

That Day...THE DAY...This Day

Malachi 3:13-4:6

Who Am I?

and

What Difference Should/Does That Make?

Big questions to be sure...tough questions to say the least. As we've discovered these past five weeks in our study of the book of Malachi, the questions above should be viewed first and foremost through the lens of the One Who has the authority to ask them first and foremost. Just as He spoke in first person in Malachi's day to a people who had drifted away from Him and who were living in varying degrees of sinful disobedience, (1) *God* asks us today: *Who am I?* and *What difference should that make in your life?* The answers to this first pair of questions determine how you answer the very same questions when you ask them of yourself. Therefore, in light of Who you say God is and how He has transformed your life, (2) *you* must then ask yourself *Who am I?* and *What difference does God make in my life?*

These big, tough questions are at the heart of everything we have learned in Malachi. They run like a thread throughout all six "dispute stanzas" of the book. As we allow Holy Spirit to illuminate our understanding of Scripture and enlighten our eyes to view the deepest, truest recesses of our hearts, do we find that we dishonor God in any one of the following areas: our trust in His love (1:2-5), our worship (1:6-2:9), our marriages (2:10-16), our tithing (3:7-12) or our trust in His justice, judgment and sovereignty (2:17-3:6; 3:13-4:3)?

As we reflect on the truths from the book of Malachi as a whole, consider the following questions:

1. Who is God as described directly in Malachi and indirectly via reference to the covenants (Abrahamic, Mosaic, New¹) that serve as contextual backdrops for the book? What difference does He say that should make (1:5,11; 2:5-7,16b; 3:3-4,12,16-18; 4:2-4)?
2. ******Vulnerability/Transparency Alert!!!!****** In light of your answers to the previous questions in #1, now turn the lens toward yourself. Who are you? What difference is God making (or not) in your life (given that He has in fact made you a new creation if you're a Christian)? Note the reason(s) for your answers to these questions.
3. Identify any similarities you find between the issues that characterized Malachi's day and those that characterize our day. What about these issues and/or the culture make it difficult to live as the new creations that we are? How might we as a church (cascading down into our Mini Churches/Care Groups) band together to support one another in our pursuit to live with distinction (3:16-18)?
4. Consider the linkage/interdependence between the two overall theme "couplets" of the book of Malachi: God's Unchanging Love/Covenant Fidelity *and* The Greatness of God/Fear of God and Repentance.

¹Abrahamic Covenant – Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; Mosaic Covenant – Exodus 19:1-8; Deuteronomy 30:15-20; New Covenant – Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13; 9:11-15.

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1. The Importance of Days
2. That Day (Malachi 3:13-4:6)
3. THE DAY (Malachi 4:1-6; Revelation 6:1-21:9)
4. This Day (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; 2 Peter 3:3-18; The Book of Malachi)