

Justice and Judgment, Repentance and Tithing (Malachi 2:17—3:12)

Problem #1 (1:1-5): Dishonoring the love of God
Problem #2 (1:6-2:9): Dishonoring priestly worship
Problem #3 (2:10-16): Dishonoring marriage

Problem #4 (2:17-3:6): Doubting God's justice

God grows tired of His justice and character being called into question (2:17).

God will send a messenger and the Messiah to bring about justice (v. 1).

God's Messiah will bring judgment and purification (vv. 2-5).

God does not change (v. 6)

Problem #5 (3:7-12): Disobedience

God desires that His people come back into a right relationship with Him (v. 7).

God's people were robbing Him by withholding their tithes and offerings (vv. 8-9).

God will reward faithful obedience (vv. 10-12).

The Solution: Return to the Lord

Ultimate Justice will come when Christ returns.

Give God what He deserves.

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For Further Consideration:

What tough questions are you asking God right now? Write them out. After you have written them down ask the Lord to help you trust in His timing and plan regarding each difficult question and/or situation.

Reread Malachi 3:6. For what unchanging characteristics of God are you grateful? With each characteristic and truth you list, how would your life and faith be different if God it changed (i.e., what if God stopped loving, showing mercy, exacting justice, providing, etc.)? Spend some time thanking God for His unchanging character and plans.

The main point of the message was found in Malachi 3:7, "Return to the Lord." Why is God so concerned about us remaining in a right relationship with Him? What are you currently doing to remain in fellowship with Him? In what ways do you need to return to the Lord (i.e., how have you "turned aside" from obeying the Lord)? Regarding each area or issue write down the specific steps you need to take to return to Him.

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 and 9:6-15. What principles of giving/tithing are found in these passages? Why did the believers in Macedonia still give with joy and abundance in spite of their persecution and poverty (8:5)? What percentage of your income have you "purposed in your heart" (9:7) to give? Are you currently giving that percentage? Are you giving out of compulsion or obligation, or out of joyful response as to what the Lord has done for you?