

## **A Credible Faith**

Lesson 4

Malachi 3:6-12

June 27, 2021

### **Credibility Gap in Trusting God with Our Finances**

#### **Introduction**

There is a desire in our society always to have post-worthy sayings or bring a new, revolutionary way to look at life. We often want our words and actions to be the next great thing that will go viral.

This idea can get into churches and even journals like this one. We don't want to talk about the old, boring ideas that have already been discussed. We hear old bible stories, and we mentally check out. We want a fresh vision. We want a revolutionary message that will make people think differently.

Essentially, we can sometimes seek to add to the Bible to make it more palatable or entertaining. We think our words and efforts can pierce through hearts when in reality, it is God's Word that changes hearts, not ours.

C.S. Lewis compared God to a Lion. You don't have to defend a lion. Just let it out of its cage. God's word is the same. A Bible story that is read multiple times can have a different meaning and affect the heart in different ways.

This week, take time to check your heart. When reading the Bible, are you perceiving it as the same old stuff you've read in the past, or are you reading it with fresh eyes, ready for what God wants to say to you?

***Memory verse: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.'—Malachi 3:10***

Pray and read Malachi 3:6-12. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

**What does the passage say?**

1. Does the Lord change? (Malachi 3:6)
2. What had the Israelites done since the time of their ancestors? (Malachi 3:7)
3. What would the Lord do if they returned to Him? (Malachi 3:7)
4. How were the Israelites robbing God? (Malachi 3:8))
5. What does the Lord ask them to do? (Malachi 3:10)
6. What does the Lord say He will do when put to the test? (Malachi 3:10-11)
7. After seeing what the Lord had done, what would the other nations call the Israelites? (Malachi 3:12)

## What does the passage mean?

1. The passage this week says that the Lord does not change. Why is this important to know? (Numbers 23:19; Jeremiah 31:3; Lamentations 3:22-23)
  
2. What does it say about God that He will return to Judah if they return to Him? (Exodus 34:6-7; Ezekiel 18:23; 2 Peter 3:9)
  
3. The kind of test in Malachi means examining, scrutinizing, or proving just as gold is tested. Yet, Deuteronomy 6:16 says, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." Why do you think God looks favorably on testing Him in the area of tithes and offerings, but not in other ways?

4. What does God ask us to do to return to Him? (Acts 2:38, 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Our passages say to test God, and He will rain blessings down. Many churches claim that God will physically bless your life with health, wealth, and possessions if you simply have enough faith. What does Jesus say about wealth and blessing? (Matthew 6:19-24; Mark 10:17-25; Luke 12:16-21)

### **Applying the passage**

1. Are there times where you have tried to test God to manipulate Him to get an outcome that you wanted? Why is this type of testing frowned upon? What does this type of test say about your relationship with God?

2. What are some non-physical blessings you've received from God in your life?

3. Name three ways that God has remained faithful to you. Take some time to thank Him today for His faithfulness and steadfast love for you.