

Ageless Wisdom for Better Finances

Part 3: In God We Trust

Malachi 3:7-12 and Matthew 6:19-33

Summary: Trusting God with our resources can unlock spiritual, material, and eternal blessings

Main Ideas:

Three Kinds of Blessings Promised (Malachi 3):

1. SPIRITUAL Blessings (v.7)
2. MATERIAL Blessings (v.10,11)
3. INFLUENTIAL Blessings (v.12)

REASONS for Trusting God (Matthew 6):

1. The PERSPECTIVE it Builds (v.19-23)
2. The PRIORITY it Brings (v. 24)
3. The PEACE it Bestows (v.25-32)
4. The PROMISE it Boasts (v. 33)

We Can TRUST God:

1. Trust God as the OWNER – Psalm 24:1
2. Trust God as the PROVIDER – Philippians 4:19
3. Trust God as the SOURCE – John 3:27

Our RESPONSIBILITY:

1. TURN to Him (Malachi 3:7)
2. TRUST Him (Malachi 3:10a)
3. TEST Him (Malachi 3:10b)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think a lot of people find it awkward to talk about money... especially in a church setting?
 2. What do you think it means to trust God as the owner of everything in your life? How could this perspective change how you view your possessions?
 3. Read Matthew 6:19-21. How do you think we can use our material resources to invest in things of eternal value? Share practical examples.
 4. What is one way you can shift your financial priorities to align with God's Kingdom purposes this week?
 5. How can your group pray with you this week?
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TRANSCRIPT:

Intro:

History of the "In God We Trust" Confession...

Do we trust Him like our currency claims? Or do we actually trust the paper upon which that confession is written? I hope you are able to understand it, to say it and mean it by the time were done here tonight.

There were an ancient people who voiced their trust in God generation after generation, they said it our t loud, but their actions betrayed them... The prophet Malachi called them on it...

Malachi 3:7-12

God gives them a second chance- actually a multitude of chances over the history of Israel. And notice the promises God makes if they decide to listen...

Three Kinds of Blessings Promised:

1. **SPIRITUAL Blessings, v.7.** "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." There's always blessing promised to those who will obey God and penalty for those who do not. Ps 1... One of the first passages I memorized as a young Christian... "Blessed or 'Happy' is the person who... For the one who doesn't obey, there's a downward regression that leads them away and distances them from the Lord. Walks...Stands...Sits!

I'll tell you how I think this happens. The worshiper begins to compare and think, "You know, I'm more committed than most of the people around me. If I don't take a full tithe to the temple today, no one's gonna know or care." It's a whisper he hears and he entertains the thought. I'm sure God's OK with it, look at all I've done for Him in the past." Then the next time he thinks, "You know, that didn't hurt anything at all. I don't sense any displeasure from the Lord, there's no need for me to feel so obligated, God doesn't want me to suffer." And little by little, imperceptibly this person one day finds himself farther away from God he ever imagined possible. What you allow in the moment, often winds up owning you in the future. You feed those whispers and they become shouts you cannot escape.

2. **MATERIAL Blessings, v.10,11.** Both provision and protection. Sometimes it is pressed down, running over, pouring into your lap. Other times the blessing is not so obvious, but manifests in zero to minimal losses that would have otherwise eaten into your harvest.

God has a way of stretching our resources when they're really His and of dissipating them when we try o hold onto them.

The Law of the Harvest- "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." One of God's Divine Laws to protect and bless us. Like, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." "Give and you will receive." Divine laws and natural laws, like law of gravity. How do they really work? Don't know, but they work every time! I'd be a fool to choose to ignore or deny them!

3. **INFLUENTIAL Blessings, v.12.**

Jesus once told a parable about a shrewd unrighteous manager and made this comment as a lesson for His followers- "I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of your worldly wealth, so that

when it fails (and it will) they will receive you into eternal dwellings.” We’ll look at this more closely next week, but He says so they will receive you into eternal dwellings- heaven. Our money is going to fail- it’s all going to be left behind, we can’t take it with us. So, use it now for its greatest effect- use it to point people to God. Invest in ministries that reach people for Jesus, that get them to heaven so they will be there to greet you when you yourself arrive.

Jesus is saying it is wise for us to use our temporary resources for permanent good!

Material Affluence for Spiritual Influence.

REASONS for Trusting God, (Matthew 6):

1. The PERSPECTIVE it Builds, v.19-23.

I love these words of Jesus! They have given me a Biblical Perspective on money and on life! Moth, Rust, Thieves, Fire!

My money won’t follow me into eternity. Only thing I can do with my money from an eternal perspective is send it ahead.

