

Message Meditation

March 22, 2015

Text: **Malachi**

Message Meditation:

1. The people of Malachi's day had grown disheartened with God. The prior generation had rebuilt the temple and the wall of Jerusalem – they accomplished great things with God. Malachi's generation had fallen into a religious routine and had grown weary of worshipping a God they had grown to believe didn't really love them. (Mal. 1:1-5)
2. Their unbelief concerning God's love and care played out terribly in their lives:
 - a. They dishonored God by offering Him what was unacceptable. (1:6-11)
 - b. The Priests joined in with the people in their God-dishonoring behavior. (2:1-9)
 - c. Their broken faith in God resulted in brokenness in their relationships with one another. (2:10-16)
 - d. Their wrong judgment concerning God's love resulted in wrong judgments concerning His care and concern for people. They began to believe evil to be good, and good to be a vain activity. (2:17-3:5)
 - e. They finally stopped serving God altogether. (3:13-15)
3. It was grace to them that God pursued them at all. They were treating God horribly, and yet, God pursued them because He loved them. He doesn't change, and He desires that they would return to Him. (3:6-7a)
4. Some responded to God's message. (3:16-18) They feared God and esteemed His name. God remembered them, recorded their names, and received them as His treasured possession. (3:16-18)
5. The Lord is coming. It will be a day of glory for those who fear Him – and a day of sorrow and dread for those who don't believe Him and, therefore, practice evil. (4:1-6)

Message Application:

1. It has been said: "What you believe about God is the most important thing about you." How does doubting God's love negatively affect your attitude toward Him, toward yourself, and toward others?
2. The people's brokenness with God was reflected in their religious hypocrisy and their relational unfaithfulness. How does the worship of God influence every aspect of your life – including marriage faithfulness and loving-concern for the oppressed and poor?
3. What does it mean to "give your best to God?"
4. What is God's message through Malachi to you?