

A Call to Repentance; Malachi 3:1-3

I. Repentance

- A. Malachi prophesied around the same time as Nehemiah
- B. Nehemiah was commissioned by the Persian King Artaxerxes to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall around 445 BC
- C. Most scholars put Malachi around 432 BC
- D. The last couple of chapters in Nehemiah lists the sins that Israel had fallen back into
- E. These very well could be the same sins that Malachi is prophesying against
- F. These sins show a people who had left God for their own selfishness and desires
- G. We see the exact same thing today
- H. The things that God mentions here through Malachi are issues today as well

II. Church Members

- A. Malachi 1:6–8 (ESV); ⁶ “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the Lord of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, ‘How have we despised your name?’ ⁷ By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, ‘How have we polluted you?’ By saying that the Lord’s table may be despised. ⁸ When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the Lord of hosts.
- B. Polluted offerings
 - 1. Any sacrifice given to God had to be “without blemish”
 - 2. The priests were offering blemished animals — this should also reflect back onto the worshipper who brought the blemished animal to be offered
 - 3. The people wanted to keep the best for themselves
 - 4. 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV); But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
 - 5. What do our “sacrifices” look like?
 - 6. Are we offering God our seconds, thirds, fourths, etc. and not our first fruits
 - 7. From the very beginning God required our first fruits (our best)
 - 8. Genesis 4:2–5 (ESV); ² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.
 - 9. God’s answer is found in the next two verses
 - 10. Genesis 4:6–7 (ESV); ⁶ The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”
- C. What are we offering God?
- D. Romans 12:1 (ESV); I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

III. Divorce

- A. Malachi 2:13–16 (LES); ¹³ And these things, which I hate, you do: You cover with tears the altar of the Lord, and with weeping and groaning from troubles. Yet is it worthy to look upon the sacrifice or to take an acceptable gift from your hands? ¹⁴ And you said, ‘Because of what?’ Because the Lord has testified between you and between the wife of your youth, whom you deserted, even though she is your partner and the wife of your covenant. ¹⁵ And did he not make her good, yet she has the residue of his breath. And you said, ‘What other offspring does God desire?’ So observe yourselves, and do not

desert the wife of your youth. ¹⁶ But if, while hating, you dismiss your wife,” says the Lord God of Israel, “you will conceal the wrongdoing of your thoughts,” says the Lord Almighty. “So observe yourselves, and never desert your wife.”

B. 2018

1. Almost 50% of first marriages end in divorce
2. 60% of second marriages end in divorce
3. 73% of third marriages end in divorce
4. The US has the 6th highest divorce rate in the world
5. Every 13 seconds, there is one divorce in America.
6. That equates to 277 divorces per hour, 6,646 divorces per day, 46,523 divorces per week, and 2,419,196 divorces per year. That means:
7. There are 9 divorces in the time it takes for a couple to recite their wedding vows (2 minutes).
8. More than 554 divorces occur during your typical romantic comedy movie (2 hours).
9. 1,385 divorces happen during the average wedding reception (5 hours).
10. 15 percent of adult women in the United States are divorced or separated today, compared with less than one percent in 1920. ¹

C. “God wants me to be happy”

1. No, He doesn't
2. He wants you to present your body as a living sacrifice!
3. He wants you to know what the will of the Lord is, what is good, acceptable, and perfect
4. I'm convinced that divorce happens because we are selfish

D. Divorce is not new, though I do think that we have perfected it

E. Malachi 2:10 (ESV); Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

F. There are things that get in the way of our marriages, things that interfere

G. I am convinced that two people who love God more than each other can get through ANYTHING!

H. Don't be faithless to your husband or wife

IV. Tithing

A. Malachi 3:8–10 (ESV); ⁸ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

B. Israel had a requirement to give 10% of their income to God

1. Their income was not just monetary
2. They gave sacrifices as well
3. If you add up all the offerings their giving came to about 33%

C. God doesn't give us a percentage or a number

D. 2 Corinthians 8:1–5 (ESV); ¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

E. The “whole person” concept

¹ “Divorce Statistics and Facts | What Affects Divorce Rates?” *Wilkinson & Finkbeiner, LLP*, lawyermarketing.com, www.wf-lawyers.com/divorce-statistics-and-facts/.

1. The Air Force used this concept for their personnel
 2. When we wrote performance reports we used more than their job performance
- F. God wants our whole person — He want us to be completely committed to Him and His Son
1. We have all heard about the chicken and the pig who were deciding what to bring for breakfast — eggs and bacon
 2. The chicken only participated, the pig was committed
 3. If we have truly died to ourselves, if we have truly taken up our cross then it will reflect in every aspect of our lives — including our giving
- G. 2 Corinthians 8:11–12 (ESV); ¹¹ So now finish doing it as well, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. ¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.
- H. Readiness
1. Exceptional interest, willingness, eager enthusiasm
 2. Is that how you describe your giving?
 3. God clearly says that is what makes it acceptable
- I. What a person has
1. We are given an example in the widow at the temple who gave her two cents versus the Pharisees who gave large amounts
 2. The Pharisees gave out of their excess
 - a) They gave to God last
 - b) They used the income God gave them for themselves first, then God
 3. The widow gave all she had
 - a) She understood that God gave it to her in the first place
 - b) That those 2 cents, however small, never belonged to her, but to God
- J. When it comes to giving, where is God in our list of priorities?
1. Do we give out of our excess, thinking of Him last?
 2. Do we give to him first (firstfruits)
 3. Do we understand that he gave it to us first?
 4. Are we eager, even enthusiastic about giving to God?
 5. Do we have an exception interest in giving to God?
- V. Repentance
- A. Malachi 3:1–3 (ESV); ¹ “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.
- B. God wants full custody not just weekend visits