



The “Do More” Challenge “Give More” Malachi 3:7-12

Introduction

Cary First exists to demonstrate the love and share the good news about Jesus everyday, everywhere, with everyone.

If Cary First is going to accomplish our purpose and impact lostness in our town we must “Do More!”

Lostness— Refers to a person who is far from God. Anyone that does not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is spiritually dead, separated from God, does not have the hope of eternal life and is destined for ruin, destruction and death.

The “**Do More Challenge**” is a compelling task calling people to utilize their uniqueness, gifts, abilities, and resources to advance God’s Kingdom on the earth.

The “**Do More Challenge**” is a challenge to:

Dream More

Pray More

Read More

Serve More

Give More

Connect More

Have More Gospel Conversations

Malachi is the last prophetic messenger of the Old Testament period.

When Malachi prophesied— life was not easy for the people of God.

The people of God were suffering under the harsh rule of the Persians.

The hope of God's people had vanished. They did not believe the covenant promises of God.

The hearts of the people of God were hardened, wicked and resentful toward God.

They were also suffering because their harvests were minimal because they were subject to the devastation from locusts as well as the natural elements of drought, wind and burning heat.

Malachi's prophecy was a message to the people of God— Obedience to the Word of God results in the blessing of God. Disobedience to the Word of God brings a curse on the people of God.

Malachi presents six oracles that God's people must pay attention to.

Scripture

Since the days of your ancestors, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord of Armies. Yet you ask, "How can we return?"

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!" "How do we rob you?" you ask. "By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions.

9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me.

10 Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way," says the Lord of Armies. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.

11 I will rebuke the devourer, for you, so that it will not ruin the produce of your land and your vine in your field will not fail to produce fruit," says the Lord of Armies.

12 “Then all the nations will consider you fortunate, for you will be a delightful land,” says the Lord of Armies. CSB

Quotes of the Day

“Giving from a heart of generosity comes from recognizing all “my stuff” is not really “my stuff” it is all God’s stuff. God has called us to be good stewards with the stuff He has blessed us with.” — Pat Kilby

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."
— Jim Elliot, Martyred Missionary

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over—will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” — Jesus

Cindy Bartholomew Testimony Video

Every follower of Christ is called to give.

We are most satisfied and blessed when we give to God and others from a generous and cheerful spirit.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 “The point is this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work.”

If Cary First is going to accomplish our purpose and impact lostness in our town and beyond we must “Give More!”

What does generous giving really look like?

It looks like Stephen King:

After his near death experience in June of 1999 Stephen King recognized the fundamental truth about giving:

The Prolific author of many horror novels Stephen King made a speech at the Vassar College commencement on May 20, 2001. He entitled it "Scaring You to Action" and told how two years earlier he had been lying in a ditch by a country road, seriously injured after being hit by a van as he walked beside the road in June 1999. "I had a MasterCard in my wallet, but when you're lying in the ditch with broken glass in your hair, no one accepts MasterCard."

On that day and in the following months, he got a painful but important insight into many of life's simple truths: "We came in naked and broke. We may be dressed when we go out, but we're just as broke."

Of all the power most Americans have, King said, "the greatest is undoubtedly the power of compassion, the ability to give. We have enormous resources in this country...but they are only yours on loan, only yours to give for a short while.... I want you to consider making your lives one long gift to others, and why not? All you have is on loan anyway. All you want to get at the getting place, from the Maserati you may dream about to the retirement fund some broker will try to sell you on, none of that is real. All that lasts is what you pass on. The rest is smoke and mirrors." King invited the audience to imagine a typical American backyard, with mom, dad, and the kids enjoying a delicious barbecue next to their swimming pool. "And standing around that fence, looking in, are emaciated men and women, starving children. They are silent. They only watch."

Citation: Stephen King, "Vassar Commencement Speech," StephenKing.com (5-20-01).

Hebrews 13:16 "Don't neglect to do what is good and to share, for God is pleased with such sacrifices." CSB

2 Timothy 6:17-19 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth, but on God, who richly provides us with all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of what is truly life. CSB

By taking a close look Malachi we will discover the importance and blessing of giving.

Today we are going to examine the fifth oracle of Malachi calling on God's People to obey God.

