

Weariness in Well Doing - Malachi 1:13

CHA-754 (Mal #10)

I. Introduction:

- A. I don't know if it is true of every pastor, but this pastor has been getting unsolicited suggestions to buy stuff.
1. And one which has come up recently, over & over again, are materials dealing with *“ministerial burn-out.”*
 2. *“Ministerial burn-out”* is a term which others have called *“Pastoral Fatigue,”* or *“Spiritual Workers Weariness.”*
 3. Spurgeon in his *“Lectures to My Students”* called it *“The Minister's Fainting Fits.”*
 4. There are days, weeks and whole months when the man of God may be ready to quit the ministry.
 - a. It may seem like he's spinning his wheels and accomplishing nothing for either God or his church.
 - b. He may feel spiritually drained; his spiritual gas tank is empty.
 - c. God has put him on the shelf, and he's looking down on the world which is passing him by.
 5. I haven't bought any of those books, because it's been a long time since I have had one of those fainting fits.
- B. I will not say that this the same thing as what we find in *verse 13*, but it is related.
1. Let's consider that word *“weariness”* this evening.
 2. God said, *“Ye have profaned (my name), in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a WEARINESS is it!”*
 3. Did you know that this word is found in one form or another more than sixty times, and several of them are fairly well-known New Testament scriptures?
 4. We can conclude that weariness, whether ministerial or otherwise, is apparently fairly common.
 5. And, by the way, the Lord even uses it of Himself, and He certainly could have here in *Malachi 1*.
- C. It seems to me that beyond that of the Lord, there are four forms of weariness in the Bible and sometimes in us.
1. There is *physical* fatigue, which can include a weariness *of life itself*.
 2. There is *emotional* weariness, and then there are *two forms of spiritual weariness*.
 3. What I'd like to do is bring each of these to your attention, considering their cause and potential solution.
 4. In the course of our study we'll come back to the weariness of these priests in Malachi's day.

II. As we are all aware there is such a thing as *PHYSICAL* weariness.

- A. I said a few moments ago that there are two well-known scriptures which use the word *“weary.”*
1. They sound almost alike, but in fact they are quite different.
 2. Please turn to *II Thessalonians 3*, and let's begin reading in *verse 11*.
 3. Speaking of himself, Paul says, *“We behaved not ourselves disorderly among you.”*
 - a. *“We hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all but are busybodies.”*
 - b. *Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*
 - c. *But ye, brethren be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man have no company with thim, that he may be ashamed.”*
 4. What is the context of *verse 13*? *“But ye, brethren be not weary in well doing.”*
 5. Isn't it referring to physical labor?
- B. I am not going to belabor this point, because we are all familiar with it.
1. It is possible and common to work hard enough that by the end of the day, we are weary; exhausted.
 2. It is not a bad thing. It's commendable, and good for us.
 3. It is usually beneficial and healthful, giving us appetites and the ability to sleep well.
 4. Eating and sleeping are important so that the next day we can get back to the work of well doing.

