearing both the tares and the wheat however much the tares may intermingle in the field of grace in the church of the living god yet nevertheless the wheat will be separate because the wheat is a godly seed and from the very outset from divine choice in eternity that seed is to be is that the lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself it is therefore observed that the godly seed will indeed have an eternal life in that seed now seed of the tares will not have eternal life in them they may grow up and they may appear to go side by side with the people of god in many many things indeed as far as time is concerned and the demands that time things may

have upon them their religion may be satisfactory to meet most of the demands and yet there is something lacking and this is that that is lacking in the godly seed there will be godly sincerity and will there be godly seed in the seed of the tares well we shall leave the seed of the tares this evening and speak more particularly upon this godly seed because it is of a holy seed it will be a seed of sincerity and what about what will they desire to be sincere well they will desire to be sincere in all things in all their activities in relation to their soul exercises before god now are we sincere we need to be careful even in respect and sincerity i remember one godly minister many years ago saying that some people said well if a person is sincere then that is a very good thing and surely it is a religion worthwhile and then he added but we have an expression that we may be sincerely mistaken and is not that true so whilst we would put sincerity in its right perspective yet we should ever remember that we may be sincerely mistaken mistaken well what is going to differentiate between being sincerely mistaken and not being sincerely mistaken the determinant factor is to be found in life now if the seed is of god it will have life it will have eternal life and what is eternal life that they may know thee the only true god and jesus christ whom thou hast said now life as you well know is active it is felt and the evidence of life may be seen in the breath that is breathed in the things that are seen the words that are heard the heart that is opened to receive the precious truths of the gospel if we can find this to the godly seed and what can we say then about the godly seed have we the the since sincerity in our heart proved to be real sincerity because of the life of god in the soul which abhors hypocrisy and is anxious that there should be nothing to mock god as a man soweth so shall he reap god is not mocked for what a man soweth that shall he also reap godly seed therefore is one that will indeed be sincere and that sincerity will be established because of the movement of life in the soul whereby we shall feel that what we say in our prayers are real ah but you may say sometimes i wonder if my prayers are real now how do you how does god make your prayers real well he brings his people into desperate circumstances and that's how he makes their prayers real there are times that we may repeat words

[18 : 52] of prayer but are there not other times when it becomes a time of desperation now then there are times of desperation when we know not how to pray and i have known what it is when having spent some little time trying to find right words to pray and not having the words to pray at all when god has suddenly dropped a passage of scripture into my soul and that has been the very thing that i wanted to ask god for i couldn't find the words to ask him for before there we have the evidence of a godly seed a prayer which comes down from heaven which you can send up to heaven again and there is life in that petition a godly seed with sincere life in the soul and the life of sincerity working there as well but then a godly seed will also know something not only of godly sincerity a part of godly sorrow godly sorrow people have sorrow everybody has sorrow but it is the godly that have godly sorrow and so you may find the tares will have sorrow but the wheat will have godly sorrow now what is the distinction here here well the sorrow of the world it worketh death sometimes it works wrath but godly sorrow it worketh repentance godly sorrow worketh and bringeth about confession confession confession of our sin have certain things come upon us that have reminded us of our color and make that we are all over as any fiend black so that we have come before god and confessed our sin and repented over our sin it may have exercised your soul as it has done mine sometimes whoso confesseth his sin and forsaketh it shall find mercy we may confess our sins but what about the forsaking and the word of the scripture seems to indicate that if there's no forsaking then how can we expect mercy if we confess our sins deeply sincerely and have a godly sorrow because of our sins then surely there will be a desire to forsake those sins you may perhaps say some of you

I've been trying to forsake some sins for a long time and I seem to be quite unable to forsake them well do you hate them or do you love them that is your sins do you really say that I only wish I could forsake my sin the sin which does so easily beset me then do you hate that sin or do you say well I'm that kind of a person that thing is always cropping up the point is this do you hate it you will never begin to forsake anything until you hate it but if you hate a thing then you'll be ready to turn away from it in spite of your of your the pleadings of your fleshly mind now this is the beginning of godly sorrow what will make us hate our sins not just hate sinning although that will come into it but hate our sins

