



Sermon
Rev. Lang Yang

“One Who Serve God and One Who Does Not Serve”

Last Sunday of the Church Year
St. Michael’s Lutheran Church
11-24-19

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Malachi 3:18, “And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.” (ESV). This is the word of God. (Cross-reference – Malachi 1:1; 3:15-16; 4:1-3, Genesis 18:25, Daniel 2:18, Amos 5:15)

Illustration “Liar” (Show talking dog for sale)



A guy sees a sign in front of a house: “Talking Dog for Sale.” He rings the bell, and the owner tells him the dog is in the backyard. The guy goes into the backyard and sees a black mutt just sitting there. “You talk?” he asks. “Yep,” the mutt replies. “So, what’s your story?” The mutt looks up and says, “Well, I discovered my gift of talking pretty young, and I wanted to help the government. So, I told the CIA about my gift; in no time they had me jetting from country to country, sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no one figured a dog would be eavesdropping. I was one of their most valuable spies eight years

running. The jetting around really tired me out, and I knew I wasn’t getting any younger, and I wanted to settle down. So I signed up for a job at the airport to do some undercover security work, mostly wandering near suspicious characters and listening in. I uncovered some incredible dealings there and was award a batch of medals. Had a wife, a mess of puppies, and now I’m just retired.” The guy is amazed. He goes back in and asks the owner what he wants for the dog. The owner says, “Ten dollars.” The guy says, “This dog is amazing. Why on earth are you selling him so cheap?” The owner replies, “He’s a big liar. He didn’t do any of that stuff.” (from Mikey’s Funnies) <https://www.preaching.com/sermon-illustrations/illustration-skill-exaggeration/>

I. Are you the one who serves God through your word and deed, or are you the one who does not serve God but telling others that you are serving God? Today we will take a look at the one who serves God and the one who doesn’t. There are two different groups of people. (Show my messenger)



First, this group of people that grumbles and complaint against God because there is no reward for serving God. They don’t want to serve God if they didn’t get something in return. Before we continue with our message today, who is Malachi? The name Malachi means “My Messenger” is one of the prophets of the Old Testament. Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament before the Gospel of Matthew. The prophet Malachi wrote that God knows the Israelite speak arrogantly against God, whether through their mouth or in their hearts. Even though

people complaint against God, He still loves them and wants them to return to serve God through their faithfulness and honesty so that they may have hope for a better future. God promises to restore their complacency and indifference so that they may return to being the people of God. (Bad – Good)



The first group of people complaint against God, “*You have spoken arrogantly against me,*” says the LORD. “*Yet you ask, ‘What have we said against you?’ ‘You have said, ‘It is futile to serve God. What do we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly*

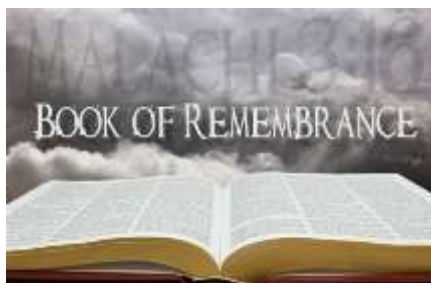
evildoers, prosper, and even when they put God to the test, they get away with it.’” (Malachi 3:13-15). God said this to the Israelites because their ancestors being disobedience. Even the generation after the parent from being good to bad and still being disobedience to God. Everyone does things according to their wishes without fearing God for consequences. When the prophet Malachi speaks God's love to the Israelite, all they did was a complaint. They offer blind, lame, or diseased animals to God (Malachi 1:8), they did evil and claim to be good in the eyes of the Lord (Malachi 2:17), and they claim that it is futile to serve God. (Malachi 3:14). (Show what does God expect of me?)



During the time of Malachi and the people of today, is it any different? Isn't this generation continue to complain about God? People want to do the things of this world according to their will instead of God's will. If God doesn't answer people's prayer, then people complaint. Too many people said, “If I do something for God, then it is God's turn to do something for me.” Similarly, too many Christians said, “We have a church where we gather to worship, people know who and where we are, why bother to go evangelize? Since people already know where we are, they should just come to us and not us going to them. Many

Christian asked, “What does God expect of me? What do I get if I were to serve God?” If God doesn't give, then people will be angry and complaint because they haven't received anything in return because those that are evil-doers still prosper (Malachi 3:15), so what is the point of serving the Lord? This group of people does not serve the Lord.

- II. The **second** group of people is the people who fear God and esteemed His name. They willingly and gladly serve the Lord to the best of their ability. They encourage one another to continue serving God regardless of their trial and suffering. (Show book of remembrance)



The book of Malachi is a book of remembrance. The prophet Malachi writes, “*Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who fear the Lord and honored his name.*” (Malachi 3:16). Christians who fear the Lord come together to be active in service, nurturing their fain, giving glory to God, encouraging one another, and leading others to Jesus Christ (ANGEL). When believer serve God, believe and

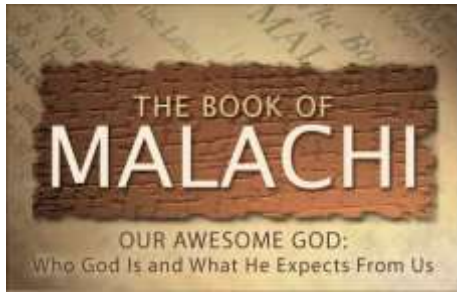
trusting Him, they will be reward with their name written in the book of life. (Show engrave in the palm of hand)



In the Old Testament, God had written, “*But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.*” (Exodus 32:32). The prophet Isaiah writes, “*See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.*” (Isaiah 49:16). The Apostle John writes, “*And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the*

throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.” (Revelation 20:12).