III. A second form of weariness, I will categorize as *EMOTIONAL*.

- A. And before I go on, we should notice that there is an overlapping of each of these categories.
1. Weariness of the body can have a deleterious effect on the spirit.
 2. And emotional weariness and dangerously affect the body.
 3. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between emotional and spiritual weariness.
- B. A couple weeks ago we spent some time considering *Jacob* and *Esau*.
1. If you ever want to study what an *ideal Christian family is NOT* – consider the family of Isaac, Rebekah and the boys.
 2. By the grace of God twins were brought into the world through Rebekah, but from the moment of their birth those boys were at odds with each other.
 3. Not only did *they* compete, but their parents chose sides in that competition – Isaac particularly loved Esau and Rebekah preferred Jacob.
 4. Things escalated until one day the hatred of Esau spilled out. He said, *“When our father is dead, I am going to kill Jacob, because he has stolen the blessing which was due to me.”*
 5. That hatred & other things in the lives of the boys drove his mother to say to Isaac, *“I am weary of my life.”*
 6. The stress and strain on the family had Rebekah ready to pull out her hair. *“I am weary of my life.”*
- C. Another example of this emotional weariness can be seen in poor *Job*.
1. That righteous man had been put through the wringer.
 2. There had been *so* much loss in his life. He had lost everything. Including his health.
 3. He was in extreme physical pain.
 4. By *chapter 10* he was saying, *“My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.”*
 5. Both Job’s body and soul were worn out. He was weary of life itself.
- D. As I was thinking about this subject, I jotted down some of the things which might produce any one of these four kinds of weariness.
1. I didn’t apply them to physical weariness because they are so obvious, but they apply to the others as well.
 2. See if you agree with me.
 3. Both Job and Rebekah had come to the point of *emotional exhaustion*.
 - a. It is possible to fight and struggle with our own emotions, sometimes winning the battle, but often losing until there is no more strength to fight. *“I am weary of my life.”*
 - b. Job was a good man and undoubtedly a great saint, as we see when his trials started to fall on him.
 - c. We can see it in *Job 1:21*: *“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed by the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”*
 - d. But eventually he was emotionally and spiritually exhausted. *“My soul is weary of my life.”*
- E. Other things which can cause weariness are *stress* and constant *conflict*.
1. These appear to be part of the atmosphere in the household of Isaac and Rebekah.
 2. And in Job’s case there was the exhaustion brought on by pain and sickness.
 3. Some of you know full-well how hard it is to even get to bed after a day of arthritis or back pain.
 4. And it’s not just physical weariness, it’s emotional, sometimes making you hard to live with.

IV. The third and fourth kinds of weariness are *SPIRITUAL*.

- A. And even though you might disagree, these are the worst and most destructive.
1. For lack of another term, I'll call the first, *positive spiritual weariness*.
 2. This takes us back to Spurgeon's "*Minister's fainting fits*," and ministerial burnout.
 3. It is quite possible for anyone, including the man of God, to become so involved in his life, or his ministry, that he neglects to feed his own soul.
 4. As he grows weaker and weaker in spirit, the more the pressures and problems of the ministry take their toll.
 5. Again, stress can cause this weariness, and so can conflict between brethren and attacks against himself.
 6. In *II Corinthians 11*, Paul recounts some of the problems he had faced in the ministry.
 7. Among everything else, "*in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often.*"
 8. And to be quite frank the constant need for another message, four message a week, can further drain his strength. Repetition causes fatigue; even spiritual weariness.
- B. There are *parallel solutions* for each of these wearinesses: physical, emotional and spiritual.
1. For example, *a good diet* is essential to keep the body functioning at peak efficiency.
 2. And a good diet is important to combat emotional fatigue as well.
 3. A hearty laugh is sunshine to the soul; it is fuel to the spirit; it can energize the heart.
 4. And joy; reading a good book on salvation or the nature of God can fill your soul with joy.
- C. Of course, *rest* is an important solution to any kind of weariness, even the spiritual kind.
1. Don't be upset if you find the pastor out fishing, or gardening, or hiking, or some other non-essential.
 2. He's not trying to feed his family with that fish; he's resting. And it is sometimes really important.
 3. And by the way, don't get angry with him if you find him reading a secular novel once in a while.
 4. Sometimes after reading a dozen books on theology, his weary brain just needs a rest.
- D. For all these four wearinesses, *companions* and *helpers* are important.
1. That was part of the weariness of Job. When his neighbors came to comfort him, he found them worthless.
 2. No matter what the circumstances, when the load is heavy, someone to help lift the burden can be an enormous blessing.
 3. It can forgo, lift or alleviate physical, emotional and even spiritual weariness.
- E. Of course, when we are talking about spiritual weariness, our *greatest resource* is *the Lord*.
1. David was full of praise to God in *Psalms 138* when he said, "*In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedest me with strength in my soul.*"
 2. And when Paul was weary with the thorn in his flesh, he found the grace of God sufficient to strengthen and help him.
 3. Later he could say, "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*" (*I Cor. 15:58*).
 4. Look to the Lord Jesus, not only as King of kings, but also as God's Servant of servants and "*consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind*" (*Hebrews 12:3*).
- F. It is not unusual for any child of God to grow weary in his work of love.
1. We are so few in midst of an army of unbelievers and enemy.
 2. And in ourselves we are so weak in comparison to Satan's powerful tools in so many areas of society.

