

GROWTH GROUP



**CREATED**  
TO DRAW NEAR

# CONTENTS

## **Introduction to Malachi**

Created to Draw Near

## **Personal Growth Guide:**

Navigate

## **Growth Group Guide:**

Connection with the Passage

## **Week 1 | Love Starts with God**

Malachi 1:1-5

## **Week 2 | Wholehearted Worship**

Malachi 1:6-2:9

## **Week 3 | God Cares about Marriage**

Malachi 2:10-16

## **Week 4 | Come Near to God**

Malachi 2:17-3:5

## **Week 5 | Rejecting Other Lovers**

Malachi 3:6-12

## **Week 6 | God is Worthy**

Malachi 3:13-4:6





## CREATED TO DRAW NEAR

### MALACHI

Coming out of the Covid-19 restrictions could be likened to coming out of exile. We've been isolated from family, banished to our houses, uprooted from our routines, and outlawed from meeting together. But now as we begin to emerge from Covid-19 restrictions, this exodus brings with it a strange sense of discouragement, disarray and dissonance. Because what emerges with us isn't just the good changes. But what also emerges is a new normal and unhealthy behaviour to face.

In Malachi we're given a window into what it was like for God's people to come out of exile. We see that God changed His people through their exile. Although they went into exile with an idol problem, it does seem as they emerge this is no longer an issue. But what's also revealed is they're hearts still have an unhealthy attitude towards God. Although God's people are physically returning to the land, the sad reality is their hearts still seem to have not returned to God.

We don't know anything about the person Malachi ('my messenger'). Assuming Malachi was one person, his messages from God have been recorded because they are God's words for God's people. The occasion was when the exiled people of Israel had been allowed to return to Judah from captivity in Babylon about 460 BC. The small minority of people are now back in the land God gave them but they are far from the heights of yesteryear. They know they must hold to the covenant relationship with God to remain his people. That means upholding things like the Mosaic Law including the sacrificial system. But they are surrounded by foreigners prospering in their pagan lifestyle.

Malachi's message is a collection of 6 speeches reflecting a similar structure of an assertion ("God lays charges"), questioning ("what have we done wrong?"), response ("but you say") and implication spelling out the warnings and promises of the future.

These four elements are well illustrated by the first disputation (1:2-5):

- Assertion (by God) "I have loved you" (1:2a)
- Questioning (by Israel) "How have you loved us?" (1:2b)
- Response (Is not Esau ... the people with whom the Lord is angry forever!" (1:2c-4)
- Implication "You own eyes shall see it ... beyond the borders of Israel!" (1:5)

Malachi points out, at the very least, Israel's spiritual apathy and contempt for God, and at the very worst, their spiritual adultery and breaking faith with God. However Israel's failures are not addressed first, but God's ancient love for his people is the prior and primary concern on the Prophet's mind.

This emphasis of God's love reveals that Israel lacked a sense of God's love (2:2-5). This lack was expressed through their contempt in worship (1:6-2:9), unfaithful marriages (2:10-16), wrong attitude to giving to God's work (3:6-12) and the consideration that living for God was a waste of time (2:17-3:5, 3:13-4:3).

What becomes clear in Malachi is that Israel is nursing a sense of neglect and unfair treatment from God. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah will be written shortly after Malach to address the same issues.





## NAVIGATE

**Navigate Devotional is a podcast that's designed to help you engage with the God of the Bible.**

Each episode is a 10 minute devotional released each day Monday to Friday. We hope that this can be a part of your routine each day as you encounter God.

You can find Navigate by searching Navigate Devotional on Spotify or go to our website [www.navigatedevotional.com](http://www.navigatedevotional.com).

**PERSONAL GROWTH: NAVIGATE**



## GROWTH GROUP GUIDE:

### CONNECTION WITH GOD'S WORD

Each week we will be exploring the passage by trying to connect with our genuine human experience of people with God. It's one thing to come away from the passage having learned something new and interesting about God, but that's not the goal God has in mind for those who listen to him. He wants our knowledge of him to change us.

- God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances. What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

*[When you think 'Life'. We are thinking about experience: what we are told about what life is like, God (Father/Son/Spirit), people, themselves?]*

- How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?
- How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?
- How is Jesus the answer we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?
- If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what does your actions show about your relationship with God? How is God challenging this area of your life? How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future? What would that look like?

*Thinking of our 'relationship with God'. Think with your heart. Although I might know this in my head, does my heart know this? Although I know this to be true of the Christian experience, is this my experience? Although I know this, do I live this way?]*





# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 1:1-5

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?



# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

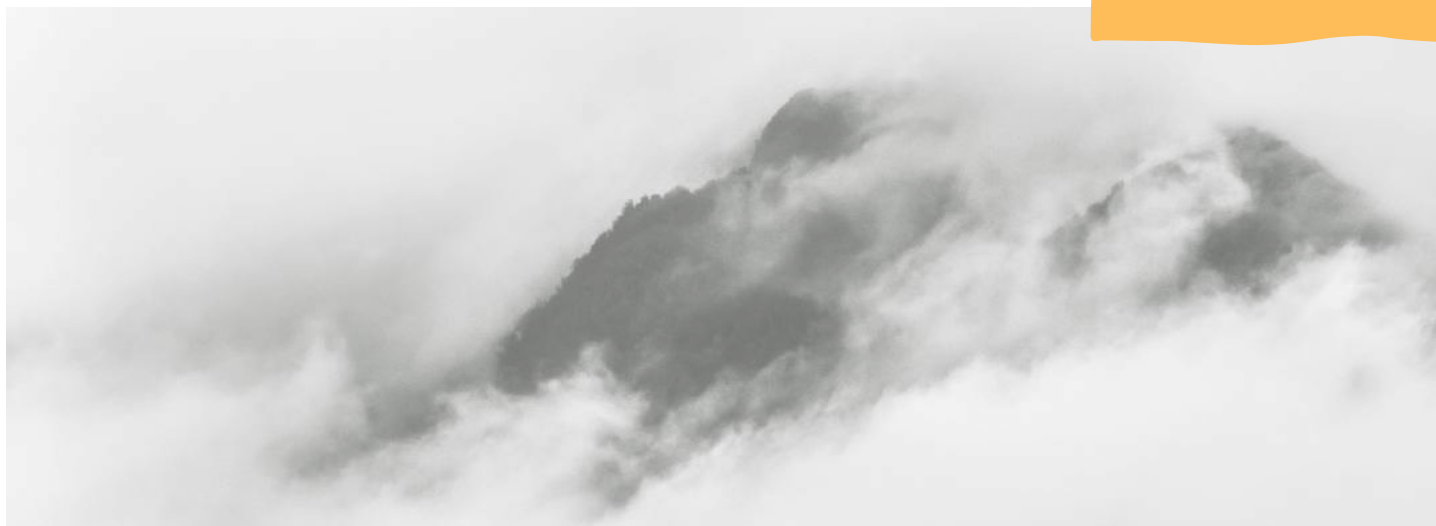
How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?





# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 1:6-2:9

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?

# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?





# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 2:10-16

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?

# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?





# WEEK 4: COME NEAR TO GOD

PERSONAL GROWTH MALACHI 2:17-3:5

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?" 3 "I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty. 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, 4 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 to put you on trial. 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 the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



TUNE INTO NAVIGATE  
DEVOTIONAL PODCAST

# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 2:17-3:5

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?

# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

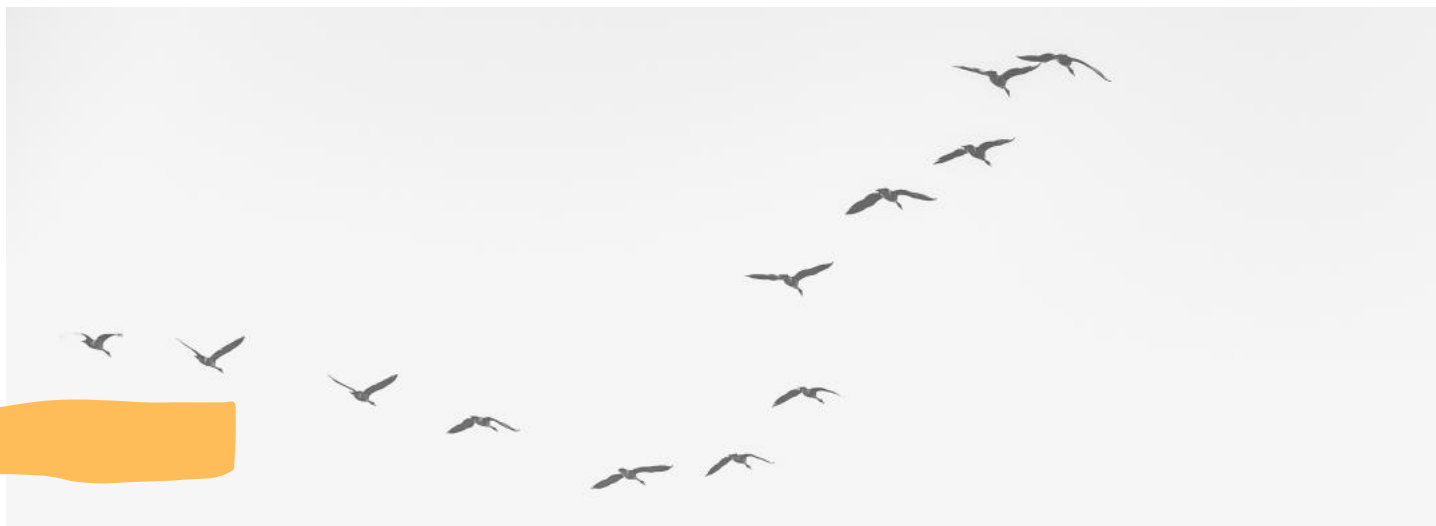
How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?





# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 3:6-12

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?

# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?







# GROWTH GROUP: MALACHI 3:13-4:6

1. God invites his people to engage with him in conversation and to air grievances.

What is the issue raised in this passage? Can you identify with this issue?

2. How is Israel's behaviour (the horizontal) a reflection of their relationship with God (the vertical)?

3. How does God instruct them to get their relationship right with Him?

4. *How is Jesus the answer* we need for us to be the person God wants us to be?

5. If how we relate to God is reflected in how we live, what do your actions show about your relationship with God?

How is God challenging this area of your life?

How does this inspire a new hope for you into the future?

What would that look like?

# PRAYER:

How has God been at work in your life this week?

How are you going with God?

How are you going with others God has placed in your life?

Something God's put on your heart from the passage?

Who are the people you are on mission to?

What can we pray for them this week?



# EXTRA NOTES

# EXTRA NOTES



[www.southsidepc.org](http://www.southsidepc.org)



@southsidepc



@southside.church



[www.navigatedevotional.com](http://www.navigatedevotional.com)



**CHECK OUT OUR  
DAILY DEVOTIONAL  
PODCAST**



Search 'Southside Magnification' on Spotify



[soundcloud.com/southside-presbyterian](https://soundcloud.com/southside-presbyterian)

**MISSED A SERMON?  
CATCH UP HERE!**



