

January Bible Study 2017

Complacency Exposed: A Study of the Book of Malachi

The Book of Malachi challenges the spiritual complacency of God's people by reminding them of God's love, holiness, and unchanging purposes for His people.

Malachi ministered in perhaps the most difficult period of his nation's history—a time of waiting for God's promises to be fulfilled. Many people doubted that God cared or would act on their behalf. They had grown indifferent toward God and unfaithful in their covenant relationships with one another.

To counter his people's growing complacency and to call them to repentance and renewed faithfulness, Malachi used a series of searching questions, incredulous answers, and clinching arguments. His messages drew clear and compelling contrasts between God's faithfulness and their faithfulness—between God's love and their apathy, between God's unchanging purposes and their doubt and cynicism.

This January Bible Study is important because many believers today have become apathetic and complacent in their walk with God. God's Word through Malachi continues to call God's people to faithfulness and obedience and in response to who God is and what He has done.

Malachi captured the nature of God and our relationship and responsibility to Him and others in the covenant community. This prophecy set the stage for the coming of Christ. The message relates to believers today as they wait for the second coming of Christ for we, too, must live in light of the nature of God as revealed through Christ and fulfill the expectations of a relationship with Him.

Study Outline:

Chapter 1. How Have You Loved Us? (1:1-5)

God demonstrates His love for His people throughout history with the sending of His Son being the greatest demonstration of that love.

Chapter 2. How Have We Despised Your Name? (1:6–2:9)

God's name is to be honored and not doing so points to our failure to recognize Him as the Holy God.

Chapter 3. Why Are We Unfaithful to One Another? (2:10-16)

How we relate to others and our spouse are indicative of our relationship with God.

Chapter 4. Where is the God of Justice? (2:17–3:5)

The Lord will purify His people, and they will worship Him in righteousness.

Chapter 5. How Can We Return? (3:6-12)

We return to God by expressing trust in His provisions, with Christ being the provision for our salvation.

Chapter 6. What Have We Spoken Against You? (3:13–4:6)

God promises to remember those who fear Him and will show compassion on them on the day of His coming.