

BEAUTYFROMCHAOS



FORMULA OR FEAR: Malachi 3:13-18

SHARINGSTORIES

We are almost finished with our study of Malachi. It seems every week's passage presents another us with another challenge to introspect and face the changes God calls us to make. Fortunately, God reminds us of His love, faithfulness, and provisions along the way. The passage we studied this week discussed the feelings of frustration the Israelites felt toward God when their expectations were not being met in the way they wanted. In fact, their expectations were not being met at all. However, the problem was not with God. The problem was with their feelings of entitlement and misguided assumptions.

*When have you been disappointed with God because of something He has not done?
What are your expectations re God? What do you assume God will and will not do?*

DIGGINGIN

Verses 13 through 18 show the Israelites frustrated with God, self-righteous, and bemoaning their lives. Many of us have felt the same way but are reluctant to admit it.
*How does God interact with believers as opposed to the way he deals with unbelievers?
What has God promised to do in our lives? What guarantees has He made to us?
What is at the root of feelings of disappointment with God? What is the real issue?*

GOINGDEEPER

Ted finished his sermon by relating the story of *The Three Trees*. Each tree had its own deepest God-given desire along with a specific way they wanted to see it manifest: the first tree wanted to be a treasure chest, the second to carry a King to battle, and the third to be the tallest tree in the world so it could point to God. All these desires were met above and beyond what they expected. The first tree did indeed hold a treasure: the Christ child. The second tree carried a King of a much higher caliber than anticipated. The third tree pointed to God as it held Christ on the cross.
*Read Psalm 37:4. What are the prerequisites for God implanting His desires in our hearts?
How do we differentiate between our personal desires and God-given ones?
When have you seen a desire met in a different way than you anticipated?*

PRAYER

Spend this time discerning how best pray for one another. Praise God for one specific item and petition Him for one request on their behalf.
Ask the Father to comfort those suffering this time of the year. Ask Him to strengthen all of us to look beyond ourselves and to love others. Thank Him for his faithfulness.

REFLECTION

What one idea has the Spirit impressed on your mind and heart from this passage?

MALACHI BEAUTYFROMCHAOS