In **Malachi 3:7-12** we discover:

A Problem

A Principle

A Challenge

A Promise

In **Malachi 3:7-12** we discover:

A Problem vv.7-9

“Since the days of your ancestors, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Armies. Yet you ask, “How can we return?” 8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!” “How do we rob you?” you ask. “By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions. 9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me. CSB

In this fifth oracle of Malachi there are three obvious and significant Problems:

Disobedience to the Word of God v.7a

“Since the days of your ancestors, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them.” CSB

Disconnect from God v.7b

“Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Armies. Yet you ask, “How can we return?” CSB

The Curse of God v.8-9

“Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!” “How do we rob you?” you ask. “By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions. 9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me. CSB

To **rob** God comes from the Hebrew word **“qaba”** which means to cheat God, steal from God, deceive and defraud God.

Those who do not give the “tenth and the contributions” are under a curse from God.

The word translated **“curse”** comes from the Hebrew word **“Meerah”** meaning an invocation of evil or injury. A curse is the opposite of God’s blessing.

The fifth oracle of Malachi reveals a significant Problem.

In **Malachi 3:7-12** we discover:

A Principle v.10a

“Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way,” says the Lord of Armies. “See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.” CSB

God calls His people to bring **“the tithe” — the full tenth** into the storehouse so that the Work of God can be accomplished through the local church and beyond.

The principal of the tithe is to give to God a portion of what He has blessed us with.

Giving has always been part of God's plan to advance His Kingdom on the earth.

The principle of giving has several qualities:

Give to God from our "First fruits."

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest; ¹⁰then your barns will be completely filled, and your vats will overflow with new wine. CSB

Giving to God with a "**First fruits**" mentality means Give to God the first and the best of what we have been blessed with and expect God to bless what is left over.

When we tithe from our "first fruits" we are advancing the Kingdom of God in Cary, Wake County, North Carolina, the United States and throughout the world!

HOW MUCH MORE COULD CARY FIRST DO TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF LOSTNESS IF EVERY ONE IN OUR CHURCH FOLLOWED THE PRINCIPLE OF TITHING?

Giving to God with a "**First fruits**" mentality means giving to God from the the first thing that comes in. The natural thought is to think, "If I give to God from the first of what I receive— what if I don't enough to pay the bills and buy the groceries?"

In **Mark 12:41-44** Jesus teaches us the difference between "**First fruit**" giving and "**Leftover**" giving.

"Sitting across from the temple treasury, he watched how the crowd dropped money into the treasury. Many rich people were putting in large sums. ⁴²Then a poor widow came and dropped in two tiny coins worth very little. ⁴³Summoning his disciples, he said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor

widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴For they all gave out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had—all she had to live on.” CSB

In this passage Jesus observes two motives for giving:

A. Giving From Our Leftovers vv.43-44a

⁴³ Summoning His disciples, He said to them, “I assure you: This poor widow has put in more than all those giving to the temple treasury. ⁴⁴ **For they all gave out of their surplus,**

The word translated “**surplus**” comes from the Greek word “**periss eu o**” which means that which is leftover, the abundance.

Here is the problem with giving God the leftovers— what happens when there is nothing leftover— does that mean God gets less than He requires, or even nothing at all?

Leftover giving does not honor God!

What does leftover giving really look like?

The Butterball Turkey Company set up a telephone hotline to answer consumer questions about preparing holiday turkeys. One woman called to inquire about cooking a turkey that had been in the bottom of her freezer for 23 years. The Butterball representative told her the turkey would probably be safe to eat if the freezer had been kept below zero for the entire 23 years. But the Butterball representative warned her that even if the turkey was safe to eat, the flavor would probably have deteriorated to such a degree that she would not recommend eating it. **The caller replied, "That's what I thought. So I will give the turkey to our church."**

Citation: Paul Harvey daily radio broadcast 11-22-95.

Jesus observes two motives for giving: Giving from our leftovers:

B. Giving From Our Livelihood vv.43-44b

Summoning His disciples, He said to them, “I assure you: This poor widow has put in more than all those giving to the temple treasury. ⁴⁴ For they all gave out of their surplus, **but she out of her poverty has put in everything she possessed —all she had to live on.**”

The “**poor widow**” gave to God everything she had to live on— **she worshiped God with her livelihood!**

The “**poor widow**” gave two tiny coins— she gave the smallest coin of value.

