

THE BOOK OF

Malachi

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

CREATED BY STEVE CASE

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Show Some Respect

OPENING QUESTION

Who do you respect the most from the following: law enforcement officer, movie star, pastor, janitor, school administrator.

READ Malachi 1:1—27.

1. How has God demonstrated his love to you?

- A. Giving me life, and so much more.
- B. Jesus came and died for me.
- C. Placing the Holy Spirit in my life.
- D. It's been a little spotty at times.
- E. The presence of key people in my life.
- F. It's a feeling I feel when I feel that God feels close to me.
- G. Sometimes it seems strong; but at other times it seems weak.
- H. Communication through prayer and Scripture.
- I. Other.

2. How have you honored God?

- A. Everything I do honors God.
- B. I'm not sure I have.
- C. I obey God in the most important things.
- D. I follow God when it fits with what I want to do.
- E. With my language. I don't take God's name in vain; I don't swear.
- F. I demonstrate respect to religious leaders.
- G. I give generous offerings.
- H. Through my consistent worship.
- I. Other.

3. What best describes the items you donate?

- A. I wouldn't want them.
- B. I give them to God; the entity that receives it doesn't matter to me.
- C. Rather than throw things away, I donate them to charity.
- D. I give to God first.
- E. My donations come after I've first paid my bills.
- F. I give sacrificially—it costs me something and I feel it.
- G. I'm more likely to give if it's tax-deductible or makes me look good.
- H. Other.

4. Who shows God more honor than you do?

- A. I can't think of anyone.
- B. Just about everyone I know.
- C. Widows with mites.
- D. People who have more money than I have.
- E. Those who are obedient.
- F. Praise and worship leaders.
- G. Children.
- H. My friend _____.
- I. Other.

5. How difficult is it for you to “serve the Lord” (vs. 13)?

- A. “Serving the Lord” is my mantra.
- B. Easy on good days; hard on bad days.
- C. It's a constant battle.
- D. I rarely think about it.
- E. I like the concept, but the details are hard to figure out.
- F. I'm willing to serve God, but not other people.
- G. Easy as long as I can set the terms.
- H. Other.

6. Have you ever made a promise to God and then cheated on your promise?

- A. No.
- B. I don't make promises.
- C. Once, maybe twice.
- D. All the time.
- E. “Cheating” is probably too strong of a word.
- F. Hasn't everyone?
- G. I don't think about it; I just let it go.
- H. Other.

7. When you honor God, how does that affect other people? How does it affect you?

8. Based on how you live out your faith, what do others think about your God (not what do they think about you)?

Clean Up Your Act

OPENING QUESTION

When have you been at your dirtiest, maybe even involving something as filthy as excrement?

READ Malachi 2:1—17.

1. What diverts religious leaders from honoring God?

- A. Ego.
- B. Busyness.
- C. Feeling they are a cut above other people.
- D. They're only human, so they dishonor God just like so many others do.
- E. People sometimes put them on a pedestal.
- F. Distractions.
- G. Representing God, they sometimes forget who they really are.
- H. Creeping compromises.
- I. Other.

2. How serious is God about correcting the religious leaders?

- A. Very serious!
- B. As serious as he is about correcting everyone.
- C. God will curse them, even their "blessings" will be cursed.
- D. Look for poop on their faces.
- E. Don't be surprised if you find them in the sewer.
- F. God will do whatever it takes to reach people.
- G. Because of their distinct role of representing God, it's more serious.
- H. Other.

3. What are religious leaders supposed to do?

- A. Be spiritual beacons and a positive example for others.
- B. Preserve the knowledge of God around them.
- C. Care for the widows and orphans.
- D. Keep God's covenant.
- E. Be involved in the political life of the community.
- F. Be available to people so they can provide instruction.
- G. Not show favoritism.
- H. Be a messenger for God.
- I. Other.

4. Compared to your spiritual ancestors, are you similar or different in the following areas?

- A. Commitment.
- B. Socio-economic status.
- C. Forms of worship.
- D. Impact in your community.
- E. Access to Scripture.
- F. Level of hardship or persecution.
- G. Receiving messages from God.
- H. Other.

5. What's the problem with marrying someone not devoted to Yahweh?

- A. It's not a problem unless you make it a problem.
- B. You have divided devotion.
- C. If God is #1 to you, your relationship with your spouse suffers.
- D. If your spouse is #1 to you, your relationship with God suffers.
- E. Your relationship with your spouse might exclude God.
- F. How are your children going to relate to God?
- G. Love can overcome all obstacles.
- H. Other.

6. Why doesn't God accept some of the worship directed to him?

- A. Some people go through the motions, but their heart isn't in it.
- B. Doing one's own thing after the worship service ends.
- C. It's done for show.
- D. When it lacks quality during the performance/worship service.
- E. Picking and choosing certain areas of one's obedience to God.
- F. If you don't play classical music, God won't accept your worship.
- G. Acting like nothing is wrong when some things are very wrong!
- H. Other.

7. What's so bad about divorce? Why is divorce so common?

8. What will happen to you if God executes justice? What will happen to others?

The Big Test

OPENING QUESTION

Which level of education has been most challenging for you—elementary, junior high, high school, college, graduate school?

