

Understanding God's Love

Malachi 1

Historical Context:

During the days of Haggai, although the Israelites in Jerusalem had fallen short of God's expectation, when they were challenged, they would acknowledge their wrongs and finally completed the foundation of the temple. About sixty years after the completion of the Temple, the Israelites saw nothing wrong with the way they were living and were willing to defend their behaviour and blame God for their reality, and so God sent Malachi to challenge them.

1. Covenantal Love vs. 1-3

The people of Israel had the responsibility of living in accordance with the covenant they had with the LORD. They were unfaithful to God and defended their behaviour as they believed they were no longer experiencing God's love. God sent Malachi to remind them that His love for them has always been present and reminds them of His love throughout their covenant history and through His response to the Edomites.

How Can We Arrive With This Attitude? Questioning God's Love.

- We have lost the sense of wonder at what God had done for us. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
- We are not intentionally looking at what we already have. We are focusing on wants that are centred on worldly things.
- Our faith has become nothing important.... We just go through the motions without wholeheartedly living for the LORD. We have forgotten what God's Word says. (Ephesians 5:8-20, John 10:10... etc.)

Those who are in Christ Jesus are living within the new covenant. A covenant that we experience because of God's love; Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and rising again three days later. The love He lavishes upon us we are called to do together as the church; to love God and to love each other as God loves us (John 13:34; 1 John 4:7-12; Ephesians 5:8-20).

Questions

- What role should self-examination play in our lives? (Matthew 7:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5)
- In what ways may we be blind to the blessings God has given us?

Reflection:

God reminds Israel that they are the covenant people. Reality: They are what they are because of God's attitude towards them. The LORD reminds them with the reality of His love. We are

God's people as we received the new covenant because of Jesus death on the cross for our sins and resurrecting from the dead three days later. As a result, we are what we are because of God's attitude towards us. Take some time and reflect on the attitude God has towards us and how we do not deserve this wonderful reality.