

Opening the Windows of Heaven

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Date Preached: April 5, 1992

Main Scripture Text: Malachi 3:7–12

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“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

MALACHI 3:10

Outline

Introduction

I. Who Is Interested in Your Finances?

- A. God Is Interested
- B. Satan Is Interested
- C. You Are Interested

II. Four Steps in Opening the Windows of Heaven

- A. Recognize Your Failure
 - 1. How to Recognize if You're in Financial Bondage
 - 2. How to Recognize if You're in Financial Bondage, Even if You Have Money
 - a. If You Try to Find Satisfaction in Your Riches
 - b. If You Spend Time Worrying over Your Wealth
 - c. If You Become a Slave to Your Money
 - d. If You're Not Rich Toward God
- B. Renew Your Fellowship
 - 1. If You Don't Tithe, You're Stealing From God
 - 2. If You Don't Tithe, You Rob the Church and the Needy
 - 3. If You Don't Tithe, You Rob Yourself
- C. Release Your Finances
 - 1. A Definite Proportion
 - 2. A Designated Place
 - 3. A Determined Purpose
- D. Restore Your Fruitfulness
 - 1. God Will Renew Your Faith
 - 2. God Will Rebuke Your Foes
 - 3. God Will Restore Your Fruitfulness

Conclusion

Introduction

Be turning to Malachi the third chapter, would you, please. We've been in a wonderful series, talking about the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord of *a-double-I*—all. And we've been speaking these past Sundays about the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord of our work, and that, when you go to work on Monday morning, you're not going out into the secular world doing something mundane and monotonous that doesn't matter. The Bible says, there on your secular job, you serve the Lord Christ, and He's Lord of your work. Then, we've been talking about the fact that He is Lord of our wealth. And we've been saying that Jesus Christ is interested in how we secure our money, how we save our money, how we spend our money, and how we share our money. Next week, we're going to be talking about the fact that He is Lord of our worship, and we're going to have one of the most glorious Sundays, next Sunday, that we have ever known; it's Lordship Sunday. And then, we are going to continue to think about the fact that Jesus Christ is Lord of our worship. And we'll be having the Memphis Passion Play, and all of these other wonderful, wonderful events.

But right now, let's begin reading here, in Malachi chapter 3. And I begin reading in verse 7: *"Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?"* And then, God asks this question: *"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?"* God says: *"In tithes and offerings."* And then, God says: *"Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."* And then, God makes a commandment and a promise. Listen to it. Here's the commandment: *"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts,"*—and, here's the promise—*"if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all the nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts"* (Malachi 3:7–11).

God says, "If you will do thus and such, I will open to you the very windows of Heaven" (Malachi 3:10)—the floodgates of Heaven will be opened, and the blessings of God will be poured out upon His people. My dear friend, how would you like to have Heaven's windows opened over your head? How would you like for the God of Glory to open the windows of Heaven and begin to pour, upon your life, His blessings. I want to talk to you today about opening the windows of Heaven—opening the windows of Heaven. And the way to do that is to get right with God in our finances.

I. Who Is Interested in Your Finances?

And may I tell you, this morning, that, when I'm talking about finances, I know that there are at least three that are interested.

A. God Is Interested

God is interested. God is very, very much interested in your finances—not because God wants your money. God doesn't need your money. *"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof"* (Psalm 24:1). God said, "If I were hungry, I wouldn't tell you" (Psalm 50:12). Don't get the idea, now, that, somehow, God is broke, or God is in financial difficulty. God is very solid; and yet, God is interested in your finances.

As a matter of fact, you just read the Bible, and you'll find out, very easily, that God is interested. In the parables that Jesus Christ told, 16 of those 38 parables dealt with man's use of finances: how he secures his money, saves his money, spends his money, or shares his money. As a matter of fact, one out of every ten verses in the Gospels deals with our financial resources. Over and over and over again, God is talking about this, because God knows, where our heart is, there will our treasure be; and, where our treasure is, there will our heart be (Matthew 6:21). And so He talks about our earthly treasures, our material goods. There are about 500 verses in the Bible about prayer. There are about 500 verses in the Bible about faith. And there are, my dear friend, some 2,000 verses in the Bible about our personal possessions. And so over and over again, God speaks to us about our possessions.

