

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 11TH-12TH // BOOK OF MALACHI

TIRED (MALACHI 2:17-3:6)

WEARIED GOD?

Though God is loving and patient, humanity can exhaust God's patience and grace by saying, "Everyone who does what is evil is good in the Lord's sight," and when we claim God is being unjust. **Perpetually turning a blind eye to sin leads God to give us over to a depraved mind (Rom. 1:28).**

CLAIMING TO KNOW BETTER ALSO WEARS HIM OUT

When people are so self-righteous that they claim to know justice better than God, this also "wears" Him.

- **We need to be careful and trust God's timetable more than our own. If we don't, we will become entitled, impatient, arrogant, and selfish.** All things God warns us not to be.

THE GOD OF JUSTICE IS ALWAYS ON TIME

V 3:1-3 give us amazing predictions of both Jesus' 1st and 2nd comings and John the Baptist that will prepare humanity for His 1st coming.

- The prophecy of the Savior coming has been communicated to humanity since the beginning but **we so easily forget the promises of God.**

JESUS' COMING DIDN'T EXCITE EVERYONE

To the corrupt priests of Malachi's time, the knowledge that God was coming to earth scared them because they disrespected the temple and lived hypocritically.

- This begs the question, **how do we feel about Christ's 2nd coming? Are we longing for the day or terrified that our hearts will be exposed?**

"FOR HE WILL BE LIKE A REFINER'S FIRE"

A relationship with God has always been a life-changing interaction, but the coming of God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, will usher in an even deeper and more intimate experience with God.

- A refining fire **brings the impurities up to the surface so the refiner can wipe them away and make the gold pure.** This is what God does with us.

WITH HIS HELP, WE HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER

If we will be humble and let the Refiner do His job in our lives, we can "present offerings to the Lord in righteousness" and "please the Lord as in the days of old."

- **Without God we have nothing to offer Him or the world around us, but with Him we are set apart for great works!**

"WHO CAN ENDURE THE DAY OF HIS COMING?"

God says that He is "ready to be a witness against sorcerers and adulterers; against those who swear falsely...oppress the worker, widow, and fatherless and against those who deny justice to the resident alien."

- **He has not changed. The only way we can "endure His coming" is by loving Him and loving others.**

ROBBING GOD? (MALACHI 3:7-12)

"RETURN TO ME, AND I WILL RETURN TO YOU"

Though God's people had a history of turning from His commands, God still loved His people and wanted them to return and be in a relationship with Him.

- We as individuals have a history of failure and mistakes, but **if we will be humble and want to change, God will draw close and help us!**

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?

The people's response, "How can we return?" was a cynical and half-hearted question. God responded with an accusation that the people have robbed from Him by withholding their tithe.

- **God knows that money is the easiest thing to worship, therefore He asks us to be open-handed with it.**

TITHING HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH MONEY

God does not need our money, but for the church to operate and the community to be blessed, the followers of God are called to give at least a tenth of their income.

- **Tithing is sometimes scary, but it really does reflect our trust in God and our heart for His Kingdom and people.**

WE MUST DEFINE "BLESSING"

God declares that we are cursed if we rob from Him, but blessed if we give our tithe and offering. This doesn't mean prosperity gospel.

- **When we trust God with our whole lives, finances included, He can protect and provide for us.** To be blessed is to have everything we need, not necessarily everything we want.

GOOD & EVIL (MALACHI 3:13-18)

"WHAT HAVE WE GAINED...?"

God says that the people had spoken harshly about Him. The harsh words against God were that serving Him didn't benefit people and that others can just be arrogant, test God, and still be "fortunate." Though we do benefit from the Christian life, **our attitude should never be "What's in it for me?"**

SOME HEARD AND CHANGED THEIR COURSE

Many of the people that heard the prophecy of Malachi resented the message, but many others were humbled by it and wanted to honor God.

- If we are humble we can **recognize the difference in conviction and condemnation. God never condemns, but He convicts in order to help us.**

A "BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE"

Those "who feared the Lord spoke to one another," decided Malachi was speaking on behalf of God, and repented of their sins.

- Malachi says that a "book of remembrance" was written for those that turned to God. The Bible speaks several times about God keeping records of our progression.

TWO REALLY GREAT PROMISES FOR THE HUMBLE

In v17 God promises repentant people that He will "be Mine," and that He will have compassion on them "as a man has compassion on his son."

- This means we will have fellowship with God now and be spared from His wrath at the end of time (Rev. 16).

THE DIFFERENCE IN THE RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

Though the dedicated follower of God can identify evil, it has become increasingly hard for people to distinguish good and evil in our society. But, one day the lines will be eternally drawn.

- V18 is a sobering reminder that **there are eternal consequences for how we live.** There is both a heaven and hell.

THE DAY OF THE LORD (MALACHI 4:1-6)

THE DAY OF THE LORD IS COMING

Malachi was written almost 2500 years ago, but urgency was still appropriate for the people of that time.

- We all have short lives and one day we will all be resurrected to stand trial in front of the Great Judge, Jesus Christ.

THIS SHOULD NOT SCARE THE BELIEVER

If we have lived a life that honors God, we will not only be spared, but rewarded in a way we cannot comprehend. But, to people that have lived arrogant, selfish, and "wicked" lives, "The coming day will consume them."

- Those who "fear [His] name" will receive healing as the "sun of righteousness" rises.

WE HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY

If we're to celebrate like "calves from the stall" and "trample the wicked...under the soles of [our] feet," we must remember the "instruction of Moses," (10 C's) and also follow the teachings of Christ that John prepared us for.

- **We have clear instruction, the example of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit! We can do this!**

IF WE WILL JUST GIVE IT OUR BEST!

God wants to restore us and all the brokenness around us. His desire is to "turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers."

- God knows we will not be perfect, but **He wants us to desire Him and His plan for our lives so we can live fulfilled, both now and forever.**

WHAT DOES GOD WANT FROM US?

- **To admit that we need help.** Without **humility** and **trust**, we have no chance to be saved and changed.
- **To listen.** We must take the time and listen to what the Word and His Spirit are saying to us. These two things will agree.
- **Honesty.** We must confess our faults to Him and trusted friends.
- **All of us.** God wants us to trust Him with our relationships, finances, occupation, and dreams.
- **To give it our best shot.** Though we will make mistakes and miss the mark, God wants us to keep working towards holiness. God wants us to want to turn from evil and sin.
- **Dedication.** God wants us to pray, read, and attend church because these tools guide and strengthen us and draw us closer to Him.
- **To be the salt and light.** God wants us close to Him so others can be close to Him. He is the only hope, and we are His messengers.