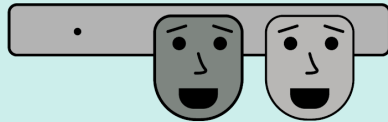
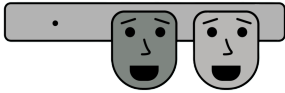


Impostor

a series in the book of Malachi



Devotional Guide

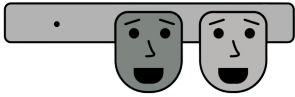


Day 1 - God's Grace

Read Malachi 3:6-15 to familiarize yourself with this passage, and then focus on Malachi 3:6-7a.

- What do we learn about God's character in these verses?
- What are the implications of his character for "the descendants of Jacob" (the nation of Israel)?
- Why does Israel deserve to be destroyed?
 - Have you turned from God's decrees and not kept them?
 - Do you deserve the same punishment as Israel?
- What offer does God make to Israel?
 - How does this offer to Israel encourage or challenge you today?

Pray in adoration: As you pray, reflect on God's grace. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), and yet our unchanging God returns to us if we return to him!

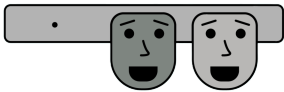


Day 2 - Robbing God

Read Malachi 3:6-9

- In yesterday's text, we noted that God was upset that Israel had turned away from his decrees, and in today's text he identifies one specific decree which they have broken. What are they doing that angers the LORD?
- Read Deuteronomy 14:22-29 and note what do you learn about the tithe?
 - How much was the tithe and what items were tithed?
 - What was the purpose of the tithe (v 23)?
 - Who benefitted from the tithe (v 29)?
- What consequences are being faced by the nation because they are robbing God by not tithing (Mal 3:9)?

Pray in confession. Have you ever thought of giving as a discipline which teaches you to revere the Lord? What does your generosity demonstrate about the state of your heart towards God and his people?

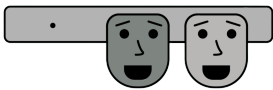


Day 3 - New Testament Giving

Titling is not specifically mandated in the New Testament, but there is an expectation that Christians will give. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

- Acts 2:42-47. How did the first Christians treat their possessions?
- 2 Corinthians 8:10-15. What principle should guide our giving? What is the purpose of our giving?
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7. What attitudes should mark our giving?

Pray today in supplication. Ask God to help you to trust him with your finances so that you can give generously and cheerfully according to your income.



Day 4 - A Positive Test

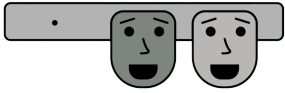
Read Malachi 3:6-12 and then focus on verses 10-12.

- What two commands does God give to the nation of Israel?
- What reward does God promise to Israel if they "test" God by bringing in the tithe?

This Old Testament promise of physical blessing was part of God's covenant with Israel (Lev 26, Deut 28). In the New Testament, God does not make these same promises to any people group, but there is a sense that God blesses Christians in a variety of ways as we give.

- Read Philippians 4:14-19. What is Paul certain of in this text?
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:8-11. How will God bless people who give? Why will God bless people this way (for what purpose? - see verse 11)

Pray today in adoration. Thank God for the ways in which he cares for the needs of his children.



Day 5 - A Negative Test

Read Malachi 3:6-15 and then focus on verses 13-15.

- What is God's charge against Israel in this text?
- What does it look like for Israel to "speak arrogantly" against God? According to verse 14, what are they saying?
- What does it look like to put God to the test in this text?
- Reflect: From this text it seems that the Israelites only want to serve God if they receive some sort of "gain" from him. Is this an attitude that you can identify in your own life?

Pray today in confession, asking God for a humble heart which recognizes his grace, and considers it an honor to serve him.