

Malachi 3:6-12 (ESV)

⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ ⁸Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. ⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. ¹¹I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. ¹²Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

Many times when you leave a business the owner or worker will ask you to “come again.” Obviously they know the value of “repeat customers.” Satisfied customers not only return but tell their friends.

Churches often ask their visitors to “come again.” They know the value of repeat “customers,” too. In American churches we often view success by “nickels and noses.” Too often we treat people as “targets” or “prospects” instead of seeing them as God sees them – His children.

God tells us to “come again” (or “return to me”) as stated above in Malachi 3. It reminds me of times when I would return home to visit my parents. When it was time to leave, they would encourage me to “come again.” They wanted their child to come home to be with them. Now that my daughter and her family live six hours away, when they make the trek to see me I also want them to “come again.” I miss my child and want to spend time with her and her family.

I kind of think that is how God views us – as His children and wants to spend time and eternity with us. He’s not interested in mere numbers, He is interested in His children. In fact, He has always made provisions to be with us.

- He walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden (**Genesis 3:8** – in the cool of the day)
- He created the Tabernacle so He could dwell in the midst of His people (**Exodus 25:8, ESV, ⁸And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.**)
- Later He permitted the Temple for the same purpose (**2 Chronicles 7:1, ESV . . . the glory of the LORD filled the temple.**)
- The incarnation of the Word of God was a temporary dwelling among us (**John 1:14**)
- The coming of the Holy Spirit is also an indicator of His desire to be with us (**2 Corinthians 1:22, ESV ²²and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.**)

He truly dwells in our hearts by faith (**Ephesians 3:17**). An aspect of that faith is that it draws us back to Him, to be with Him as children with their parents.

God isn’t treating us prospective “club members.” He treats us as children with whom He wants to spend time and eternity. He wants to know us and us to know Him. Return!

Keep The Light Burning!
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