

MALACHI #4
Seven questions of the backslider
WHERE IS THE GOD OF JUSTICE?

Mal. 2 ¹⁷ You have wearied the Lord with your words. “How have we wearied him?” you ask. By saying, “All who do evil are good in the eyes of the Lord , and he is pleased with them” or “Where is the God of justice?” NIV

The world is full of injustice. Often people becomes so exasperated with injustice until they feel like it doesn't really matter how good we live, especially since those who do evil seem to get away with evil unpunished.

Does it make a difference how we live?

Are those who are doing evil always going to get away with their sin?

Will there ever be a time when everyone will be judged properly?

It does matter how we live.

There will come a time when justice will be carried out even if it doesn't happen always now!

We form opinions when justice is not carried out immediately.

The backslider will react in the following ways:

I. THE BACKSLIDER DEVELOPS FALSE OPINIONS ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

A. They were cynical about God's righteousness.

1. If God is just why don't he do something to those who do evil?

2. **Because God is doing nothing about it now, therefore those who are doing evil must be right.**

In other words they were calling evil good!

Isaiah 5²⁰ Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

One of the greatest problems slipping into church culture is this idea that **evil is being explained away**. It is not seen as sin, but weakness, failure, sickness, or out right excused because God is love! Wrong!

3. They conclude that God is more pleased with the sinner than the saint!

Paul addresses this problem in Romans 6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

B. They become careless.

1. Careless living is the result of having a cynical attitude.
2. If God doesn't do something to them for what they are doing, then why should I make an effort to be righteous?

The wheel of God's justice grinds slow but grinds exceedingly fine.

II. GOD'S ANSWER TO THE BACKSLIDER.

Mal. 3¹ Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

A. "I will send my messenger"

1. This is his **prophet**. He is to prepare the way for His coming.
2. God has his **word declared before he acts**.

B. "the Lord...shall **suddenly come to his temple**."

1. When God begins to carry out his justice **he moves quickly (suddenly)**.
2. When the Lord comes to his temple **things that are wrong are made right**.

John 2 15... he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; ¹⁶ And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

3. The Lord must come to his temple **first before he can judge the ungodly**.

1Peter 4 ¹⁷ For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? ¹⁹ Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

4. God does not let evildoers escape punishment, **it is only delayed in mercy so they have time to repent**

III. GOD'S JUSTICE WILL BRING PURITY

Malachi 3 ² But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he

will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.

⁵“So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me,” says the Lord Almighty.

A. Christ first coming was to forgive sin.

B. His second coming will be to bring judgment. v5

1. Who can endure?
2. Who can stand?

C. He demands purity.

He will be like refiner's fire and launderer's soap.
(purging) (cleaning)

D. He will judge those who do not fear him.

Who are these who do not fear him?
drug users, adulterers, liars, those who take advantage of the poor, and those who mistreat the foreigner.

Injustice is only apparent on this side of eternity, God will bring to justice every wrong that is done by evildoers if they leave this life without having repented of their sins.