



Malachi 3:6-12

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

All through Scripture we are told not to put God to the test. Then comes Malachi 3, the one place God himself says: test me in this. Bring the whole tithe, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven. Pastor Matt was honest that this topic is hard to preach and hard to hear, and he preached it anyway, because he has watched what it does. The series was never really about finances. Money is a pathway to greater faith, because giving cannot be done without thinking and praying. Bring the loaves and the fish, and let God do the multiplying. The whole thing comes down to one word: test.

To get started

- What is something you only believed after you tried it yourself?

Looking back at the message

People carry baggage into any sermon about giving. Name that at the start.

- 1 Pastor Matt admitted that money is a difficult topic even for him to preach. Why do you think giving is such a hard subject in most churches?
- 2 The series was never really about finances. Money is a pathway to greater faith, because giving forces thinking and praying. Does that reframe the topic for you?
- 3 Our church talks about five ways of approaching God: gather, grow, group, give, go. Which is strongest for you right now, and which is weakest? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Malachi 3:6-12. Notice that God is the one who proposes the test.

- 4 Read Malachi 3:6-10. What is God's accusation against the people, and what invitation follows it?
- 5 Everywhere else, testing God is discouraged. Here he invites it. What makes this test different?
- 6 Read verses 11-12. What kind of blessing is described? Notice it is protection and reputation, not just money.
- 7 Read Matthew 14:16-21. What did the disciples actually have in their hands, and what did Jesus do with it? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

He named three groups: never given, giving some, giving beyond. Let people locate themselves without announcing it.

- 8 Pastor Matt said the real value of giving is that it forces a conversation with God and, if you are married, with your spouse. Have you ever actually prayed about your giving?
- 9 What is the conversation you need to have about money, and who is it with?
- 10 Pastor Matt described a year he worked without a paycheck and learned that faithfulness is not contingent on being paid. Where is that kind of faithfulness being tested in your life?
- 11 What are the loaves and fish in your hands right now? OPTIONAL

The group together

Do not let this turn into anyone prescribing a number for anyone else.

- 12 Why is money usually the last thing people hand over in their faith?
- 13 How can this group talk about giving without judging each other's situations?
- 14 A year from now, what would you want to be able to testify that God did?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What would it look like for you to actually test God in this, and when will you start?

You might pray about

- For honest conversations with God and with spouses
- For those for whom this feels impossible right now
- For faith that grows through obedience