

Our God Who Never Changes: Knowing That God Will Reward Faithfulness

God's promises are not always quickly fulfilled. Instead, we are often called to walk in faithfulness when we cannot see the path in front of us. In what ways does God ignite our service to Him in the midst of uncertain times? In this session, we will examine Malachi 3:16–4:6 and be encouraged as we are reminded that God will reward faithful obedience and trust.

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I. Introduction

- A. Haggai and Zechariah prophesied a superb time, but it was taking long for this to happen.
- B. It is the same today. When the church is not advancing, we are tempted to blame God.
- C. The Jews failed to grasp God's eternal love and infinite glory (chapter 1).
- D. They also failed to maintain pastoral and marital unfaithfulness (chapter 2).
- E. They failed because they felt it does not pay to serve God (chapter 3).
- F. In this session, we see that knowing that God rewards faithfulness puts wind in our sails.
- G. You will recall that we ended on a stalemate (3:13–15) but this stalemate gets resolved. How? Through Malachi, God encourages the few who "fear the Lord" to remain faithful.
- H. Applying the lessons of this book to our hearts for self-examination

II. A Remnant That Fears God (Malachi 3:16–18)

- A. In every generation there is a remnant that remains faithful, and God takes note of them. That is what we see in our text. There are always those who “fear the Lord” (v.16).
- B. They get together for mutual encouragement in informal fellowship and conferences. They mourn the lack of grasping God’s love/glory, the unfaithfulness, and lack of service. They pray together and encourage one another for God’s glory in the singing of hymns.
- C. The Lord listens to these chats and takes note of all this for the judgment day (v.17–18).
- D. The ear of faith hears “they shall be mine” and the eye of faith sees the coming distinction.
- E. This is what puts steel into the beings of those who advance God’s cause in difficult times.

III. What a Final Distinction (Malachi 4:1–3)

- A. The distinction produced by the final day of judgment makes all the suffering worthwhile.
- B. God, through Malachi, drew the attention of his people to the day which is coming soon.
- C. It is the day of judgment when Jesus will appear with his angels in glory (Matt. 25:31–33).
- D. The heat from that throne will consume those who refused to repent and lived in sin (v.1).
- E. The same heat will bring warmth, causing those who fear God to celebrate with joy (v.2).

- F. On that day, the Lord will finally vindicate his people against all their adversaries (v.3).
- G. What a final distinction when that judgement day comes. It makes serving God priceless!

IV. So, Obey and Trust in God (Malachi 4:4–6)

- A. Where does this leave us? It is to put our armour on and heed the call of Christ our captain.
- B. In Old Testament language, God called his faithful ones to obey the law of Moses (v.4).
- C. At Horeb, they got the ceremonial law, the priesthood of Levi, the covenant, the agenda.
- D. Trust in God to fulfil his redemptive agenda beginning with Elijah (i.e., John the Baptist).
- E. In view of Matt. 11:14, Mark 9:11, Luke 1:17, God points to redemption coming in Christ.
- F. Without this agenda of redemption in Christ, there would be utterly no hope for anyone.
- G. Do your part (obey), trust him to do his part. It is priceless. God will reward faithfulness.

V. Conclusion

- A. Remember that our God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
- B. Let's go out to advance the gospel in our own difficult times!