2. The PRIORITY it Brings, v. 24.

Money is important. We all need it to survive. It’s useful, we do a lot of good with it. The more we have the more good we can accomplish. Money is **important as a servant, but it’s terrible as a master.**

Joke- Jack Benny... Held up. “Your money or your life. I said, Your money or your life!” “Just a minute! I’m thinking, I’m thinking!”

Money is **important as a servant, but it’s terrible as a master.**

We need to be careful that it doesn’t begin to own us. We need to manage it carefully. If we don’t, it can begin to manage us and own us! “The borrower is the lenders slave.” Ever hear that? It’s true. “16 tons and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt. Saint Peter don’t you call me cuz I can’t go. I owe my soul to the company store.”

Gaining the right PERSPECTIVE and PRIORITY brings PEACE...

3. The PEACE it Bestows, v.25-32.

Jesus’ teaching here has taught me I can defeat with worry.

“O, you of little faith.” You see? Again, this trusting God with my finances is a spiritual issue! Jesus gives us Ageless Wisdom for Better Finances- Trouble always follows a lack of faith. A lack of faith always leads to trouble.

4. The PROMISE it Boasts, v. 33.

It’s kind of a paradox right? So much of Jesus’ teaching is this way. If I seek to build my own kingdom, in my own strength, for my own benefit, I will one day lose it all. We die, right? I may lose it before I die too.

“Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it,” -Jesus, Mark 8:35.

If I am seeking God’s Kingdom, building His kingdom on earth now with the resources He has given me to manage for Him. As I do so, He promises to meet all the needs I have on this side of heaven.

And as I’ve seen and experienced, He tends to meet even more than our basic needs. He’s a generous God to those who trust Him.

Illust: My desire to travel and see the world... Leaving PT and figuring I had to give up that dream...

We Can TRUST God:

1. **Trust God as the OWNER – Ps 24:1**... Job 41:11...

Lev 27:30... 1 Tim 6:17... All the earth and everything in it belongs to God.

2. **Trust God as the PROVIDER – Philippians 4:19** (KJV) *“But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”*

As humans, **we all have needs**. We need food, shelter, protection, clothes, jobs, money, rest, peace, and a whole list of other things.

And at some point, most of us have struggled between **trusting God to provide** and burning ourselves out *trying to make it happen on our own*. But we don't have to carry it all on our shoulders!

3 more Scriptures that show God is our Provider-

Deuteronomy 2:7 (KJV) *“...These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have not lacked a thing.”*

Psalms 146:7-9 (NLT) *“...He gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry. The Lord frees the prisoners. The Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are weighed down...”*

James 1:17 – Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, nor turning shadow.

3. Trust God as the SOURCE – John 3:27

God is the Source of Everything—Speaking of Jesus authority to baptize people as he himself was commissioned to do, John the Baptist answered those who were questioning it, “A man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven.”

Not only of money and the material world...

Of counsel— I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go. I will counsel you with my eye on you. – Psalm 32:8

Of Lovingkindness— Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, But he who trusts in the LORD, loving kindness shall surround him. - Psalm 32:10

Of Confidence— I sought the LORD, and he answered me, And delivered me from all my fears. They looked to him, and were radiant. Their faces shall never be covered with shame. - Psalms 34:5, 6

Of Purpose and Meaning— For he satisfies the longing soul. He fills the hungry soul with good. - **Psalms 107:9**

Of Direction- Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, And he will direct your paths. - **Proverbs 3:5, 6**.

Of Peace – I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world. – **John 16:33**. Prince of Peace.

Of All Spiritual Power— Now the fruit of the Spirit is...

If we consider and know that God is the Owner of it all, that He is our Provider and that He is the ultimate Source of all we have and all we need, then we have to consider something else... **Gal 5:22**.

Our RESPONSIBILITY:

1. **TURN to Him, v.7**

Returning to God is called repentance. The Israelites had fallen away from God and the symptom Malachi points to here has to do with their failure to tithe, to give offerings from the resources God had supplied for them. Tithing is not only a financial matter, it's a spiritual one. Not tithing is not a financial problem, although it can lead to one, it is a spiritual problem. It is one of which we, as children of God, need to repent. "Repent" = return, turn around. By the way, this is for believers. You have to "pent" before you can "re-pent." Just as "revivals" are for Christians, not non-Christians. You have to be "vived" before you can be "Re-vived." Anyway, if you're still seeking and haven't made a decision to follow Jesus, this is not necessarily for you. Although the Law of the Harvest is effective for anyone who employs it, God is specifically calling His followers to repent and trust in Him in the area of tithing. Our responsibility as flowers is to Turn, return to Him.

2. **TRUST Him, v.10a;** Prov18:10-11- Contrasts those who trust Him and those who trust in themselves.
3. **TEST Him, v.10b-**

GOD'S GUARANTEE: Mal. 3:10

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," say the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."