

THE BURDEN OF THE MESSENGER



Week Three - 3:7-18

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

This weeks passage contains a familiar line about tithe, but the heart of the message goes far deeper. God is seeking those who would trust Him fully, with all they have. Pray that this lesson would help lead our kids to put their full trust in God as the only one who can provide for and protect us.

- **Big Idea:** God wants our full trust

Starter

- **Trust Walk:** *You may choose to split the kids in pairs and have one walk backwards while the other gives directions, then switch roles. They have to trust one another.*
- **Trust Talk:** *If this activity is too much, you may simply ask kids if they have ever done a trust fall or know what it is. Explain it. Then ask, 'What happens if the one falling doesn't fully trust that he/she will be caught?'
The idea for both of these is to lead up to our lesson today about trusting God fully.*
- **Video:** *You can also watch this video as an introduction to the book of Malachi:*
<https://youtu.be/LLVzHcZVmAA>

Sing Together

Love the Lord Your God - <https://youtu.be/vdMlxCdIY-c>

Story

God had sent His messenger Malachi to tell His people that He has loved them, still loves them, and will always love them. But they had not loved God and they hadn't cared for people well. God continued to tell them that they were not trusting Him fully. You see, God wanted their full trust. He wanted His people to know that He was the one who provided for them and protected them.

After all, this was the God who freed them from slavery in Egypt, provided bread from the sky when they were hungry in the desert, and brought them safely into a wonderful land He had promised them. So, one of the ways God asked them to show their trust was to give a tenth of what they had to the temple. This was to provide for the priests who worked at the temple and to make sure the temple was taken care of.

But most of the people were scared to give what they had away, so they kept it to themselves. God said it was as if they were robbing Him! Can you imagine that - people robbing God!?

God said, "Go ahead and test me! Give the full tenth like I've asked you. You'll see! I am a good God who will provide for you whatever you need. You don't have to be afraid and keep it to yourselves. I'm the one who gives you everything anyway. The whole world belongs to me!"

But the people said, "It is useless to serve God. What have we ever gotten out of it? There are bad people out there who have more good things than we do! Why shouldn't we be like them?"

Of course, this made God sad to hear. Didn't they remember all that God had done for them? Couldn't they see that the ways they suffered were because they rebelled against God?

Some of the people began to see clearly. The ones who respected the LORD started to remind one another about how good and powerful God is. God heard their response and He honored it. He said He would put their names in a book of remembrance, meaning, they would always be His people and He would always be their God. He said, "Just like a parent loves a child who respects and honors them, I have found joy in those who trust me. I will have compassion on them and they will live with me."

Many years after God sent this message, the true and perfect Son came to earth. Jesus was the Son who fully trusted in and obeyed the Father God. Now, if we trust in Jesus the way God asked His people to trust Him with all they had, we can also become loved children of God and live with Him forever!

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- What are some of the things God wants us to trust Him with?
- How can we show that we trust in and follow Jesus now?

Breakout Time

- **Prayer:**
God, we are sorry for not trusting that You are always better than anything else. Help us to believe more. Thank You for Jesus, who trusted You enough to go to the cross for us, so we can become Your children. Amen.
- **Craft:**
 - For older kids: Watch this video on generosity from the Bible Project and discuss it further - <https://youtu.be/62CliEkRCso> (if you can't use the link, just search 'Bible Project generosity' on YouTube)
 - For younger kids: Use the coloring sheet attached and discuss the widow in Mark 12:42 who gave all she had to the LORD because she trusted Him
- **BLESS Activity:**
For kids to do during the week
Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask the Spirit to help us to *Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath* (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Eat** rhythm. The Israelites tithes were often the food they grew in their fields. Is there an opportunity this week where you can share some of your own food with someone else in need?

THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

Mark 12:41-44



The widow gave her last two coins