

How Do Christians Rob God?

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➤ Intro:

- **400 years before Christ**, recorded in the last book of the OT, **God accused Israel of robbing Him**

- **Mal. 3:8** God said, “You are robbing Me!”

- How Do Christians Rob God?

- learn from the mistakes of Israel, so we don't rob God as they did – **Rom. 15:4** written for our instruction

- We rob God by **withholding the service and worship He deserves!** – rob Him when we sin
 - **Mal. 2:7-9** (corrupt priesthood), **14-16** (divorce); **3:7-8** Israel robbed God by sinning, not reverencing Him to serve as commanded
- - **rob:** (one of many definitions) **to deprive of something due, expected, or desired** (Merriam-Webster)
 - **illus.: story, an employer** who doesn't pay an employee, robs him of wages – **Ja. 5**
 - **illus.: story, a homeowner** who doesn't pay his mortgage, robs the bank of money owed
- - **when we withhold the worship and service God deserves, we rob Him**
 - **Rom. 12:1b** . . . present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your **reasonable service**. (NKJV)
 - **illus.: story, man revels in the passing pleasures of sin**, not obey God, robs god
 - like the rich man who ignored Lazarus, not like Moses
 - **illus.: story, Christian gets up on Sunday morning and goes fishing** rather than church, robs God
 - **illus.: story, Christian, stays out late Sat. night, sleeps during church**, robs God
- - **unauthorized use of the church, robs God of service and worship**
 - **1 Tim. 3:15** God owns the church, Jesus purchased it with **blood**
 - **1 Cor. 4:6; Col. 3:17; 2 Jn. 1:9** **any unauthorized use of the church robs God, deprives God of it's use, and the service and worship He deserves**
 - **illus.: Matt. 21:12-13** **Jews made temple a den of robbers by unauthorized use**
 - church is a temple (1 Cor. 3:16)
- - **unauthorized use of our lives, robs God of service and worship** – body is a temple
- - **1 Cor. 6:19-20** our **bodies / lives belong to God** – **1 Pet. 1:18-19**
 - **any unauthorized use robs God, deprives Him of their use, and the service and worship He deserves**
 - **illus.: parable of the laborers** (Matt. 20:1-16) landowner hired laborers who agreed to work for the day for a denarius – **God has the right to do what he wants**
 - **hired some early in the morning, then more** at the 3rd, 6th, 9th, and 11th hours
 - **end of the day, landowner paid all the laborers the same**, those who had worked all day cf. those who had worked just an hour or two
 - **the people who had worked all day complained** that they weren't paid more, since they worked more
 - **landowner replied:** “Is it not **lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own?** Or is your eye envious because I am generous?”
- **God has the right to do whatever he wants with His church, and with our lives**
 - **when we do things He hasn't commanded, we deprive Him of use, and rob Him**
 - **illus.: unauthorized use of the computer** at work, robs our employer
 - **illus.: unauthorized use of our parent's car**, robs our parents
- **Are you robbing God of the worship and service He deserves?**

- **We rob God by rendering second-rate service!** – inferior, mediocre service
 - **Mal. 1:7-8, 13** Israel giving God less than our best (disobeying), thereby **robbing God**
- **- We are commanded to give our best:**
 - **Rom. 12:11** not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit – on fire for the Lord, doing His work
 - **Tit. 2:14** zealous for good deeds – energetically and enthusiastically working as Christians
 - **Col. 1:10** walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work – God requires our best
 - **Rev. 3:15-16** Jesus detests lukewarm Christians
- **illus.: caring for children without parents** – giving our best to God – **fervent, zealous**
 - went to a party at a house owned by a couple in their 60s, hardly knew
 - saw the pool with toys in it and remarked that they it **must be for their grandchildren**
 - someone told me it was for their daughter and motioned across the room, where I saw an **adult woman** on the couch
 - a little later I heard someone talking about the **8 year old girl** who was at the party, who had been sitting beside the **adult woman** on the couch, she was the **8 year old daughter of the couple in their 60s**
 - **thought about: they weren't "wasting" their time like many older couples**, consumed with recreation rather than "good works"
 - **though about: the couple adopting a child later in life**, and it encouraged me that I may be able to do something **extraordinary** one day too, if I have **enough faith**
 - **at the end of the party**, I caught the **father** alone, and **told him** how great it was that they adopted a girl later in their life
 - **he told me they had been her foster parents since she as 5 days old**, and then **adopted her**, it's **what we're suppose to do** - "**James 1:27**" he said
 - **How many of us give God second best, deceiving ourselves** into thinking it's really the best we have?
 - **How many of us have the faith to adopt a parentless child**, later in life, giving up the **golden years**, to do God's work?
 - **How much are we willing to freely give of ourselves, to do more of God's work** in our lives?
- **illus.: helping Christians in need** – giving our best to God – **fervent and zealous vs. lukewarm**
 - **Ja. 1:27** benevolence test – there are basically **2 types of Christians: What type are you?**
 - those who **diligently seek to help** other Christians (e.g., elderly)
 - those who **seldom help** other Christians (e.g., elderly)
 - **scheduling priority, allocating time:**
 - **Irene's last birthday:** one woman stopped on way to work with gifts, another woman went by on lunch hour with gifts, another family had her over for dinner, others may have called or stopped
 - for some it was a priority for the day, for others it wasn't
 - **Why do some people make it a priority and some don't?** – redeem the time, stewardship
 - **issue of sacrificing self: some do, some don't** – **Rom. 12:1**
 - **one day I stopped by an elderly members's house**, one of the busiest ladies in the congregation who had the heaviest burden of life was there, cleaning the kitchen
 - **sacrificing: time, money, self**
- **- Are you giving God your best? Or, are you robbing God by withholding your best?** - rendering second-rate service?
 - **assembly, worship, Bible class, personal Bible study and development, personal work, light to the**

world, family, work, school, benevolence – fervent and zealous vs. lukewarm
- it's about making decisions, giving God your best, all the time

➤ **God curses people who rob Him**

- **Mal 3:9; 4:1** God curses those who rob Him, punished for eternity unless they repent

- **illus.: parable talents**

- man went on a long journey and gave his slaves talents: 5, 2, 1

- 5 and 2 talent slaves served their master faithfully, doubled their talent

- rewarded: entered joy of their master

- 1 talent slave robbed his master, didn't work because he was wicked and lazy, didn't even put \$ in the back to gain interest

- punished: cast into outer darkness, where weeping and gnashing of teeth

➤ - **If you are robbing God of the service and worship He deserves:**

- you are wicked and lazy!

- you'll be punished in hell!

➤ **Summary . Inv.**

- **Mal. 4:2-3** those who repent from robbing God, will be blessed for eternity, rejoice in Christ for eternity, victorious over sin and evil in the kingdom of the Lord

- **illus.: parable of the talents**

➤ - **If you repent from robbing Him, you'll be rewarded with a home in heaven! – Rom. 3:23**

- not a question of whether you've robbed God, only a question of whether you've repented

- **inv.:** if you are robbing God of the service and worship He deserves (requires), repent, obey, be saved