

Post-Exile Prophets
WORD TO LEADERS
Saturday, October 4
Reading: Malachi 2:4-7

Malachi 2:7 *"For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth."*

In the middle of His warning to the priests, God gives us an example of what a godly leader should look like. God chose the tribe of Levi to be His special possession. Instead of getting a portion of the Promised Land, God said that He Himself was their portion and inheritance (Numbers 18:20; Deuteronomy 18:1-2; Joshua 13:33). They were blessed by serving God and serving the rest of the nation.

God said His covenant with Levi would bring "life and peace" (2:5a). By their actions and teaching, the tribe of Levi brought people into peace with God that would bring them real life. In the New Testament, we are told that this happens when we submit our lives to the Spirit's control. "The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). A godly leader is one who leads people to a right relationship with God.

Godly leaders also show proper reverence and honor to the Lord (2:5b). To "stand in awe" comes from the Hebrew root word meaning 'to shatter.' Serving a holy God should shatter our pride and selfishness. It should cause us to bow before Him and serve Him with reverent fear and pure motives.

Godly leaders teach the truth of God's Word without twisting or corrupting it (2:6a). They do not teach simply what the people want to hear but deliver the whole council of God. They teach what the people NEED to hear, not necessarily what they WANT to hear. They preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Godly leaders walk with God (2:6b). This pictures a steady, consistent lifestyle, following the Lord's lead. In the New Testament, we are told to walk worthy of the Lord (Colossians 1:10), walk by the Spirit, (Galatians 5:16), walk in the way of love (Ephesians 5:2), walk in the light (1 John 1:7), walk in truth (2 John 1:4), and walk in obedience (2 John 1:6). These should be displayed in every Christian's life – but especially in the lives of leaders. Many people will turn from their sin when they see your godly example.

Godly leaders should be diligent to preserve the knowledge of God's Word and way (2:7). True leaders never stop learning and growing in their love and service for God. They strive to know, understand, and apply God's Word daily. This will draw people to come and get help when they have questions and needs in their lives.

In one sense, every believer is a priest. We can all come boldly before God's throne through Jesus Christ. But Christian leaders have a special calling and greater responsibility before God. He has called us to teach, influence, and be an example to those He has placed under our care so that they can grow and live for God. Church leaders: read these verses from Paul to "Pastor Timothy" – 1 Timothy 4:11-13. For the rest of us: read Hebrews 13:7, 15-18 and think about how you can help your leaders in their God-given task.