

The God of Justice  
Malachi 2:17-3:6

Review:

1. We tend to cry out for God to bring justice to our enemies
2. But God promises that He will first purify His priests, burning away the sin of all those who have been set apart for His service
3. Purification requires total transformation, dying to ourselves and living only for Christ
4. Jesus makes our purification possible by dying for our sins and by giving all who trust in Him new, resurrection life

Reflect:

1. Do you look forward to the coming of Christ? Why or why not?
2. What areas of your life stand in need of some purifying? What changes can you make to bring them into greater conformity with Christ?

Go further: Read Matthew 3:1-12

1. Where did John preach?
2. How does verse 2 summarize John's message?
3. Verse 3 is a quote from Isaiah 40:3. What did Isaiah say that John would do?
4. How does verse 4 describe John's appearance and diet?
5. From where did John's listeners come?
6. What does verse 6 say John did for them? What did they do as part of this ritual?
7. According to verse 7, what did John call many of the Pharisees and Sadducees?
8. In verse 8, how did John tell people to live?
9. Verse 9 reminds us that many of John's listeners trusted in the fact that they were physical descendants of Abraham. Why did John say their trust was misplaced?
10. What did John say God would do to trees that don't bear good fruit?
11. How did John describe the baptism he administered to his listeners?
12. How did John describe the One Who would come after him?
13. What did John say he was not worthy to do?
14. How did John say the One coming after him would baptize His followers?
15. What does John say the One coming after him would do to the wheat and the chaff?

Summary and Application:

1. What does the way John lived say about His priorities? How did John's lifestyle fit the message he preached?
2. What kind of fruit can you bear in your life that would demonstrate a repentant heart?
3. In John's time, people would separate the husks or chaff from the kernels of grain by throwing it up into the air and using a fan to blow the lighter chaff away. John uses this image to describe the way Jesus will separate righteous and wicked people. Do you see yourself as wheat or chaff? Why?