

## Malachi 2:17-3:5 Discussion Guide

### Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

### Read Scripture

Read Malachi 2:1-3:6 together while focusing on 2:17-3:5.

### Bible Study: The HEAR Method

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together using the HEAR inductive Bible study method.

### Remember:

- Walk through the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all your life.

### Pray

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

### Malachi 2:17-3:5 (ESV)

*"You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, 'How have we wearied him?' By saying, 'Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them.' Or by asking, 'Where is the God of justice?'"*

*<sup>1</sup>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; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>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 fullers' soap. <sup>3</sup>He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.*

*<sup>5</sup>'Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widows and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.'"*

**Open:** Have you ever gone to court for a speeding ticket? If so, what were you hoping the judge would do in your case? Why?

**Context Matters:** Remember that at the beginning of this book God addresses people unbelief in His specific love of them, then moves to address the religious leaders, the priests, of their wrongdoing, then confronts the people of their unfaithfulness in marriage, and now God turns to question them about injustice.

**Study:**

- 1) Malachi 2:17 opens with the fourth dispute between God and His people. What has God grown weary about? What about their circumstances might have led Israel to complain in this manner?
- 2) By the people's complaints, what are they implying about God? What attributes of God had they forgotten?
- 3) What does the postexilic people of Malachi's day desire God to do? Is this a wrong desire? Why or why not?
- 4) Read Mark 1:1-15, Matthew 11:1-25, then Malachi 3:1 again. (Keep in mind that the words of Malachi were spoken about 580 years before the events in Mark's Gospel took place.) Who is God promising to send? Who is this first messenger a prelude to? Who is Malachi prophetically speaking of as the second messenger of the covenant? How do these facts affect your ideas about God and who He really is?

Note: In the ancient world it was customary for kings to send a messenger or herald before them so people would be prepared for the arrival of the King.

- 5) What will God do when He returns (3:2) and why will He do it (3:3)? Why does God want to purify His people (3:3)? Why is it necessary to repent before seeing the Lord in His glory?
- 6) When will God bring a "swift witness against" those who oppress others spiritually and physically? Read Matthew 19:23-20:16 and John 5:18-47.
- 7) What are the things that God despises and wishes to judge (Mal. 3:5)? Try not to think about just the actions, but also the behaviors, thoughts and feelings affiliated with the actions.

**Apply:**

- 8) When you consider the things God despises and will judge, what problems surface in your own walk with God? What can you do to rid yourself of these things?
- 9) How does God's promise to draw near both comfort and illicit hope to you as well as dread and fear? What is your only hope when God draws near?
- 10) Where has your hope for God's swift justice waned? How does 3:5 help remind you of the surety of His justice when He comes again?

**PRAY:**

- Take time thank God for His justice to you through the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to help you remember that there is a day of justice coming.
- Ask God for opportunities to share with others the gospel while there is still time to experience His mercy and grace.

NOTE: a variety of resources have been used for this discussion guide including: *ESV 12-Week Study Guide*, *Malachi Study Guide* from Christ Redeemer Church, and *Malachi: Easy Doesn't Change the World* by John Barry