

August 25, 2019

**“Who Cares? – Malachi: God’s Wake-Up Call”**

A Series in the Book of Malachi

**“Who Cares? – God; Giving Matters” Part 1**

*“Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated Me. But you ask, ‘What do You mean? When did we ever cheat You?’ You have cheated Me of the tithes and offerings.”*

*Malachi 3:8*

**A. Our giving is directly linked to our relationship with I AM...**

*“I AM the LORD, and I do not change.” Vs 3:6a*

1. God holds out His promise to the people of Israel.

*“Now return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies.” Vs 3:7b*

2. The people have blindly walked away from their awareness of a complete sacrifice.

*“But you ask, ‘How can we return when we have never gone away?’” Vs 3:7c*

3. God clearly speaks to the people of how they have cheated God and the curse that comes with it.

*“Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated Me! But you ask, ‘What do You mean? When did we ever cheat You?’ You have cheated Me of the tithes and offerings due to Me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating Me.” Vs 3:8-9*

4. God gives clear expectations to His people and a promise!

*“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,’ says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, ‘I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in!’” Vs 3:10a*

5. God gives permission for His people to “test” Him in His promise!

*“Try it! Put me to the test!” Vs 3:10b*

**B. Is this Old Testament command a New Testament expectation and promise?**

1. Jesus continues the commandment in the New Testament as He spoke to the Pharisees.

*“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.” Luke 11:42*

2. Jesus reminds His people to be faithful in little (worldly wealth) to experience the greater wealth (true riches of eternal values).

*“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?” Luke 16:10-11*

3. Jesus expands the level of expectations from just fulfilling the act of obedience to making sure the heart is fully engaged.

*“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose... You have heard that our ancestors were told... But I say... angry... adultery... divorce... vows... (revenge)... love your enemies...” Matthew 5:17, 21, 27,31,33,38,43*

4. Paul reminds the body of Christ to make sure their giving is cheerful and of their own free will.

*“For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will.” 2 Corinthians 8:3*

*“Remember this – a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. ‘For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.’ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.” 2 Corinthians 9:6-8*

**C. When you give...**

1. You learn the joy it brings.
2. You learn the freedom from possessions that it brings. It breaks our dependency on money.
3. You are including giving in your worship.
4. You are building trust.
5. You are allowing God to be your provider.
6. You are seeing God work through you.
7. You are keeping God first.
8. You are learning God’s values for life.
9. You are storing up treasures in Heaven.
10. You are putting God to the test to honor His promise!

*“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,’ says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, ‘I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!’” Vs 3:10*

Next week: September 1

**“Who Cares? – God; God’s Faithfulness Matters”**