



Empowering People to Change the World

Refiner's Fire Part III

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Refiner's Fire Part 3

Malachi 3:1-3

- 1) Baptism at The Road coming up on November 4th.
- 1) NexGen Jr. - Our vision is the building of “wholehearted disciples in a half hearted world.” I would like everyone to be a part of discipling our kids. Even Michael is going down to lead worship at NexGen two times a month.
- 1) Everyone stand now and hold up your Bible. We have the “Mountain Moving.”

**PP: *God can move mountains in my life.
I will build up my faith with God's Holy Word.
I will come alive in the power of the Holy Spirit.
With Jesus, nothing will be impossible.***

For the past month, God has been speaking to us about a “refiners fire,” a purging fire, a blue flame. Liz would come into the sanctuary and pray and kept seeing a blue and gold flame. A prophetic friend in California said that she keeps getting “refiner’s fire” over our church.

Malachi 3:1-3

¹ "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the Lord of hosts. ² "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.

As we shared last week, we are speaking here of a “refiner’s fire” not a forest fire. A refiner’s fire refines and purifies. Just as silver and gold lodged into impure objects like stone or iron ore, have to be placed into a heated vat, a refinery and heated up to **1,764 degrees Fahrenheit** .

- Malachi is speaking to the whole nation of Israel.
- God is refining us—in our church, in our family relationships, in our marriages; and it is not fun, it is not easy.
- “Stevesmithing” is when a Refinery pulls out the dross and the impurities of our life through heat, extreme heat. But do not miss this; it is a refining, a purifying for God’s love, joy and power to be released in greater measure in our life.
- He is making you into a living letter of his love to the world. Like the silversmith who sees his reflection in the molten silver, God is desiring to see a reflection of Himself in your life.
 - God is purifying your heart that you might “see God.” (Matthew 5:8)
 - God is refining your faith to make it a genuine faith, **“tested by fire may be found to praise, honor, and glory.”** (1 Peter 1:7)
 - James speaks of the **“testing of your faith...that you might be perfect.”** (James 1)

Vers 3b

- **“purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering of righteousness.”**
- The writer of Hebrews speaks of the discipline/chastening of the Lord being hard and difficult and that, if we will endure it, will produce the **“peaceable fruit of righteousness.”** (Hebrews 12)
 - Right heart, right motives, right treasures leading to right relationships, right choices and right decisions.

Malachi 3:7

⁷ Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to

you," Says the Lord of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'

- Malachi uses a rhetorical style of questioning and answering.
- Malachi is putting the responsibility on Israel to return to Him first. You see, God is already returned, He never left but He is waiting on us to return to Him.
- So, the question being asked is “In what way shall we return?”
 - Jesus wants our heart—the difference to Jesus between the Pharisee’s and the ultra-religious and the prostitutes and sinners of his time was not their outward behavior but the direction of their hearts.
 - Jesus wants our heart, then the lifestyle will change from an inside out transformation.
 - Jesus said there is a test of our heart ***“where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21)***
 - Now Jesus answers the question of the purpose of the refiner’s fire, how we might return to the Lord.

The Treasure Principle or The Malachi Miracle

Malachi 3:8-12

⁸ "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. ¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. ¹¹ "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the Lord of hosts; ¹² "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the Lord of hosts.

- I truly believe that the reason God has not judged America—with all of our immorality, greed, and injustice is right here!
- God has not only not judged America, He has mightily blessed us! Our economy the past two years is just booming!!
- America’s generosity has saved the rest of the world. We are the most generous nation the world has ever known.
 - We build hospitals, fight infectious diseases, find cures for mortal illnesses.
 - We lead the world in adoptions from other nations.
 - We spend more money in Disaster Relief than the entire GNP of Europe.
 - We build nations back up after war and devastation.
 - We single-handedly rebuilt Western Europe, Japan and Korea after WWII and the Korean War.
 - We have militarily protected most of the world from communism and have wiped out fascism.
 - Christian missions and missionaries pour out of the U.S. to other nations.
 - We lead the world in the fight and cure of the HIV positive and AIDS epidemics.
- I believe that this is the very reason God continues to bless America.
- But God is speaking to us as individuals—The Malachi Miracle, The Treasure Principle is for you and me.
- Amazing passage! **Verse 10 “Try me now in this” “Test me in this.”** The only passage in the Bible that God says to test Me!
 - For example, like a powerful weight lifter who can bench press 300 lbs, saying “let me show you what I can do, put the weight on...”

- For example, like a father wanting to bless his kids, “test me and I’ll show you my love and blessings.” What father does not want to bless his kids?
- Compare verse 7 and verse 10. A tithe is 10% of your income. He’s not talking about just “giving” but bringing in the “whole tithe.”
- **Proverbs 3:5-10** “*first fruits*” is the best, the FIRST fruits, the gross of your income! Father God gets it first before Uncle Sam gets his part.
- I learned to tithe at 23 years old as I was raising support to be a missionary.
- **Philippians 4:17** “*Spiritual Bank Account*” is the treasure principle.
- I cannot tell you how many times Liz and I have needed an automobile, a plane ticket, a new septic tank, a house, desire to give more to our church’s building fund, helping out missionaries in trouble and I have walked the road crying out to God...and this is what I’ve said, “Lord, I have a Spiritual Bank Account of close to \$1 million and I need a withdrawal right now!!”
- God has always come through with more than enough!!

If you will Return to God with Tithing (your treasure being in heaven), God will Return to you with Treasures that will change your life and finances.

1) (Vs. 10) Open Heaven over your Life and Finances

- The open heaven concept is interesting. It speaks of an intimacy with God.

2) (vs. 11) Protection over your Life and Finances

3) (vs. 11b-12) Fruitfulness in your Life and Finances

- Even touching all the nations!

A few stories from Liz and me:

- Just before leaving Japan our church needed funds badly. We had no idea where money would come from for seminary but God spoke to me to give \$3k to the church and give away all of our furniture to a needy couple.
- When I finished college I had \$7k saved up. I went on the mission field for the next 10 years and invested my money in stocks, mutual funds, and CD's. Upon my return God had blessed me with close to \$100k.
- We had planted MSC and needed funds for new construction on a building on Woodmen and pledged \$10k but then our septic tank went out...a neighbor came over and asked if she could give us \$5k.
- Do you have a “Spiritual Bank Account”? Have you deposited much in there? It's the refiners fire of your treasure!

The Malachi Miracle—The Treasure Principle...4 Principles:

1. When you trust and worship God through giving 10% of your income, the church and your home will have everything you need. In other words, God will meet all your needs supernaturally.
2. You can test God on this! I can tell you from 37 years of tithing, God will be so faithful to you. It does not make sense but that's the point! If it made sense, it would not be God and it would not be supernatural!
3. When you start tithing 10% of your income to the Lord, He will pour out incredible blessing upon you!
4. When you start tithing and trusting God with your finances, God will protect what is His! You see, your stuff is not under God's protection until you freely give it to Him!

The Ways you can Give at The Road:

- 1) Boxes in the lobby.**
- 2) Online giving at our website.**
- 3) Online giving on our App.**