

Taking God for Granted

Instead of honoring me, you profane me. You profane me when you say, "Worship is not important, and what we bring to worship is of no account." **—Malachi 1:12, The Message**

The expression "to take for granted" means to be so sure of having something that we no longer appreciate it. That is what this passage is about.

The thing that particularly grips me about this passage is that God notices. These professional clergymen had actually given God animals they couldn't use themselves. They thought that God wouldn't notice and didn't care. But He did notice. He sees everything we do.

This word is not just for preachers; it is for every believer, because every believer is part of the body of Christ. God not only noticed what was happening, but He also was angry about it. He didn't let the priests get away with what they were doing, and He won't let us get away with taking Him for granted either.

How do we know God was upset with them for taking Him for granted? He felt so strongly about it that He said He would prefer that the doors of the church were closed than for this mockery to continue. "Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires upon my altar!" (Mal. 1:10).

If you are engaged in ministry, whether you are a deacon or involved in children's work, doing the flowers or sweeping the floors, and you are saying, "What a burden," and you are bored with it, don't you realize what a privilege God has given to you to do anything in His name?

You will never be a Christian until you come to the place where you recognize that, far from being able to do anything

for God, you don't deserve the least of His grace. As long as you feel you deserve better from God than He has given you, you are not saved. The people who are saved are those who realize they were lost and on their road to hell when God stopped them in their tracks and showed them that Jesus died for them. When the Holy Spirit showed them their sin, the last thought in their minds was that they could do God a favor! And what a warning to us.

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