3. The Lord told *Isaiah* to comfort those souls in Israel who were weary in their spiritual warfare – *Isaiah 40:1*.
 - a. God told His prophet to remind them that Jehovah was the sovereign God.
 - b. He *“bringeth the princes to to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.”*
 - c. *“To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? Saith the Holy One.”*
 - d. *“Lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things...”*
 - e. *“Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD the creator of the ends of the earth faitheth not, neither is WEARY?”*
 - f. And then *verse 31*: *“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”*

- G. There is a spiritual weariness which comes with living the Christian life. Anyone can experience it.
 1. It was particularly common and devastating for people like Jeremiah, for Elijah, for Moses.
 2. But there are solutions, and the greatest of them is the Lord Himself.
 3. We can take all the artificial stimulants money can buy, but every saint of God needs a daily, a constant diet of the Lord.

V. And with that we return to the weariness which we find in *Malachi 1*.

- A. Again, it is spiritual, but it is not the result of hard work in the vineyard of the Lord. This is evil.
 1. *“Ye have profaned (my name), in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a WEARINESS is it!”*
 2. Like any of the other varieties of weariness, *illness* can be its cause.
 - a. In this case, I refer to doctrinal and spiritual illness.
 - b. If the man of God becomes addicted to some sin, it will eat away at his soul and his service.
 - c. It will become hard or impossible to offer the people’s sacrifices to God.
 - d. Certain false doctrines can encourage a spiritual infection which will produce the same effect.
 3. And *Jeremiah 9:5* speaks about people wearying themselves to commit sin.
- B. In Malachi’s day, both the priests and the people of Israel were guilty, infecting and re-infecting one another.
 1. It became wearisome to offer the two daily sacrifices, morning and evening, day after day.
 2. And it also became wearisome for the people to bring the sin and trespass burnt offerings.
 3. What point was there in bringing sacrifices to go along with special vows and promises?
 4. What good was it doing? What improvements did it make in their lives?
 5. It seemed that just about everyone was blind to the blessings of sanctified service to the Lord.
- C. This weariness in their religious practice was rooted in sin and bad theology.
 1. Both people and priest had corrupted the doctrine of the blood atonement.
 2. They seem to have decided that once they were saved they could sin with impunity.
 3. They were, at least at heart, bringing the offerings of Cain to the Lord’s altar.
 4. There was no faith, no joy, no sacrifice in their sacrifices, and *“whatsoever is not faith is sin.”*
 5. *“Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?”* (*Isaiah 7:13*).
 6. In *Jeremiah* the Lord told Israel that He was sending His ambassadorial judges, adding *“I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in.”*

- D. When God's people grow weary in well doing, the Lord can be patient and remedial.
1. But when they grow weary of the Lord Himself...
 - a. When they get weary of hearing the truths of God's word...
 - b. When they are tired *OF* their service, rather than *IN* their service, then they can expect to feel the backhand of the Lord's anger.
 2. It is a disastrous thing to be cursed by the Lord.
- E. There was a curse upon those people who were weary of worship, weary of hearing the voice of God, weary of trying to bring glory to His name.
1. And as I said last week, it is a disastrous thing to be force to one's knees before the great King, the One whose name is dreadful among the heathen.
 2. As Paul said in **Galatians 6:** *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*
 3. *For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*
 4. *And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faith not."*