

"Faithful God" (Malachi 3:13-4:6)

For the week of June 4, 2017

1. As we complete our study of the book of Malachi, it is clear that the prophet spoke to many people. He spoke to the disillusioned (1:3), the cynical (1:7, 2:2), the callous (2:16), the dishonest (3:5), the apathetic (3:14-15), the doubters and skeptics (3:16-18), and the truly wicked (4:1).

Are you a tough audience for those who speak truth into your life? What kind of speech gets your attention? What would a prophet of the Lord need to say to you to cause you to listen?

If you relate to any of these, ask the Lord to soften your heart to the truth givers in your life. Soften your heart to His word. Contemplate your attitude when confronted with truth. This week as you review Malachi, ask the Lord to show you areas in your life, attitudes that need adjusting, to be brought in line with the truth of righteousness.

2. Read Malachi 3:13-15. What is Israel accused of doing? How do they respond? What is Israel's justification for their behavior?

Compare Malachi 3:18 to Malachi 2:17. What attitude is portrayed? How do the people in 3:18 differ from those in 3:13-15? Which are you more like?

What circumstances cause us to argue over what God expects of us?

Read Exodus 34:6-7. Who does God say He is? What does God do?

Read James 1:12-15 and 2:8-13. What is God's standard? What sin do we tolerate?

3. Read Malachi 3:16-4:6. What things will happen on the "Day" listed in Malachi 3:16-4:6? What is promised for those who fear the Lord?

How is sin described? The idea of sin seems to be foreign to many today. How would you explain sin to someone?

Do we justify our own poor choices in our walk with God or worship of God based on how others are blessed or rewarded? Do we judge God's "blessing" in our lives by our personal material gain?

4. Read Colossians 1:9–14. Consider how Paul's prayer for the Colossians compares with our prayers for our family, our friends and us. Do our prayers reflect a concern for God's will or our own comfort?

How is prayer used as a tool for our spiritual growth? Do we ask God to bless our choice or direct our choosing?

How can you determine if your prayers are God-centered or man-centered? List the characteristics of each:

God-centered –

Man-centered –

5. Read Malachi 4:5. What do you think of when you hear "great" and "dreadful" (KJV) day of the Lord? For whom is the day great and whom is it dreadful?

List what happens and each category the action belongs in:

GREAT: 4:2, 3:17 –

DREADFUL: 4:1 –

6. Read Luke 1:5-17 and Matthew 11:2-15, 17:10–13. How do these verses compare to Malachi 4:5-6? Has the prophecy of Mal 4:5-6 been fulfilled? If so, how?

Finally, read I Timothy 4:10. What is our eternal hope?

Pray

- Pray that your heart does not harden as Israel's did.
- Pray that you may accept the word preached to you in faith.
- Pray that you walk in a manner worthy of his calling.
- Pray that you place your eternal HOPE firmly in Him! Trust that all He says is true.