B. Satan Is Interested

I'll tell you somebody else who is interested in your finances: It's the devil. Satan is interested in your finances, because he knows that, if he can get you into financial bondage, he can wreck and ruin your life. And my dear friend, he has done a good job in blasting the lives of so many, because they have not learned God's principles of finances. And Satan has wanted the windows of Heaven shut up, so that you will not be blessed.

C. You Are Interested

I'll tell you a third one who is interested in your finances, and that is you. If you say you are not, I'm just going to think that, perhaps, you are not telling me the truth. You are interested, and you ought to be interested, because God expects you to be a good steward over that which He has placed in your hands.

II. Four Steps in Opening the Windows of Heaven

Now are you interested in opening the windows of Heaven? May I give you four steps, right here, out of the Word of God? Now just take your Bibles—we're in Malachi 3—and

just look right down in the Word of God.

A. Recognize Your Failure

Now first of all, step number one—and this is a painful step—but recognize your failure. Now you're not going to get right until you recognize where you are wrong. Now not everybody here is a failure, but many are; and we must recognize that. God says here that some people are cursed with a curse. Do you see that, in verse 9? "*Ye are cursed with a curse*" (Malachi 3:9). We're going to find out what that curse is: It is financial bondage.

1. How to Recognize if You're in Financial Bondage

Let's see whether or not you're in financial bondage. May I give you a little checklist? Do you want to check? Want to find out? Will you be honest? All right, let me give you about 11 checks here to find out whether you're in financial bondage.

Number one: Do you find yourself charging daily expenditures because you don't have money to pay? If you do, you're in financial bondage.

Do you find yourself putting off paying a bill that is due because you don't have the money to pay it, and so, you put it off till next month?

Let me ask you another question: Do you borrow money to pay fixed expenses, such as taxes, insurance, rent? Do you?

Let me ask you another question—let me ask you another question: Does your long-term debt exceed over 20% of your income? Now most financial analysts tell us that when you get beyond 20% long-term debt, you're in danger. And you know, we Americans—we just believe that you're supposed to borrow it, for whatever it is. I mean that we've just been told that. Somebody has described a modern American as somebody who drives a bank-financed car over a bond-financed highway with gasoline he bought with a credit card on his way to open a charge account at the department store, so he can fill his savings-and-loan-financed home with installment-purchased furniture. Now that's just the way we are; but that's not the way we ought to be.

All right, next number: Do you find yourself unaware of just how much you do owe? Most of us won't balance the books and look at it honestly for the same reason we don't want to step on the scales and see how much we weigh. Are you just unaware of how much you owe?

Next question: Do you have creditors and bill collectors calling you or writing you about past-due bills?

Next question: Do you take from your savings to pay current bills?

Next question: Do you make new loans to pay off old ones?

Next question: Do you and your wife ever argue over finances?

Next question: Have you ever even thought about being dishonest about money?

Final question—here’s the big one: Do you find it difficult to return God’s tithe?

2. How to Recognize if You’re in Financial Bondage, Even if You Have Money

“Well,” you say, “Pastor Rogers, I’m not worried about any of those things. I’m just doing fine. I’ve got more money than I know what to do with.” Well, you still might be in financial bondage. Did you know you can have a lot of money and be in financial bondage?

a. If You Try to Find Satisfaction in Your Riches

A rich person is in financial bondage when he tries to find satisfaction in his riches and can’t find it. The Bible says, *“He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver”* (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

b. If You Spend Time Worrying over Your Wealth

You can be in financial bondage when you spend your time worrying over your wealth. The Bible says, in Proverbs chapter 15 and verse 6: *“In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenue of the wicked is trouble”* (Proverbs 15:6). Maybe, maybe your revenue is high, but your trouble is also high.

c. If You Become a Slave to Your Money

You can be in financial bondage when you become a slave to your money. Proverbs 23, verse 4: *“Labour not to be rich”* (Proverbs 23:4). Maybe that’s your problem: Gold is your god.

d. If You’re Not Rich Toward God

Or, maybe...maybe you’re in financial bondage, because you have plenty in the bank, but you’re not rich toward Heaven—you’re not rich toward God. Here’s a verse that all of us ought to know by heart—Proverbs chapter 23, verse 5: *“Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven”* (Proverbs 23:5).

