

A Call to Take Inventory
"I Have Loved You" sermon series, pt. 4
Malachi 3:13-4:6
Pastor Gerald Stigall

Introduction:

Malachi challenges us to take an inventory of our lives. In this last section, several key questions confront us which confront us to determine what "shelves" in our character need to be restocked.

Overview of Malachi:

In this closing section of Malachi, God contrasts two types of people by the three questions that are raised.

I. Is it worthwhile to serve God? (Malachi 3:13-17)

ANSWER: *YES!* - Because God grants several privileges:

1. We have the **EAR** God (verse 16a)

Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard.

2. We have the **MEMORY** of God (verse 16b)

A scroll of remembrance was written in His presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored (esteemed {NASB}) His name.

3. We have the **HEART** of God (verse 17)

The Lord says, "They (the people of God, YOU) will be MINE..."

The Lord uses two illustrations to make His point * special possession * special people

II. Is there any difference between the righteous and the ungodly? (Ma. 3:18-4:3)

ANSWER: *YES!* Note the way the heat affects the two:

* the heat **BURNS** the 1st group with judgment (vs. 1)

* the heat **WARMS** the 2nd with healing grace (vss. 2-3)

III. Are there guides that will instruct us? (Malachi 4:4-6)

ANSWER: *YES!* There are 2 guides:

1. The Law (verse 4)

"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel."

2. The Prophet Elijah (vss. 5-6) (refer also to Mt. 17:10-17; Lk. 1:16-17; & II Co. 5:18-20)
"See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

Conclusion:

Digging Deeper

Read the passage several times. Some sample questions are listed below:

- 3 : 13 Who is speaking in this verse? What does it mean to be arrogant?
- 3 : 14 Is it vain to serve God? In what way is there profit? What kind of profit? (physical, spiritual, emotional, relational)
- 3 : 15 Are the wicked really blessed? When? What are some ways that they test God?
- 3 : 16 Does God listen and remember those who fear Him? What does it mean to "fear" God? Can God ever forget us?
- 3 : 17 Are we, who choose to fear God, His possessions? What is a possession? Can anyone take us from Him?
- 3 : 18 How can we distinguish between the righteous and the wicked? Do the evil, or wicked always LOOK evil?
- 4 : 1 What will happen to those that are arrogant evildoers?
- 4 : 2 What will happen to those who fear God?
- 4 : 3 What value are the wicked on that Day?
- 4 : 4 What are we told to do?
- 4 : 5 Who is He going to send? (see Matthew 17:12-13) Why is John the Baptist called Elijah?
- 4 : 6 What will God restore?

As you meditate on these verses, thoughtfully consider what areas of your life God would like to change in order to bring you into deeper conformity to His truth. Share your individual applications with others.