I hate the sins that made thee mourn and drove me from thy side that is when we see Christ suffering on the cross when we see the burden that he did bear while hanging on the accursed tree and hopes our guilt was there this is that which will break the stony heart this is that which will bring forth godly repentance and godly sorrow which needeth not to be repented of oh some of you I believe would give a great deal to feel a few tears of repentance dropping at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ so that you brought forth those words oh on such love my soul still ponder love so great so rich so free say whilst lost in holy wonder why such love oh lord to me a godly seed will know this experience from time to time and it will produce in their heart a godly sorrow they will be therefore sorrowing after godly sought grieving for grieving him grieving because of the burdens which have been laid upon the lord Jesus

Christ that he might seek a godly seed you see the lord in seeking he seeks to distinguish the lord said that he came to seek and to save that which was lost godly seed godly seed is that seed which is implanted in a person appointed unto heaven itself at last whose names are written in heaven men men cannot plant a godly seed they may preach the word and the word may indeed be as a quickening seed in their own souls but it is god that plants the godly seed and it is god that rears the fruit from that seed that he might seek a godly seed we read that there shall be a generation a seed to serve him and a generation to call him blessed therefore the lord seeks a godly seed that shall serve him have we that mark in our lives of serving him there is a great deal of what we might call wriggling by the lord he puts people through the seed you see some people may say oh yes

I'm serving the lord all way well that seems to be a good desire it seems to be a right thing but how much of self is involved in our serving the lord whilst it is perfectly right for us to assemble ourselves together in the house of the lord as often as opportunity may afford but I've been thinking today what about washing the disciples feet have we inquired of the lord or have we been satisfied that we are serving the lord because we have said well I want to do this but what about that poor woman down the road have you looked into her case have you spoke a word in season to her ah but I want to go to the house of god now that's perfectly right but what is the spirit behind it what is the spirit behind it is it that you might honour god is it that there is that in your spirit which says lord what will thou have me to do you know the man that fell among thieves he was looked upon by the priest and the Levite and then came the

[27 : 52] Samaritan now don't think that the Samaritan was just walking along there and had no business particularly on hand he might well have had great business to do but he turned aside now then shall we say this and I would be careful how I say this too suppose that Samaritan was going to the house of god to worship and here is a poor person fallen among thieves on the side of the road now what is the will of the lord shall we be like the priest and the Levite say well I can't stop now I can't stop now but the man is dying he might be glad of a word in season he might be glad of you to come and to pray over him that he might have hope that in his great weakness and in his sad state there may be some encouragement I only use this as an illustration not to dissuade you from coming to the house of god but to try and set before you the importance of a right spirit in the matter now you see the action of the samaritan was commendable in the sight of god the man he had to forsake himself there is a precious word in the epistle to the romans which we need to look at again and again i think it is in the yes in the fourteenth chapter in the in the fifteenth chapter we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves no serving the lord let us bring the serving the lord into this category we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak no we are not very happy at bearing the infirmities of the weak are we they are too much of a bother they are too much of an impediment they upset our uncomfortable circumstances but then what do we how do we read on for even

Christ please not himself now you see the godly seed will be distinguished sometimes when they are perhaps involved in a certain matter and it seems to be upsetting all their little plan and all they wanted to do and they thought they would be serving god in doing it and then there was this that came along and it didn't seem right but the godly seed heard a word in respect to serving him even christ please not himself now what effect would that have upon your spirit would it not have a quietening effect upon your spirit even christ even christ please not himself now how much do we please ourselves we may say oh we're doing a wonderful work we are doing all that we can for this and that person but human nature being what it is how often is number one a first consideration i've sometimes thought of those great words in the scripture the lord gave his life for his sheep let us not just restrict it to his laying down his life but he gave his life every moment of his life was devoted to the salvation of the church of god and he further says i came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me now that will be very searching to us sometimes the godly seed will know it and they will serve god accordingly i came not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me to seek out a godly seed to manifest forth his grace in the heart of these people now the godly seed will of necessity be greatly humbled by these experiences if you are aware that you have a natural nature that is contrary to anything that's godly it will be a wonderful evidence of your having a godly seed when you have evidence of that godly seed being there so that you have sincerity in your worship and the evidence of the life of god in your soul since there is a knowledge of god and of his son jesus christ and that god directs you how to serve him serve him in not in the letter but in the spirit for the letter killeth but the spirit maketh alive how many that serve the lord in the letter well god alone knows that it will not be our concern to decide who does and who does not it will be our concern that we should serve god in the spirit this is particularly the case in the verse before us because after this sentence that he might seek of godly seed we are reminded therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth how much we need to take heed to our spirit with respect to the godly seed and serving the lord the psalmist tells us to serve the lord with trembling now this

