



Finding Courage to Escape Apathy

July 26, 2020

Sermon Discussion Guide

Around 400 years before Jesus' birth, the Lord sent Malachi (my messenger) to confront the Israelites regarding their spiritual apathy despite their recent recommitment to follow his ways. Spiritual apathy is just going through the motions. It is like telling God "I don't care" or "that doesn't matter" when it comes to you or your ways. As a result, we get trapped in a season where we lose closeness with God and our sense of purpose becomes unclear.

In Malachi 1, we learn that we can escape the trap of apathy in two ways. First, we remember the love of God. The Israelites had become cynical about his love, so God showed them the proof of his love through his fulfillment of the covenant with Jacob (Israel) and the destruction of Esau's descendants (Edomites). And we too should remember his love when we are apathetic. The truth is, He loves and cares for us even when we don't and his love is certain when we doubt.

Secondly, we should give God our best. The Israelites had been giving second rate and even last rate sacrifices to the Lord. So, the challenge for us today is that we cannot expect for our lives and our walk with God to be different if we are indifferent. In view of his love and mercies, we should offer him our very lives (Rom. 12:1-2) as a living sacrifice. We joyfully give him our first and best because he gave us his one and only on the cross.

HIGHLIGHT

- **Read the Text.** Malachi 1
- **Look for Highlights** - As the text is read, tell the group to be looking out for the highlights (a particular verse, something new learned, a reminder, a question, etc.)

EXPLAIN

- To whom was it originally written? Why?
- How does it fit with the verses before and after it?
- What is the Holy Spirit intending to communicate through this text?

APPLY

- What does this mean today?
- What is God saying to you personally?
- How can you apply this message to your life?

RESPOND

- In what ways does this passage call you to action?
- How will you be different because of what you've learned?

- What is a prayer to God in response to what you read today?