



**Malachi: Navigating a Breakdown**  
**Mason Stewart**  
**“Coping with Condemnation”**  
**3/19/23**

**Key Verses:** Malachi 2:17-3:5

**Key Thought:** Accepting the reality that we are accountable to God involves a recognition that we have two options: condemnation— or surrendering to God's way of salvation in Jesus.

**Points to Consider:**

- Neither we nor God like the idea of Him condemning people. ← Notice how God sends His messenger (i.e., “Malachi”) to warn and purify before judgment (cf. 2 Pet 3:9).
- Yet, we do need to cope with condemnation.
  - i. God does not avoid the subject (cf. John 3:36; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:6).
  - ii. Avoiding the subject promotes rebellion.
  - iii. Condemnation is unavoidable because rebellion has an expiration date.
- God will condemn the guilty, but He yearns to save us through Jesus. → Jesus reapplied the role of “Malachi” (i.e., my messenger) to John the Baptizer (cf. Matt 11:10), which implies... JESUS is God come to judge! However, Jesus— in His 1<sup>st</sup> coming— came to save and has— in His mercy— deferred condemnation until a 2<sup>nd</sup> coming (cf. Mal 3:5).
- What is there to do but surrender to God's way of salvation in Jesus?
  - i. Repent from rebellion— described in 3:5.
  - ii. Embrace forgiveness— implied in 3:4. ← Those who trust in Jesus are forgiven and declared righteous via the offering of His blameless life.
  - iii. (Re)submit to purification— described in 3:2-3. ← “Declared righteousness must become embodied righteousness” (Timothy C. Tennent).
- Avoiding or denying the idea of condemnation hinders us from grasping the beauty and significance of Jesus, as well as obscures for us what it means to “follow Him” out of condemnation and into righteousness.

**Discussion Prompts:**

- When do you tend to have a low sense of accountability to God?
- What are “side-effects” of avoiding or denying the idea of condemnation?
- Based on the Bible as a whole, how does it seem like God feels about condemnation?
- How do you know whether— on the one hand— you are still under God's condemnation, or— on the other hand— you need to embrace God's forgiveness?
- How— specifically— do you need to surrender to God's way of salvation?