is not to be understood as that which comes from being subject to a tyrannical discipline but to serve the lord with trembling means to that we should indeed fear before him with a wholesome and deep respect and reverence because he is the almighty god now the godly seed they will recognize that the lord is holy and that he has a perfect right to govern me and mine now the godly seed will be surrounded with much that will destroy that seed if it were possible especially in respect to serving the lord with trembling trembling will come into our worship unto this man will I look unto him that tremble at my word is there that desire in your soul that you want god to look upon you and you say yes

I do but he doesn't well we have to look at another point do you tremble at his word have you fallen down before him in sincerity and in truth and said god be merciful to me a sinner if my soul was sent to hell by righteous law approved it well that he might seek a godly seed that shall serve him in a right way now serving the lord is then to serve him according to the word of god i greatly fear that there are many who have their own ideas about the will of god we have the expression in some religious circles god wants me to do so and so and it's not what god wants them to do at all it's what they think god wants them to do now it's not good enough for us to think what god wants us to do it's what god determines that we shall do so then the people that know what god wants them to do as they say you will discover them because there's no trembling at his word how many projects are set on foot with this idea in mind this is what god wants me to do and very often the things that they say god wants them to do is the things that they're not capable of doing how can they communicate faith to a soul how can they convert a sinner from the error of his ways and yet you'll find people that say well this is what god wants me to do nobody can do the work of god so then there is a serving god with fear and trembling we shall find as our best example the lord jesus christ himself what an example he gave to his disciples when he took a towel and girded himself and washed the disciples feet and he said this i am among you as one that serveth and now this meant a great deal of humility just imagine oh have we given weighty thought to the matter that the lord of heaven and earth should come down and serve his creatures who will be greater who will be great among you let him be your minister in other words let him be the one that serves that he might seek a godly seed seek a godly seed that will be saved in the lord with an everlasting salvation that will be his witnesses or his witness in the earth ye are my witnesses saith the lord that i am god and that those witnesses the true witnesses are only the godly seed because they are witnesses of god they are witnesses of what god can do because they are witnesses to what god has done

in them and for them and to them and with them therefore they are witnesses how few people can speak about the almighty god but works miracles and what greater miracle was that effected than that which the hymn writer speaks of when he said ah but for free and sovereign grace i still had lived estranged from god till hell had proved the destined place of my deserved but dread abode but oh amazed i see the hands that stopped me in my wild career a miracle of grace i stand the lord has taught my heart to fear to fear his name to trust his grace to learn his will be my employ till i shall see him face to face himself my heaven himself my joy will you be amongst the godly seed then that can be a witness unto the lord that he works miracles and here is the demonstration of it now then if we believe in miracles if we believe that god has changed our heart renewed our will and turned our feet to zion's hill then may we not give hope to others you know sometimes you'll come in contact with people who will in the bitterness of their soul experience at the time at the time will say well i feel there's no hope for me no hope at all well what are you going to say to those people there will certainly be the priest and the levite that will say well i don't think there's any hope for you at all but i don't really think it's possible for any of the godly seed ever to tell anybody that there's no hope for them because who of mercy need despair since i have mercy found these are witnesses for god reminding such people as it were on the brink of going down to the pit that god has recovering grace look from the borders of the pit to my recovering grace have we done that sometimes ourselves then we are witness for god and that witness for god can only be the godly seed the subjects of god's work the god's work being seen in the seed sown and god's work in in the growth of that seed subsequently and the lord says that he might seek a godly seed that you'll be a witness a witness but then how do we witness i feel that a great deal of mistakes a great many mistakes are made with regard to this witnessing i should give you scriptural support for what i say a word which may often come before us is this let your light so shine before men that they may behold your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven now i'm sure that both young and old at some time rather have been tasked with this about their light shining before men and their natural mind will go along and say well my light doesn't shine at all why doesn't it why doesn't it is it

