

Quote: "God shovels in and I shovel out but God has a bigger shovel."

This is the only place in the scriptures where God says "prove me". Lord has over and abundantly blessed your life. I've never met someone who told me they gave to God faithfully and now they regret it.

Instead of having the spirit of the people of Malachi's day let us the spirit of the people of King David's day

See 1 Chronicles 29:9-14 9

Can you see the awe of God. Can you see the worship? Can you see the glory of God being praised? Can you sense the gratitude? Can you sense the humility? Can you sense the Love of God? What a powerful picture of what grace giving looks like.



GROWTH GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. How did God touch your heart during the message?
2. Does the topic of giving bother you? Why?
3. Why does giving reveal what is in your heart?
4. Can you love God without giving?
5. Do you feel like a tithe (10%) is a good "Launch point" for giving?

Answers to blanks

rob
theocratic
symptom
cursed



THE BOOK OF **MALACHI**

A Cheap View of Grace

Text: Malachi 3:7-18

Lord reminds the children of Israel of a great promise. Return to me and I will return to you. If there is any distance in our relationship with God it's always on our end. In Malachi chapter 3, we see that once again, the children of Israel are blind to their ways and blind to their sin.

God is gracious. He reveals to them how they can return to Him. Malachi continues the message to the people with this convicting question - **Will a man _____ God?** See *Malachi 3:7-8*

What a crazy thought? To think you could rob God. It was an astonishing statement!

Remember they were dealing treacherously with each other just a chapter ago. Robbing your neighbor is interfering with God's blessing and provision for that person. What a dangerous position to be in. However, even more shocking is to find yourself at odds with the creator of the Universe.

God tells them you have stolen the tithe and offering from me. The tithe is the Lord's. The Bible is very clear on this. The tithe is a tenth.

See Leviticus 27:30

In Malachi's day there was a _____ government established with Persian oversight.

The tithing that Israel would comply with according to the Mosaic law actually equated to more than 10% of their income. It was closer to 23.3%. There were multiple tithes and every 3 years you had to give a special tithe to meet the needs of the widows and orphans (a welfare system). The tithe was also meant to support the government - Israeli judges, elders and officials and levites.

Malachi reminds the people there was a covenant or agreement in place with God. The Mosaic covenant. There were legal ramifications for not holding up our end of the agreement. There was laid before the people a cursing and a blessing in Deuteronomy 28.

God was concerned with their heart for Him. A lack of giving is always the _____ of a greater heart issue.

See John 3:16

The practice of giving a tithe revealed who is the Lord of my life. It's a reminder to me and my family that God is the owner and we are simply stewards of all that God entrusts into our care. Remember, God owns it all. Everything.

See Psalm 24:1 and Psalm 145:15-16

An honest evaluation of your financial statement will always reveal who or what is really your God. There is an invisible chain from your heart to your wallet. Wherever your treasure there will be your heart be also.

In the Bible much of the scriptures deal with money, possessions or giving.
1 in 10 verses in the NT speak about money, possessions or giving

Why? Jesus said wherever your treasure is there will your heart be also.

See Malachi 3:9-12

Because God's people did not give as He commanded, God did not bless them materially or spiritually the way He would have otherwise.

Question: Are we _____ with a curse today if we do not tithe?

No. We are not living under the Mosaic laws. The law was a tutor to lead us to Christ. Tithing as seen in the Mosaic law is not explicitly commanded for Christians but it's a good principle that really is a launch pad to giving in the New Testament.

See Romans 6:14 and Galatians 3:13

New Testament Application:

So what is the proper percentage we are to give God then? If our question is, "How little can I give and still please God?" then our heart isn't in the right place at all.

Tithing or giving to the Lord a tenth is a beautiful practice. I honestly believe it is a great launch point. It is an important practice in our spiritual walks.

Regular, Sacrificial, Cheerful and Secret.

The sad state of affairs is that the average christian gives only 2-3%

I wouldn't use the verbiage that you are robbing God today if you are not giving scripturally but you have cheapened grace. You have taken God for granted. You have taken the cross for granted. You have taken the resurrection for granted. You are taking the spiritual blessings God has provided you lightly.