READ Malachi 3:1–18.

1. Who prepares the way for God?

- A. Nobody.
- B. Angels.
- C. God's people on earth.
- D. John the Baptist.
- E. I do.
- F. My church denomination is all about this.
- G. Nature.
- H. Evangelists and revivalists.
- I. Other.

2. What preparations does God need before he arrives?

- A. The Gospel needs to be preached to the whole world.
- B. There have to be enough righteous people to make it worth the trip.
- C. Making the crooked ways straight, leveling mountains, filling valleys.
- D. Clear demarcation between the righteous and the wicked.
- E. He needs to finish constructing mansions in heaven for his people.
- F. A testing that sifts the wheat from the chaff.
- G. Implementation of a one-world government.
- H. The earth needs to be on the verge of complete self-destruction.
- I. Other.

3. Who do you want God to judge most severely?

- A. I won't tell you their names, but God knows who they are.
- B. Rapists and murderers.
- C. Corrupt politicians.
- D. Hypocrites.
- E. Self-righteous people.
- F. People who have hurt or mistreated you.
- G. Those opposed to immigration (to heaven).
- H. The rich and the powerful.
- I. Other.

4. What will God do when he arrives on Planet Earth?

- A. Turn up the heat.
- B. Clean house.
- C. Destroy the wicked.
- D. Purify his own people.
- E. Accept sacrifices made to him.
- F. Hold court.
- G. Pass judgment.
- H. God is already on Planet Earth.
- I. Other.

5. In what way(s) have you cheated God.

- A. What are you talking about?
- B. I haven't always paid tithe.
- C. There have been times when I might have maybe cheated on taxes.
- D. I've made promises that I haven't kept.
- E. I've slept with the enemy.
- F. I do what I'm supposed to do, but my heart isn't always in it.
- G. Putting "my tithe" where I want to put it.
- H. Other.

6. What kinds of "bad talk" have you spoken about God?

- A. I don't say it; I just think it silently.
- B. God doesn't act when he should.
- C. I don't see enough evidence for God's existence.
- D. Corrupt people get away with their corruption.
- E. What's with all the pain and suffering?
- F. It isn't worth it to follow God.
- G. God demands more from us than he gives in return.
- H. Other.

7. What is God's storehouse? Where is God's storehouse?

8. When have you put God to the test? What happened?

Judgment Day

OPENING QUESTION

What's an example of something unfair you have witnessed or experienced personally?

READ Malachi 4:1—6.

1. What will happen on judgment day?

- A. The wicked get burned.
- B. The wicked will be completely consumed.
- C. The righteous are set free.
- D. God's people get out of here and go to heaven.
- E. I'm not really sure.
- F. The New Testament describes it differently than the Old Testament.
- G. Sheep and goats finally get separated.
- H. It doesn't sound like people burn forever in hell.
- I. Other.

2. In what ways do the wicked tread on the righteous now?

- A. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer.
- B. Corrupt government.
- C. Proliferation of pornography.
- D. Valuing the things of this world over the things of God.
- E. Imaging religious things as silly, superficial, and superstitious.
- F. Using "God talk" to justify whatever they want.
- G. Exposing religious hypocrisy and impotence.
- H. Scientific talk and thought that denies God.
- I. Other.

3. What prevents you from leaping for joy right now?

- A. Life is too difficult for me to leap for joy.
- B. Gravity.
- C. I have a disability.
- D. Um, I don't dance.
- E. I'm carrying too much weight to do any leaping.
- F. Those in control prevent me from leaping for joy.
- G. Something in my past.
- H. I have to be on guard; it isn't time to celebrate yet.
- I. Other.

4. In what ways will the righteous one day tread on the wicked?

- A. Trading places—look who’s on top now!
- B. The righteous don’t treat the wicked the same way they were treated.
- C. The true winners finally get vindicated.
- D. They are the last ones standing.
- E. God turns the wicked to dirt; those remaining walk on the dirt.
- F. Leaping for joy rather than cowering in submission.
- G. Tofu cries out in a mocking voice, “Where’s the beef?”
- H. Other.

5. What part(s) of the law of Moses given on Sinai do you “remember”?

- A. Not much.
- B. The fourth commandment: Remember the Sabbath day.
- C. The 10 commandments.
- D. Everything given on Sinai, not just the 10 commandments.
- E. There were some crazy things just for the Israelites at that time.
- F. Eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.
- G. I follow the Sermon on the Mount, not the law given on Sinai.
- H. Other.

6. Who is the “prophet Elijah” sent before the great and terrible Day of the Lord promised in Malachi?

- A. John the Baptist.
- B. Those given the Spirit of Prophecy.
- C. God will send the real Elijah from heaven before Christ returns.
- D. Someone who is able to bring down fire from heaven.
- E. An outpouring of the Holy Spirit like on the Day of Pentecost.
- F. Charismatic Christians.
- G. Extraterrestrials.
- H. Other.

7. What turns the hearts of the fathers to their children? What turns the hearts of the children to their fathers?

8. When will this take place?

