

Worship Discussion and Reflection Questions

Sermon Series: Ancient Voices for Unsettled Times

Sermon: Malachi: A New Hope, Despite Everything

Scripture: Malachi 2:17-3:5; 4:1-6

2¹⁷ You have wearied the Lord with your words. But you say, “How have we wearied him?” By saying, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delights in them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God of justice?”

3 “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.[a] ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.⁵ “Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

Questions:

1. Are you ever impatient with God or do you start judging him because of all the evil around us? How does Malachi call us to respond when we feel that way?
2. Look again at the list of “sins of the saints” in Mal 3:5, both private sins and public sins, both individual sins and collective sins—how do you and our society measure up to this standard?
3. God's judgment is shown as both destruction for the wicked and transformation for those who fear God's name and serve Him. Review Mal 4:1-3. Does this sound like good news or bad news for you? Why?
4. Malachi promises that God is here, his judgment (and justice) is coming, and he points ahead to the coming of John the Baptist and of Jesus. How does Jesus' sacrifice on the cross impact your understanding of the Day of the Lord?

Guided Prayer:

Loving Lord—thank you for your patience with us and for your steadfast love towards us. Help us to trust you, to wait on you, and to follow you. Protect us from falling for the lie that you don't care about what we do. Help us to live your way as you shape us for your transformation, healing and new life in Jesus. In his name we ask it, Amen.