

Gather | People

God's people are to bring all that's useful to a place reserved for the benefit of the community - a Storehouse.

Just a reminder of the storehouse introduction from last week:

WE, THE CHILDREN OF THE LORD, HAVE BEEN CALLED TO COME BACK TO THE TRUE COVENANT OF GOD.

- “RETURN TO ME, AND I WILL RETURN TO YOU!” (**MALACHI 3:7 NIV**).ⁱ
- “THEN ONCE MORE THE LORD WILL ACCEPT THE OFFERINGS BROUGHT TO HIM BY [HIS PEOPLE], AS HE DID IN THE PAST” (**MALACHI 3:4 NIV**).

REMEMBER HOW WE CHEATED GOD?

WE FAILED TO TAKE AN APPROPRIATE VIEW OF HIS PLACE IN OUR LIFE AND HIS BLESSING ON OUR LIFE.

MALACHI 3:5 “I AM EAGER TO WITNESS AGAINST ALL SORCERERS AND ADULTERERS AND LIARS. I WILL SPEAK AGAINST THOSE WHO CHEAT EMPLOYEES OF THEIR WAGES, WHO OPPRESS WIDOWS AND ORPHANS, OR WHO DEPRIVE THE FOREIGNERS LIVING AMONG YOU OF JUSTICE, FOR THESE PEOPLE DO NOT FEAR ME,” SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN’S ARMIES.”

ACCORDING TO **MALACHI 3**:

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD HAS BEEN DISRESPECTED IF NOT ABANDONED,

- OUR WORSHIP HAS BEEN SELF-CENTERED AND PRETENTIOUS,
- WE GIVE UP NOTHING (LACK OF PERSONAL SACRIFICE) IN RESPECT TO GOD AND HIS BOUNDLESS LOVE AND BLESSINGS.

OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS HAVE BEEN MISDIRECTED INTO A WORLDLY MODEL,

- IN OUR MARRIAGES, FRIENDSHIPS, AND FAMILY

- IN SOCIAL CONCERNS – TREATING OTHERS INAPPROPRIATELY AND WITHOUT REGARD FOR THEIR HUMANITY (NO SOCIAL JUSTICE BASED ON GOD’S LOVE AND REQUIREMENTS)

HEBREWS 13:16

“AND DON’T FORGET TO DO GOOD AND TO SHARE WITH THOSE IN NEED. THESE ARE THE SACRIFICES THAT PLEASE GOD.”

Let’s begin today with the idea of bringing, or “Gathering.”

Malachi 3:10 begins with “**Bring** your tithes into the storehouse...”

Gather these tithes – or *promised sacrifices* – to the Lord’s temple (*His place of sanctuary*).

- Bring your **WORSHIP** – your confident hope of salvation to the church – the modern-day storehouse of God
- Bring your **EXPERIENCES** – your offering of the **painful** moments, the **celebrations**, the **questions**, and the **disappointments** to the altar, the visible image of Christ – the church.
- Bring your **SPIRITUAL GIFTS, APTITUDE, PERSONALITY**, the offering of your journey of life to the storehouse.
- Bring your sacrifice of **TIME AND SPACE** to the storehouse.
- Bring your sacrifices **OF WORLDLY VALUE** to the church so God can supply the physical needs of others to love as Christ loves.

When we bring our promised sacrifices to God, we engage in people’s lives.

We are to fill the Storehouse with His **PEOPLE!**

We are to **PURSUE THEM!**

The Great Commandments (Matthew 22:34-40)

- Love God completely (getting our hearts right first).
- Love others as we do ourselves (sharing our new creation with others).

We are to **DISCIPLE THEM!**

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

*“...go and **make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ **Teach** these new disciples **to obey** all the commands I have given you.”*

After we find them, we are to,

- Disciple them – Usher them lovingly into the presence of regeneration.
- Baptize them – Confirm their obedience
- Teach them – Mentor them into deeper respect and obedience to the Lord.

We are to **SERVE EACH NEED!**

Ephesians 6:6-7

⁶Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. ⁷Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

The Great Religion (James 1:27)

²⁷Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

- Religion that is acceptable by God

- Religion that is pure
- Religion that is faultless

The “care of” the marginalized: *To be completely devoted to or obsessed by...* (definition contributed by Encarta Dictionary).

Luke 4:8

⁸ *Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”*

Worship and service are not the same, but they are inseparable.

All we bring to the storehouse will be:

An INVESTMENT for the kingdom of God today and for GENERATIONS to come!

Psalm 22:30-31 NIV

³⁰ *Posterity [succeeding generations] will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord.*

³¹ *They will proclaim his righteousness,
declaring to a people yet unborn:
He has done it!*

ⁱ All scripture references will be taken from the New Living Translation (NLT) unless otherwise noted.