

## Will A Man Rob God? Mal. 3:8-12

### Introduction:

A preacher got up in the pulpit one Sunday morning and announced, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is that we have enough money to build our new building. The bad news is that the money is still in your pockets."

If we were to take a poll of everyone in the room and ask each individual about their personal giving to the Lord, most, if not all, would say that God is pleased with their giving. However, in order for us to know if God is pleased with our giving, we must know what He has said about the subject.

Our giving on the first day of the week is a true test of our faithfulness to God. No one knows how much we earn; and no one knows how much we give. It is therefore only between the individual and God. It is a true test of our faithfulness to Him, because no one can know how faithfully we keep this commandment.

### I. It is possible to rob God (3:8-9).

- A. God says that the people robbed Him in their tithes.
  - 1. Everything that the Israelites possessed was to be tithed.
    - a. Lev. 27:30 - And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S. It is holy to the LORD.
    - b. Deut. 14:22 - You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.
  - 2. Even in the time of Christ, tithes were important to the Jews.
    - a. Lk. 18:12 - (In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the Pharisee says) - I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.
    - b. Mt. 23:23 - Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.
    - c. It was not the tithing that was wrong, but the fact that they neglected the other matters that needed to be taught.
- B. Not only had the people robbed God in tithes, but they also robbed Him in offerings.
  - 1. There were many kinds of offerings (or sacrifices) that the Israelites were commanded to offer to God.
    - a. Burnt
    - b. Drink
    - c. Heave
    - d. Peace
    - e. Sin
    - f. Trespass
    - g. Wave
    - h. Freewill

2. The Israelites were commanded to offer all of these at some point throughout the year.
  3. They were robbing God by not giving Him the offerings that He had commanded them.
- C. Notice how we can rob God today.
1. Time
  2. Worship
  3. Money – when we give from abundance, not poverty (Mk. 12)
  4. We rob God when we do not give our best at all times.
  5. We rob God when we do not give Him what He is due.
  6. It is not that God needs us today, especially our money; but He wants us to serve Him faithfully, just as He wanted Israel to serve Him faithfully.
- D. In robbing God, we take what is not ours and use it for ourselves.

## II. God will bless us when we give to Him properly (3:10-12).

- A. God expects us to give to Him (3:10a).
1. God has always expected us to give to Him.
    - a. God expected the children of Israel to give to Him.
    - b. This is why He is upset with them in Malachi.
  2. Pr. 3:9 - Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; (there are many ways in which we can honor God, but He expects us to honor Him with our possessions.)
  3. Even in the New Testament, God expected His people to give to Him.
    - a. Mk. 10:21 - Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."
    - b. I Cor. 16:1-2 - Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: {2} On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.
- B. In life, we will reap what we sow, and this is especially true in our giving (3:10-12).
1. II Cor. 9:6-7 - But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. {7} So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.
  2. (In a different context, but the same principle) Gal. 6:7-8 - Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. {8} For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.
- C. God has the ability (and the willingness) to give us tremendous blessings when we are faithful to Him.

1. God promised to take care of the children of Israel if they were faithful to Him.
    - a. **Lev. 26:3-4** - If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, {4} then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.
    - b. **Deut. 11:13-14** - And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, {14} 'then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.
    - c. Part of that obedience would obviously be in their “tithes and offerings.”
  2. **Ps. 23:5-6** - You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. {6} Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.
  3. **Lk. 6:38** - Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.
- D. It is not that we give so that we can have, but rather it is that obedience to God that gives us greater blessings.

### III. Even though it is not directly mentioned in our text, we can see that we should want to give to God because of what He has given to us.

- A. Notice where the children of Israel are at the time Malachi wrote this book.
  1. It is commonly believed among scholars that this book was written in the time of Nehemiah.
  2. The children of Israel have been in the Babylonian captivity for many years.
  3. They have now had their nation restored to them.
- A. God has given us great physical blessings.
  1. **Js. 1:17** - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
  2. **Mt. 6:33** - But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
- B. We also have tremendous spiritual blessings in Christ.
  1. **Eph. 1:3** - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
  2. **II Pet. 1:3-4** - as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, {4} by which have been given to us exceedingly great

and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

- C. Because all of the spiritual blessings occur in Christ, they occur in His church, which was purchased with a great price.
  - 1. **Acts 20:28** - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
  - 2. **Eph. 1:14** - who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
- D. To make it more personal to us, Peter tells us that we were redeemed with that same price.
  - 1. **I Pet. 1:17-19** - And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; {18} knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, {19} but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
  - 2. Redeemed means "to buy back."
  - 3. We have been bought with a great price: the blood of Christ!
- E. Because God has given us His best (His Son), we should want to give Him our best as well.
- F. When we do not give our best to God, we rob God!

Conclusion:

Giving of our means is a true test of whether we are faithful to God or not. There is no way for anyone to know if your giving is acceptable to God or not. The only ones who know are you and God.

Today, how is your giving to the Lord? More importantly, how is your attitude behind your giving? Do you give because you feel you have to, or because you want to?