[43 : 34] because you say well look at all these other people they go along and here they are they can speak a word to this person and that person they can take their bible and they can thump it and so on what light they are and here am i can hardly do a thing well now i want to draw this to your attention there are several aspects of light which are important for our consideration light light never makes a sound does it whether it is god's light or artificial light it doesn't make a sound when the sun the dawn rises the sun rises and the dawn comes is there any tremendous thunder not at all it comes quietly doesn't wake us up when it comes does it and if you look at the candle light is there any noise there certainly isn't but then the lord says let your light shine before me so shine before me now i take you to the book of proverbs and there we read the spirit of a man is the candle of the lord now it brings a great deal of enforcement to these words in this verse take therefore take heed to your spirit now that's the light that's the light see many people that go under the christian name and consider that they are great witnesses for god are very lacking in the true spirit of christ we would be judged of no man in that matter except that we judge ourselves in the matter but this is the light the spirit of a man now then let your light so shine before men that they may be see your good works and bring glory unto your father which is in heaven so that he might seek a godly seed wherein the light of the grace of god may be observed then the light is as it were disseminated now do you know have you ever seen a person a godly person they haven't been a person of many words but will you not say that you knew they were a christian their very soul seemed to ooze it as it were it was not what they said but it was what they their general deportment and their general concern and the odd word here and there in respect to their desires of the soul and furthermore their separation from an ungodly world that he might seek a godly seed to be a witness and to be a light ye are as light shining in dark places well we live in a dark place in this present evil world don't we now may our souls be exercised in respect to this as whether our spirits our spirits glorify our

father which is in heaven this will take us into a number of things those of us that may be called upon to speak in public prayer what about the light shining there does it shine you can't see it you're not intended to see it the candle doesn't know the effect of its light but those that see the light know what it affects not what effect it has and it will be good if the spirit of prayer granted to you sometimes will be a light to people well what are they going to do are they going to say isn't that man wonderful hasn't he got a wonderful gift no they're going to say this when that man prays it draws my soul to Christ when that man prays it makes me fall down and feel the spirit of repentance before Christ that man's light shining and glorifying his father which is in heaven or we might well examine ourselves and desire fervently that such spirit of prayer and supplication might be granted to us that our light may so shine even when we stand up in public prayer but then this godly seed will be blessed with that sometimes and the more wretched you are in yourself the more likely the light is to shine the harder you smite upon your breast and the more feelingly you cry out

God be merciful to me a sinner will make your light shine much the greater because it will draw your very soul unto the Lord Jesus Christ and the people will see it and they will have their souls drawn out unto the Lord Jesus Christ and I if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me what does light do well it attracts it attracts is the spirit of Christ in us that it attracts people on the other hand it turns others away you may think that's strange but that's true we read in the word of God that the righteous or the godly they come to the light that their deeds may be reprov'd but those that are of an ungodly scene they turn away from the light lest their deeds be reprov'd they prefer the realms of darkness now it is good then if we are drawn to the light now the psalmist was drawn to the light when he said search me and cry me and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting the way everlasting is the

Lord Jesus Christ so then it will be a very solemn moment for us if we say to the Lord now search me and try me and see if there is any wicked way in me and then the Lord answers that prayer and he shows you this sin and that sin and the other sin and eventually you say our staggering faith gives way to doubt our courage yields to fear shock to the sight we straight cry out could ever God dwell here and are you going to remain there can you remain there will you not more fervently say lead me in the way everlasting bring everything to light my sins to light but also bring my salvation to light and bring thy love to light and bring thy mercy to light and bring my truth to light but in these things being brought to the light I may indeed have that good hope that the

Lord has died for me that he might seek a godly seed now you see the seed being the seed of God will indeed be attracted to God have we the godly seed that desires to serve him with reverence and godly fear as we have it in the Hebrews and the basis of it you know was not very solid and very real wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved that is the kingdom of God set up in our hearts by the holy ghost let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear for our God is a consuming fire that he might seek a godly seed may the Lord have mercy upon us and deal graciously with us and bless that which has been according to his will and pardon all that has been wrong for his name's sake amen