She gave the “**greatest**” gift of value— SHE GAVE ALL SHE HAD!

The difference between the gifts of the rich and the gift of the poor widow— she understood the value of what God requires:

Genesis 22 is the story of Abraham, Isaac and their sacrifice to God.

From **Genesis 22** we learn there are four requirements of an acceptable sacrifice:

We must give our Best
We must give it Now
We must give it Freely
We must give it All

The principle of giving has several qualities:

We are called to Give to God with a “Cheerful Spirit.”

2 Corinthians 2:7 “Each person should do as he has decided in his heart —not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since **God loves a cheerful giver.**”

The phrase “**cheerful giver**” comes from the words “**Hilaros**”— a willing, happy, cheerful, merciful “**dotes**”— One who transfers something of value to another without expecting compensation.

The principle of giving has several qualities:

We are called to Give to God “Generously.”

2 Corinthians 2:11 You will be enriched in every way for all **generosity**,

The word “**generosity**” comes from the Greek word “haplotes” — sincere, not self seeking, bountiful, generosity.

Generosity— A sincere readiness to give more of something, than is strictly necessary or expected— Things such as money, possessions time, ability, and encouragement.

God Blesses Generosity—

Psalms 112:5-10 Good will come to the one who lends generously and conducts his business fairly. ⁶ He will never be shaken. The righteous one will be remembered forever. ⁷ He will not fear bad news; his heart is confident, trusting in the Lord. ⁸ His heart is assured; he will not fear. In the end he will look in triumph on his foes. ⁹ He distributes freely to the poor; his righteousness endures forever. His horn will be exalted in honor. ¹⁰ The wicked one will see it and be angry; he will gnash his teeth in despair. The desire of the wicked leads to ruin. CSB

The principle of giving has several qualities:

We are called to Give to God “Consistently.”

The New Testament Church continued what was started in the Old Testament **Deuteronomy 26:1-19** — God has always commanded His people to give in order to Advance His Kingdom on the Earth.

I Corinthians 16:1-2 Now about the collection for the saints: You should do the same as I instructed the Galatian churches. ² On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he prospers, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. HCSB

From this text we learn **Giving should be Consistent, Timely and Proportionate.**

The fifth oracle of Malachi reveals a Significant Problem, a Biblical Principle:

In **Malachi 3:7-12** we discover:

A Challenge v.10b

“Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this way,**” says the Lord of Armies. “See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.” CSB

The phrase “**Test me in this way**” comes from the Hebrew word “**Na**” meaning a procedure intended to establish the quality or credibility of something, in this case YAHWEH.

The word “**test**” carries with it the idea of testing a person’s power, knowledge and skill.

Literally the Lord is saying— Test me and let me prove to you— Trust me and let me show you.

When we step up to the challenge of tithing we are showing God that we trust Him more than our money!

When we step up to the challenge of tithing we believe God is more powerful than money!

When we step up to the challenge of tithing we prove our faith is in God more than money!

The fifth oracle of Malachi reveals a Significant Problem, a Biblical Principle, a Curse:

In **Malachi 3:7-12** we discover:

A Promise v.10c-12

“See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure. 11 I will rebuke the devourer, for you, so that it will not ruin the produce of your land and your vine in your field will not fail to produce fruit,” says the Lord of Armies. 12 “Then all the nations will consider you fortunate, for you will be a delightful land,” says the Lord of Armies. CSB

When we trust God with our tithe— God has promised to bless us beyond measure and protect our resources.

What does opening the flood gates of heaven and blessing you without measure really look like? Texas Rangers story— The equipment manager saw Myles and asked— Do you have any Texas Ranger gear?

God can do what seems humanly impossible to provide the needs of His people!

God made a promise that He would bless without measure those who trust and honor His word by tithing.

Commitment Card

A Prayer of Commitment—

God, I understand Your Word teaches the tithe is the Lord's.

God, my desire is to honor You in my life, I commit to trust and obey Your Word.

God, I know Your Word says, “Where your treasure is there will your heart be also.” I also believe You will bless me without measure If I obey your Word and give you the “first fruits” of what you have blessed me with.

Today I commit my tithe to you.

Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus said—“Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” CSB

The Bible has much to say about giving and generosity:

Giving is an act of:

Humility

Worship

Obedience

Faith

Investment in the Kingdom of God

Expectation