

MALACHI 3:6-12

8 JANUARY 2021

ICE BREAKER: Describe a great advice you have tried to apply in your life.

GROUP QUESTIONS:

(Read verses 6-7) **People change.** People’s views of themselves, others and their situation change. Painful experiences come when those closest to us change their commitment, promises, or vows to us, **bringing destruction to us** and often to **themselves**. Some become absent when we need them most. Others say they will do one thing, but do another.

Malachi proclaimed to Israel they had changed in their faith and love to the Lord. They, who had vowed to be His people, had turned away and placed themselves in danger of destruction. Yet, despite their change, the Lord reminded them, **“I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.”**

1. When you have failed or done wrong, who are you thankful has remained faithful and unchanging?

(Read verses 8-9) Malachi charged God’s people with a heinous crime. They had robbed God. How? By holding back their ‘whole’ tithes and offerings. Throughout the Old Testament, tithing was commanded of God’s people. In the New Testament, one-sixth of the gospels, including one of every three parables touched on financial stewardship. Jesus himself stated the importance of tithing, while standing up for justice and love for God (Luke 11:42).

Yet, the crime among God’s people continues today in America. The average Christian only gives 2.9% of his income to the church. Only 12% Protestants and 4% Catholics even tithe.

2. Why do you think it is so difficult for Christians to tithe when the Bible emphasizes it?

(Read verses 7-8) When the Lord charged His people with the crime of robbing Him of His tithes and offerings, notice what He called them to do to make things right. He did not call them to work harder or work smarter, nor to manipulate or conquer the neighboring countries to bring in funds.

Rather God called out to them, **“Return to me, and I will return to you”**. God proclaims **our money issue is really a relationship issue**. The **health of our finances is directly related to the health of our relationship with Him**.

3. How does our view or use of money reveal the health of our relationship with the Lord?

(Read verses 9-11) God, who is **unchanging**, makes a **promise** to His people. If we will faithfully honor Him with our tithes and offerings, He will **“throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough”**. God promises to **repeatedly surprise** us with **unexpected funds and blessings** to meet and exceed all our needs.

He will also make the **paychecks** we do receive **last longer** than before so we don’t wonder where all our money went. **“I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit.”**

4. Describe how tithing or not tithing has effected your finances , mental health, even relationships.

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE & USE PRAYER LIST AS BIBLE BOOK MARKER

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to witness Christ to this week.)
