

The Lips of a Priest; Malachi 2:7

I. Priests

- A. Malachi 2:1–2 (ESV); ¹ “And now, O priests, this command is for you. ² If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the Lord of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart.
 - 1. God is rebuking the Levitical priesthood
 - 2. “Levi had been set over the Church, not to apply to himself the honour due to God, but to stand in his own place as the minister of God, and the teacher of the chosen people.” ¹
- B. We are priests — all of us!
 - 1. Revelation 1:5–6 (ESV); ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
 - 2. By virtue of Kingdom citizenship we are priests
 - 3. 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV); But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- C. In Malachi 2:7 God gives his priests responsibilities — to guard knowledge, to give instruction, and to be God’s messengers

II. Guard Knowledge

- A. Knowledge is subject to the whims of those who give it
 - 1. We are seeing this today in many forms — one is the media
 - 2. They only tell you what they want you to know and spin it to their own ideology
 - 3. All three branches of government are guilty of selectively giving us knowledge
 - 4. It no longer takes days or weeks news stories to break
 - 5. We are in the days of immediate news — even before all the facts have been established
 - a) During the day of and following Sept 11, 2001 all the news channels played the videos on a loop
 - b) To fill air time the news anchors had to give their opinions of what happened, they had to make guesses of what could have, might have, or should have happened
- B. We have the complete story
 - 1. It is our job to protect the facts of the event and to proclaim them accurately
 - 2. 2 Corinthians 5:19 (ESV); ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
 - 3. 1 Timothy 6:20–21 (ESV); ²⁰ O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” ²¹ for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.
 - 4. 2 Timothy 1:13–14 (ESV); ¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.
- C. It is our duty as Christians to guard the word of God — to “rightly divide” the Scriptures

III. Give Instruction

- A. Deuteronomy 33:10 (ESV); They shall teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar.

¹ John Calvin and John Owen, Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets, vol. 5 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 527.

- B. Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (ESV); ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- C. The New Testament letters are instructions to different congregations (and some individual people) throughout Asia and Europe
1. Each book bears the name of the congregation or person being taught (or doing the teaching)
 2. 1 Corinthians — divisiveness, worldly versus Godly wisdom, stewardship of God’s word, sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage and divorce, food offered to idols, idolatry, the Lord’s Supper, and love
 3. 1 Corinthians 10:11 (ESV); Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.
 4. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV); ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- D. It is our duty as Christians to encourage and instruct our Brothers and Sisters
- IV. God’s Messenger
- A. 2 Corinthians 5:19–20 (ESV); ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
- B. “Certainly, it is a fact now that if one is to communicate the knowledge of God effectively to anyone else, it must be done by one who himself is a sincere and faithful worshipper at the Throne, and who lives in full consciousness of the presence of God in his life. In the holy religion of Christ, however, there is no distinguishable priesthood apart from the rank and file of all Christians, who alike, are ‘kings and priests unto God.’” ²
- C. We have to be serious about our role as messengers of God
1. We would rather sit in the pews and listen instead of taking a more active role
 2. We are not listeners, we are messengers (the exact opposite)
 3. People should watch and hear us and be able to see the Living God in us (when people see you, what do they see?)
 4. And in seeing God, they are given an opportunity to become His children
 5. My role here, as a herald, is to encourage you to live as messengers of the Father
- D. “They were [we are] to be God’s messengers. They were [we are] not free to devise or fashion their own message to suit their own whims or to fit in with the times.” ³
1. The message has been given to us
 2. We don’t need to figure it out
 3. We just need to deliver it
 4. In every word, in every action, we must remember that we are ambassadors for God through Christ

² Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on Malachi 2:7". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/malachi-2.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

³ Roger Ellsworth, Opening up Malachi, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2007), 46.

- 5. We must constantly question our words and actions knowing that we will be called to account for them
- E. Matthew 12:36–37 (ESV); ³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”
- V. The Lips of a Priest
 - A. Guard Knowledge
 - B. Give Instruction
 - C. God’s messenger