

Saturday Celebration (1-28-06)
"The Malachi Challenge - Pt. 1"

"Preparing for the Next Chapter"

Malachi 3:1-12

Mal 3:3, 5 ... God is in the business of CHANGING US —

Mal 3:6 ... a reference to God's MERCY for HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE ... Chosen to be Changed

"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be Holy and
blameless before Him" Eph 1:4

"those whom He foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son"
Rom 8:29

Mal 3:7 ... The Call to RETURN — again a call of ASSESSMENT & ADJUSTMENT
— in what areas of my life have I DRIFTED or REBELLED or NEGLECTED what God has said

Mal 3:7-12 ... Interesting Starting Point for Returning — Our MONEY!!

"Jesus Christ said more about money than about any other single thing because, when it comes to a man's real nature, money is of first importance. Money is an exact index to a man's true character. All through Scripture there is an intimate correlation between the development of a man's character and how he handles his money." Richard Halverson (quoted in "Money, Possessions, & Eternity", p.15)

"Money never stays with me. It would burn me if it did. I throw it out of my hands as soon as possible, lest it should find its way into my heart." John Wesley (quoted in "Money, Possessions, & Eternity", p 225)

"ROBBING GOD" Why was this act considered stealing?

Lev 27:30-31 Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD.

"GIVING THE LORD HIS DUE"

1Chr 16:24-25, 28-31 Consider What This Passage Mandates That We Do:

- v. 24 ... DECLARE His glory and works
- v. 25 ... Hold God in AWE above anything else
- v. 28 ... ASCRIBE
- v. 29 ... WORSHIP
- v. 31 ... BE GLAD
- v. 31 ... Welcome His REIGN!!

PAYING A TITHE LIKE PAYING A "TRIBUTE"

.... if we understand the principle of the tithe to the King ("paying tribute"), then we understand why Malachi calls this "ROBBERY" — it's really not ours to keep. Just because it is in our possession doesn't mean that it's mine!

tribute >noun 1 an act, statement, or gift that is intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration. 2 something resulting from and indicating the worth of something else: his victory was a tribute to his persistence. 3 historical payment made periodically by a state to another on which it is dependent

“The tenth of all produce, flocks, and cattle was declared to be sacred to Jehovah by way, so to speak, of rent to Him who was strictly speaking, the Owner..” Merrill Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*

“When we give to God the first tenth of everything we have, we are indeed acknowledging God as the possessor of all things and we are His stewards. Tithing has been designed to remind us of this great truth.” Kevin Conner, *Tithes and Offerings*, p. 47

Gen 14:18-20

Gen 28:20-22

- Abraham knew that God was the “Possessor of heaven and earth” and that his Victory Came From God ... therefore he gave back a TENTH
- Jacob recognized that God provided to him food, garments, and protection and responded by giving God a TENTH

IN WHAT WAYS ARE WE ROBBING GOD?

- **Robbing God of being TRUSTED**
Mal 3:10 “...put Me to the test” and see if you won’t end up being blessed

Prov 3:9-10 Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce;
10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.
- **Robbing God of being CELEBRATED**
- **Robbing God of being Obeyed**
- **Robbing God of the joy of blessing us**

THE STATEMENT OUR PRACTICE OF GIVING IS MAKING ... Mal 1:6-14

— In this passage the “manner” of our giving touches the issue of God’s Greatness and Worthiness.

- **Not giving 1st** ... Reveals Our PRIORITIES
- **Not giving significantly** (10%) ... “Bring the full tithe”
- **Not giving sacrificially** (Giving what you don’t want or perhaps need – “the Blind, Lame, and Polluted”) ... Reveals the values operating in our lives (we sacrifice for what we value and deem important or critical)