

Do You Trust Me? (Malachi 3) – 7.23.17 #cccsermons

The Last Words of the Old Testament: a series on the book of Malachi

The book of Malachi is written as a **WAKE-UP** call for us to make sure our motives and actions are pleasing to the Lord. God wants to bless us, but first we must return to God.

#1 God is passionately **FAITHFUL**. (Malachi 2:17-3:1)

- This passage predicts the coming and the work of John the Baptist and His Son Jesus Christ. (see **Matthew 11:7-10** and **Matthew 21:12-17**).
- God has always been faithful even when we **doubt** that He is still there.
- **Remember, God doesn't work on our timing, but works in our lives to always be on TIME!** (see **2 Peter 3:9**)

#2 God is passionate about **PURITY**. (Malachi 3:2-5)

- The Lord wants His people to come to Him before it is too late because He loves us and wants what is best for us and does not want us to have to face His wrath and judgment.
- God proclaims that He is coming back to put the people of God through the refiner's fire to make them **PURE**.
- God also proclaims He is coming back to clean the people of God with launderer's soap to make them **HOLY**.
- God said He would start with the priests them by bringing them back to worship Him in spirit and truth as they did in the former days (4).
- So who can endure or who can stand before the Lord? The answer is **NOBODY**.
- If you don't fear Me, then you won't endure forever.

#3 God is passionately **IMMUTABLE**. (Malachi 3:6-7a and Hebrew 13:8)

- God is **ALWAYS** gracious but He is indicating that His unchanging faithfulness hinges on His people's purity.

#4 God is passionate about **STEWARDSHIP**. (Malachi 3:7b-12)

- God says that He can protect and provide for us if we are willing to trust Him, yet here He says that we rob Him with both tithes and offerings.
- The term "tithe" is directly mentioned **39** times in Scripture, and in every single instance it means a tenth of all our income that we give to back to God, which enables Him to move on our behalf and bless us (see **Genesis 14**).

What happens when we fail to worship God by not tithing?

When we fail to tithe **WE ROB GOD** (Malachi 3:9).

- When we do not tithe, we rob God of that which is rightfully His.
- Christian stewardship is really nothing less than doing our best with all that we have. (see **Psalms 24:1**)
- When we give a tithe, we don't give to meet a need, but we give to **WORSHIP** God. God doesn't need our money, but God wants our hearts.
- It is an unchanging truth about God: God always blesses those who give to Him **FIRST**. (see **Luke 6:38**)

- Most Christians agree that we should do something for God, but many struggle with the concept of 10%. Of course you can do whatever you want with your money, but you can't do just **ANYTHING** with your money and live a consistent Christian life. The truth is if we won't commit to God the material parts of their lives, we are not likely to commit the immaterial part of their life to God either!

Four truths on tithe and offerings:

#1 Tithes are paid on what you make, not on what you have LEFT OVER.

#2 Offerings are OVER and ABOVE tithes.

#3 God sets the tithes, but YOU set the offerings.

#4 When we fail to give, we rob God of that which is RIGHTFULLY His.

When we fail to tithe **WE ROB THE CHURCH** (Malachi 3:10).

When we do not tithe, we rob God's house, the church, of everything needed to carry on His worship and work.

- Most people give **REACTIVELY** when there's a need, but God wants us to give **PROACTIVELY** to the church then trust Him for the results.

When we fail to tithe **WE ROB OURSELVES** (Malachi 3:10-12).

- **When you stop giving to God, He STOPS blessing you.**
- Israel was suffering severe economic hardships because drought and insects had all but destroyed their crops, but He said if the people would begin tithing, He would "open the floodgates of Heaven" and pour out His blessings.
- And God says, "TEST ME IN THIS" because tithing is really about **TRUST**, not about money! God wants to show off His faithfulness to us!
- Giving to God pays off in so many ways like children, crops, food, enemies defeated, work, wisdom, prosperity, lenders, friends, mercy, deliverance, protection, strength, peace, favor, health, healing, peace, security, grace, etc. (see **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**, **Matthew 5:7**, **Psalms 29:11**, **Proverbs 18:22**, **Proverbs 2:6**, **Proverbs 3:8**, **1 Peter 5:5**, **Proverbs 11:24-25** and **Proverbs 19:6**)
- **God is saying that we all CAN afford to tithe.** If you think you can't tithe, maybe you are living at a lifestyle you cannot afford to live.
- **God is also saying that we CAN'T afford not to tithe either.** (see **Hebrews 11:6**)
- Giving comes down to two things: who you love, and who you trust.

#5 God is passionate about **REPENTANCE**.

- **How many times has God not given us what we DESERVE?**
- God's eyes are always on the righteous and their names are written on His heart.
- Rest in the fact that God listens to us, remembers us and treasures us.
- Basically, God doesn't want our **COMPLAINING**, but He wants our **REPENTANCE** and **OBEDIENCE**.

Since we were born we've been clutching things and saying "mine", but now God says **OPEN** your hands and let go.

- **We are blessed in order to be a BLESSING** and we can't be a blessing if we hoard all we have for ourselves.