

## Sermon Points:

1. The Book of Malachi  
Our Hope in a Faithful God

2. BIG IDEA:

Our love and desire for God can be measured by how seriously we deal with the sin in our lives

3. "Repentance is turning from all that you know of sin, with all that you know of yourself, to all that you know of God." J.I. Packer

4. Resistance to repentance is in itself the greatest proof for the need to repent

5. Bucket 1:

### **Half-Hearted Devotion**

6. Insufficient Sacrifices

Malachi 1:13-14 (ESV)

But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts!

7. Insufficient Offerings

Malachi 3:8 (ESV)

Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions.

8. We are not the owners of anything, we are managers and stewards.

9. Bucket 2:

### **Broken Covenants**

10: God-like Covenants:

A promise to do something or be somebody regardless of the other.

11: A sure sign of a wicked generation is in their inability to make and keep covenants

12: Malachi 2:17 (ESV)

You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is the God of justice?"

13: Malachi 3:14 (ESV)

You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts?'

14: Malachi 3:6-7 (ESV)

"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts."

**15: *The answer to the problem was always going to require, not more from us, who drift, but more from God who is already/always faithful.***

16: We don't need another resolution. It has already been kept in our place. We need rebirth.

### **Group Questions:**

1) The people in Malachi's day are pictured as not being aware of the sin in their lives. Even questioning often if God even loves them anymore. Why is this a MAJOR problem in having a relationship with God? Why is how we think about ourselves, and think about God so important in being close to Him?

2) Talk about Bucket One.

The Israelites kept all of the external rituals of faith. They gave. They offered animals, They visited the priests. They were consistent and faithful in the external ceremonies. But they gave bad animals and less than 10%. This was sign of bad hearts and a poor relationship with God. Talk about that, but also what do you think may be signs today of our own culture having a half-hearted devotion to God?

3) Talk about Bucket Two.

The Israelites began diminishing the marriage covenant and taking other wives. They also questioned if it was any benefit to them to be good, do good and to keep covenants. Why is this a sign of evil taking hold in their culture? Do you think our own culture likes or dislikes the idea of covenant? What is the problem? Do you think that abuses in covenant are a reason to stop making and keeping them?

4) The O.T. ends with the word "curse."

Have you been following the story from Genesis? Talk about all the ways God has tried to "love" His people and keep them safe in Him, and aware of their identity? Is there anything else He could have done?

How does this ending of the Old Testament allow us to clearly see the seamless story into the Gospel? What does Jesus solve, that the O.T. could not?

5) How does Jesus solve the wandering of your own heart?

6) Prayer and Praise