(Show the book of Malachi)



Malachi writes, “On the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty, “they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son, who serves him.”

(Malachi 3:17). When God calls us to faith, He makes us His own. God said, “They shall be mine my treasured possession.” These are the ones who fear the Lord and put their trust in Him. When you place your faith in God, He made you righteous. Our righteousness is in the Lord Jesus Christ. You either be the *group*

of people who serves God – who trusted in Christ and live for Christ because you have been justified by Christ or the *group of people who do not serve God* – who are label as wicked and only want to help themselves instead of helping others. (Show General George Washington)



During the American Revolution, a man in civilian clothes rode past a group of soldiers repairing a small defensive barrier. Their leader was shouting instructions, but not attempt to help them. Asked why by the rider, he retorted with great dignity, “Sir, I am a corporal!” The stranger apologized, dismounted, and proceeded to help the exhausted soldiers. The job is done, he turned to the corporal and said, “Mr. Corporal, next time you have a job like this and not enough men to do it, go to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you again.” It was none other than General George Washington.

Today in the Word, March 6, 1991. <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/s/service.htm>

III. Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, in our Old Testament, Malachi writes, “And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.” (Malachi 3:18). Are you the one who serves God? How do you live your life through your character, word, and deeds? Instead of grumble and complaining about God, be the one who serves God to the fullest. Everything that you do in life is a form of serving God.

(Show - Nobel Peace Prize winner for Physics 1957 – Tsung-Dao (T.D.) Lee and Chen Ning Yang – Subrahmanyam Chandrasekhar



Yang

Lee

Chandrasekhar

In 1947, a professor at the University of Chicago was scheduled to teach an advanced seminar in astrophysics. At the time, he was living in Wisconsin, doing research. He planned to commute twice a week for the class, even though it would be during the harsh winter months. Registration for the seminar, however, fell far below expectations. Only two students signed up for the class. People expected the professor to cancel, lest he wastes his time. But for the sake of two students, he taught the class, commuting 100 miles round trip. It doesn’t matter if it was snowing or cold at 0 degrees. Even if there are only two students, Chandrasekhar continuing making the trip to teach. Ten years after 1957, the two students won the Nobel Peace Prize for Physics. The teacher won in 1983. It shows that the

teacher who teach and the student who learns has completed the task. Those who completed the task of serving will receive the reward. http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/1957/ http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/1983/ (Show Malachi the messenger)



During the time of Malachi, God's people being disobedience. These are the kinds of people that grumble and complaint and do not serve God. But there are also those who fear God and serve God. Think about where you are today. It doesn't matter if you are young or old. Can you honestly say to yourself that you are the one who serves God or the one who does not serve God? If you are

not serving God, what will your inheritance be? Glory for yourself? If you are serving God, what will your legacy be? (Show receive reward)



The Apostle Paul writes, "Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Colossians 3:24). You can't go around and telling a lie to other people what you have done when you haven't done it. Remember the story about the dog when we first began, how the dog claim to serve with the government of being a spy for the CIA of eavesdrop of listening to the enemy's conversation, but the dog never did any of that. Be truthful to yourself and God. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

(Show Queen Victoria)



Queen Victoria said to Gordon of Havelock, "When can you start for India?" He answered, "Tomorrow." That is the key to useful and successful and influential lives. When the call came, they were ready—ready to make use of the opportunity, to resist temptation, to answer the call of duty, of country, of God.

<http://www.moreillustrations.com/Illustrations/serve.html> (Show surgery)



A medical student was in the operating room, waiting to watch a great surgeon's work. The surgeon's assistant failed to come, and the surgeon called this student to help him. "How proud I was," he said, "to help this great man save a life." Jesus has called us to help Him save others, and we should be proud of the honor, glad that we can help to saves others to everlasting life. A great minister said that he praised God for the honor and privilege of helping to save the world. We have only to obey His command and trust Him to help us do this work for Him. — *Gospel Herald*.

<http://www.moreillustrations.com/Illustrations/service%201.html> (Show hugging)



God knows all things, and while you are living on this earth, continue to serve God to the best of your ability. Jesus came and humbled himself to serve you, going to the cross for your sin so that you may have life. You may not have a gift like others, but God gave you a gift that you can use for the expansion of Christ's Kingdom. Because you are serving God and when He called you home, he will say to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant! ... Come and share your

master's happiness!' (Matthew 25:23). Be the one who serves God. Amen. May the Peace of God which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ. Amen.