

"Return To ME!"

Opening Announcements

Opening Prayer

Q: What IS "repentance"?

Q: If you were trying to explain it to a friend, what approach would you take?

READ: Malachi 3:1-7 ""Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. **2** But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. **3** He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. **4** Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. **5** "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts. **6** "For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. **7** 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. But you say, 'How shall we return?'

Q: Ultimately, WHO is Malachi talking about in verse 1?

Q: What is verses 2-4 about? Discuss the various ways "prophecy" works?

Q: What is verse 5 about?

Q: What is the comfort of verse 6?

Q: What is the reality AND the invitation of verse 7?

Now.....

Q: How do we apply THIS reading to OUR life? (That's actually the question at the end of verse 7!!!)

READ: Matthew 3:2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Q: What is the content of John's preaching?

Q: What's the "reason", motivation for repentance?

Q: What IS the "kingdom of heaven"?

Q: What does "at hand" mean?

READ: Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Q: What is interesting about Jesus' first recorded sermon?

Q: What did Jesus "bring"? How was His arrival on the scene, the fulfillment of "at hand"?

Q: How is the "kingdom come", still YET to be fulfilled?

READ: Matthew 6:10 "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Q: In this petition, what are we asking?

Q: How is God's Kingdom "done" in heaven?

Q: How will that be "done" on earth? Will those who do not believe, "do" God's Kingdom will? Then "how" will be it "done"?

Q: What's one way YOU can be about, focus on, work towards God's "Kingdom come"?

DON'T FORGET: Advent Wednesday Worship: 5:30-6:20 meal, 6:30-7:30 Worship!