

# MALACHI

## Week 5

### **OVERVIEW**

The people of Judah have robbed God and spoken hard words against His name. As with many of the lessons across this book, this still remains as a real threat today. How we choose to leverage our energy, efforts, time, finances, skills, and other hosts of resources for ourselves or for God shows where our heart is. This week, be sure to take time as a group to dream up ways you can encourage each other to build hearts of generosity and service.

### **KEY QUESTIONS:**

In what ways are you serving and giving within the church?

In what ways are you serving and giving outside the church?

How can your group help you with this?

### **DISCUSSION**

READ Malachi 3:6-15 out loud as a group

### OBSERVATION:

- What is the overarching message of 3:6-15?
- What claims are made in this text?
- What 2 Disputations happen here?
- What conditions are there "If... then..."?

### INTERPRETATION:

- What is so significant about God's unchanging (immutable) character?
- Upon whose faithfulness is Judah spared: theirs or God's?
- What do you think it means for the people to "return to God" in this text?
  - Consider the other previous readings in Malachi to back up your answer.
- What does God promise He will do for the people?
- What did it mean for the people to devote a "tithe" to the priesthood?
  - See for example Leviticus 27:30-33
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## INTERPRETATION:

- What other parts of Scripture do you recall as being relevant to “tithing” as a practice?
- READ Nehemiah 13:10-14
  - What has Nehemiah instructed in his reforms for the people that they were supposed to be doing?
- “Tithe” was a contribution of 1/10 of ones harvest or income to the priesthood to provide for them in the absence of their sustenance coming from their daily labor. How does this shape your understanding of Generosity today?
- Consider these texts and their impact on how you think about financial stewardship of the church.
  - See 1 Corinthians 9 (Paul's defense of the financial support for the church)
  - See Romans 13 (regarding Submission to Authorities and giving them their due)
  - See Romans 3:19-28 (The Law as it relates to Faith in Christ)
  - See the following as it relates to continual requests for provision for churches across the Mediterranean:
    - Romans 15:22-29 (Paul's Plans to visit Rome)
    - 1 Cor. 16:1-11 (Collection for the Saints and Plans for Travel)
    - 2 Cor. 8 (Encouragement to Give Generously)
    - 2 Cor. 9 (The Collection for Christians in Jerusalem & Cheerful Giving)
    - Phil. 4:10-20 (God's Provision)
    - 1 Tim. 5:17-28 (Elder's provision)
- What did it mean that the people had “robbed God”?
- The people had complained about serving God - in what ways were the people to “serve the Lord”?
- What does it mean to serve the Lord now?
- How does the Gospel shape both Giving and Service today?

## APPLICATION:

- When you were young, what was your family culture like around finances and giving?
  - o Was it something you were taught or no?
  - o Was it something you understood to be important?

#### APPLICATION:

- How do you and your family decide how or what to give?
- Are you taking steps to faithfully steward your finances, including Giving?
- How can this group help you do this well?
- Share about a time when you “served the Lord”.
  - o What were you doing?
  - o What was the difference between “Serving the Lord” and not?
  - o What were some of the feelings around this service?
- What are some of the ways you enjoy serving?
- What are some things that are hard for you when it comes to serving?  
What obstacles do you sometimes face or things that hinder you from serving?
- How can this group help you grow in serving?

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Read Malachi 3:16-4:6
- Make notes of Observation, Interpretation, and Application
- Bring your thoughts to group to share next week