



Wrestling With God — Malachi — Study & Discussion Guide

THE BIG IDEA: Malachi records God’s final prophetic words for Israel before 400 years of silence. In six disputes, God confronts His people about their misplaced trust, divided hearts, compromised worship, injustice, disobedience, and doubts about whether serving God is worth it. The underlying challenge we receive from the Book of Malachi is this: **Are you really listening to God—and does your life prove it?**

THE SIX DISPUTES

1. **“I Have Loved You” — READ Malachi 1:2-3 ///** Israel asks, *“How have you loved us?”* They are so focused on their immediate circumstances that they can’t recognize the larger scope of God’s love for them. They have forgotten about His promise to prosper them and not harm them.

Truth: God’s love is bigger than your timeline.

Discussion: Israel struggled because they were focused on what God was *not* doing on their timeline.

In what ways are you tempted to measure God’s love by your circumstances rather than by His character and promises?

2. **“Where Is My Honor?” — READ Malachi 1:6-10 ///** Israel gives God their leftovers instead of their first and best. Not just occasionally, but consistently. In fact, the priests led the charge in breaking the rules for sacrifice and offerings laid out in the Mosaic covenant.

Truth: God wants your first and best.

Discussion: Israel gave God their leftovers rather than their first and best. **What are some ways we give God our “leftovers”—with regard to our time, attention, worship, resources, relationships, or energy?**



THE SIX DISPUTES CONT.

3. “How Have We Been Faithless?” — READ Malachi 2:10-16 /// Israel has compromised their covenant, marriages, and devotion to God. Their choice to live in rebellion to the covenant they had with God has led them down a path of sexual immorality, divorce, and re-marriage with pagan cultures. This has ultimately led to idolatry and ungodly offspring; entire future generations that would worship other false gods instead of the one True God. He wants to be your first and only God; and He wants you to reflect that faithfulness in your marriage and parenting.

Truth: God wants your first love to be your last.

Discussion: Selfishness and culture can influence us to veer away from following God. **What are some of the ways you see this happening in your life right now?**

4. “Where Is the God of Justice?” — READ Malachi 2:17-3:5 /// Israel sees evil people prospering and wonders whether following God is worthwhile. God promises that His justice is coming. In fact, the Day of the Lord is coming and it will deliver a justice and reckoning that is so much bigger than you or me.

Truth: God’s justice is bigger than what we can see.

Discussion: Jealousy is an easy path to walk down when we see wicked people prospering. **What promises from God can you hold on to that help keep you grounded when you see good things happening to bad people?**

5. “Return to Me.” — READ Malachi 3:6-12 /// God shows His people that the path back begins with obedience and trust—it is not coincidental that God’s challenge to return to Him starts with Israel’s finances and possessions.

Truth: The path back to God begins with obedience

Discussion: Malachi repeatedly exposes a lack of trust beneath Israel’s disobedience.

What does genuine trust in God look like in your life right now?



THE SIX DISPUTES CONT.

6. “It Is Vain to Serve God.” — READ Malachi 3:13-18 /// Israel returns to dispute #4 and complains that serving God is pointless because the wicked seem to prosper while they suffer. Instead of recapping His response from earlier, He reveals a new hope for them: He has written a book with the names of all those who respect and honor Him. He promises that He will never forgets them or forsake them. He will save and preserve them as His treasured possession.

Truth: God sees, hears and holds on to His children.

Discussion: God keeps a “book of remembrance” for those who fear and honor Him.

How does knowing that God sees and remembers faithfulness change the way you respond when doing the right thing seems unrewarded?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

1. What is God asking you to trust, surrender, or obey right now?
 - a. Take a moment to pray about that specific area.