

Malachi 1:6-14

Are We Cheating God?

Does anyone here deliberately cheat God? Do you intentionally do things that you knowingly cheat God out of something? Can we cheat God out of anything? Is it possible to do things that God would call cheating Him? I believe we can and do cheat God, both consciously and unconsciously. The prophet Malachi told the Children of Israel that they were cheating God all the time. Look at what God told Israel through Malachi. Turn to chapter 1 verses 6 thru 14.

Here Malachi tells us six things that God expects of Christians. There is an order to these, because if you don't do the first, then you can't do the second, or third, or fourth, etc.

- I. ***God expects Honor.*** - vs. 6-7 God reminds us that even in a human relationship we are commanded to honor those over us. Specifically our mothers and fathers, or masters and bosses. Eph. 6:1-3 Yet, because of the problem the Jews were having with their sacrifices, God accused them of not showing honor to Him. Likewise, we as Christians should always show honor to God. Do we ever not give God honor? How do we do that? What can be done to correct it?
- II. ***God expects our best*** - vs. 8 God rebukes the priests and tells them they are guilty of sin because of their evil sacrifices. They were giving leftovers and less than perfect animals as sacrifices. Ex. 25:1-4; Eph. 6:5-8, 2 Tim. 4:7, Gal. 2:20
- III. ***God expects acceptable offerings*** - vs. 9-10 God has never accepted less than he commanded. Cain's offering was not accepted by God because of his attitude, not the offering itself. Luke 18:10-14
- IV. ***God expects us to Worship Him*** - vs. 11 We are commanded to worship and praise His name. That is why we were created. To worship God Almighty. Phil. 2:9-11 We will all worship and bow down one day.
- V. ***God expects diligent service*** - vs. 12-13 These folks were lazy here. They sacrificed stolen goods and animals, and animals who were sick. God also requires us to give of ourselves unconditionally and without

reservation to the service of God. He expects us to live out our Christian life as a testimony to Him. [James 2:17-18](#)

VI. ***God expects us to keep our promises*** - [vs. 14](#) The men were promising God the best of what they had, but were giving much less. Only promise God things you can keep.

Look at the progression of these things.

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| First, | We fail to give God honor and His rightful place in our lives. |
| Second, | We can't give God our best if we don't honor Him and desire to live for Him. |
| Third, | Nothing we try to give God is acceptable if our lives and hearts are not right with God. We will be like Cain. |
| Fourth, | We fail to worship God. It is hard to worship God when you are out of fellowship with Him. |
| Fifth, | If we are out of fellowship with God and if we aren't giving God our best or giving Him the honor he deserves, then our service will be lacking and subject to our convenience schedule. |
| Last, | But not least, if we fail to honor God, or give Him our best, or give him an acceptable offering, and do not worship Him as we should, which leads to poor or no service to Him. Then we have failed to keep a promise to obey God and keep His commandments. God commands us to be “. . . living and holy sacrifices to God . . . “
Romans 12:1 |