

RELIGIOUS BOREDOM

Text: Malachi 1:11-13

INTRO: Malachi finds it necessary to try to deal with one of the most difficult problems a preacher or teacher can wrestle with--trying to spark an interest in those who are bored. When entertainer Pat Boone began to make his exit from the Lord's church, he talked about how boring the worship services were.

I. BOREDOM IS A SEVERE LIABILITY.

A. Some few may look upon it as a mark of sophistication, feeling a need to dampen any spark of enthusiasm on the part of those around them.

B. Some preachers/teachers may lose their own enthusiasm and in turn, promote a lack of enthusiasm among their listeners. Preacher drones on. Little boy asks mother what he is talking about. She says he's praying for those who died in the service...

C. Religious boredom is a liability because it takes all the joy out of serving God. Christians ought to be the happiest people in the world.

1. Forgiveness of sins.
2. Hope of everlasting life.
3. Knowledge that our prayers are heard by an all knowing, all powerful, loving heavenly Father.

4. We have the privilege of knowing & being associated with some of the best people on earth.

D. Boredom is a liability because it causes us to waste our energies and resources trying to amuse ourselves.

For all the Athenians & the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. (Acts 17:21).

...Ever learning & never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Tim.3:7).

E. Boredom is a sure & certain road to spiritual death.

1. Whenever you lose the joy of your salvation you have lost or are jeopardizing that salvation itself.

2. When you lose all enthusiasm for pleasing God, you have ceased or will soon cease to please Him.

READ I CORINTHIANS 11:29-30.

F. Religious boredom is a liability because it mars our influence. Family, Friends, Neighbors, etc. When rain keeps you from worship on Sunday, but not from work on Monday, don't you think your children & your neighbors are smart enough to figure out where your priorities are? Don't you think God is smart enough to do so? Late for work every day?

II. SOME OF THE CAUSES OF BOREDOM.

NOTE: The people of Malachi's day had not abandoned religion altogether--but Oh, what a weariness! How did it get to be that way?

A. They had chosen a cheap & convenient religion.

1. Offered defiled food. READ 1:7-8, 13-14.

2. Withheld the tithe. READ 3:8-9.

3. Substituted ritual for right living. READ 2:13-16.

1 Sam. 15:22

NOTE: Whoever else was there when you said your marriage vows, God was a witness. He heard your vows. He is interested that those vows be kept. He hates the breaking of those vows. He hates divorce.

4. They put their own pleasure ahead of pleasing God. Why did the Israelites worship a golden calf? Because they wanted to. Why did the Samaritans build a temple on Mt. Gerizim & worship there? Because they wanted to. Why do some

people today substitute sprinkling for baptism, a social gospel for Christ's gospel, & the church of their choice for the church Christ died for? Because they want to! But the person who seeks primarily to amuse & please himself at God's expense is sure to continue to come up short & find his efforts unrewarding, unfulfilling, unsatisfying--even boring.

5. Indeed, the people of Malachi's day had come to find their religion unfulfilling & unsatisfying.
READ 3:14

6. Another problem that causes spiritual boredom is an inflated sense of one's own knowledge. When you think you already know all you need to know, it stifles reading, studying, & listening to the teaching of God's word. A preacher I have read after tells of attending the performance of a piano concert artist with a 4 year old boy.

III. HOW CAN WE ESCAPE OR OVERCOME SPIRITUAL BOREDOM?

A. By recognizing it as a problem. Not an asset. A liability.

B. By facing the fact that what we lack in spirituality cannot be made up for in pursuing other matters. Making more money. Achieving more prestige, earning your doctorate, driving a newer, sportier, flashier car--or even finding a church that pleases us.

C. We must seek to please God. Not half way, but all the way. Attend Bible classes, gospel meetings, etc.

D. Be interested in your own soul and in the souls of others. More interested in your soul than your suit or your Chevy. More interested in your neighbor's soul than in his money or his joy or any of his possessions.

E. Seek to spur your enthusiasm by being more active in worship and in godly living. Don't think about visiting

the sick or the shut-ins. Do it. Don't think about calling a friend or neighbor. Do it. Don't think about sending a get well or sympathy card. Do it. Don't think about talking with someone about the Lord. Do it. Don't wish someone would say Amen! Do it.

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, November 27, 1994
Wrightsville, PA, July 13, 1995 (meeting)
Fairfield, PA, March 25, 2001