Now are you—are you—cursed with a curse, financially? Does it just seem that nothing really works out? All right, step number one: If you want the windows of Heaven open, just recognize your failure. Just go ahead and admit it—admit it before God. Say, “God, I am not what I ought to be in the financial realm; and I don’t believe I am what You want me to be.” All right, now, I’m not trying to say that, if you’re poor and can’t pay your bills, you’re not right with God. But I am saying—listen to me very carefully, listen to me very carefully—there may be some principles that you are transgressing, and God wants to teach you these principles, so He can bless you. Point number one: Recognize your failure.

B. Renew Your Fellowship

Point number two: Renew your fellowship. Now look at it here, in verse 7: *“Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept*

them. Return unto me,”—return unto me—*“and I will return unto you”* (Malachi 3:7). Now if you want financial freedom, and if you want the windows of Heaven open, first of all, you just return to God. And I want to remind you that it is not your money that God wants. Please hear me say that. It is you that God wants. God needs nothing. Put this verse down—Psalm 50, verse 12—God says, *“If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof”* (Psalm 50:12). God loves you for yourself. It is not what you have that God wants. God wants you. God says, *“Return unto me, and I will return unto you”* (Malachi 3:7). And if you give your money without giving yourself, remember that proverb: “The gift without the giver is bare.”

And if you think that we as a church are just simply here talking to you about finances to try to somehow wrest more money out of you, you are so wrong. And may I tell any guest who’s here today, I’m not talking to you—number one; I’m talking to our members. And may I say to our members that, what is not freely given, and what is not gladly given, God neither needs nor wants. Put it down: What you don’t freely give, and what you don’t gladly give, and lovingly give, God neither needs nor wants.

Here’s the way they gave in the Bible—2 Corinthians chapter 8 and verse 5—the Bible says, *“They...first gave their own selves to the Lord”* (2 Corinthians 8:5). *“They...first gave their own selves to the Lord”* (2 Corinthians 8:5). There must, dear friend, there must be that renewal of fellowship, where you just say, “Here, Lord. You are Lord of all.” Or, 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 14—the Apostle Paul said, *“I seek not yours but you”* (2 Corinthians 12:14)—“It’s not your money I’m after; it is you I want.” And why did the Apostle Paul want the people? He wanted the people for God. Recognize your failure. Number two, my dear friend: Restore your fellowship. Just come back with and to God.

Now a lot of people are trying to get right with God, but they never get right financially, and that’s the reason they never get right. I want to say something, and I pray God the Holy Spirit will cause it to come right into your heart, and that you will not miss it. Listen. The kind of repentance and the kind of consecration that does not reach the purse, that does not reach the bank account, has never reached the heart. Now you can say all you want that you’re going to get right with God, but if you don’t get right with God in your finances, you are not right with God. Matthew chapter 6, verse 33, says: *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:33). Now you put God first, and things second, and things will begin to happen in your life. But you put things first, and then, God second, and, my dear friend, you’ve just canceled it all out.

Now God says, *“Return unto me,”* and renew your fellowship” (Malachi 3:7). And the people said, “Well, how shall we return?” And look in verse 7: *“But ye said, Wherein shall we return?”* God answers—look in verse 8: *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have*

robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?” And God’s answer is: *“In tithes and offerings”* (Malachi 3:7–8). Now my dear friend, the point of return is the point of departure. More people than we dare think get away from God in the financial realm. And if you’re going to come back to God, if you’re going to renew your fellowship, you’re going to have to begin with the tithe.

1. If You Don’t Tithe, You’re Stealing From God

Now if you don’t tithe, you’re stealing from God. That’s pretty blunt, isn’t it? Now you say, “Pastor, I don’t agree with that.” Well, that’s all right, but don’t come to me after the service and argue with me about it. Just take your Bible—take Malachi 3, verse 8—and go argue with God somewhere. Don’t argue with me about it, because I’m not the one that said it. *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me...Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings”* (Malachi 3:8).

Now dear friend, it would be wrong to rob a bank. Most of us will not get a gun and a mask, and go in and rob a bank. I heard about a man who did try to rob a bank. He shoved a note to the teller, and he said, “This is a robbery. I’ve got a gun on you. Put all of your money in a bag, and slide it over here to me.” She wrote him a note, and sent it back to him. And it said: “Straighten your tie; they’re taking your picture.” Now I want to tell you that God is taking your picture.

Now you can fool me. I don’t know what anybody in this church gives, except me. I don’t know what you give. I don’t know what they give. I don’t know what anybody gives. I have never made that any of my business—not any of my business whatsoever. As far as I’m concerned, everybody in here is a tither; I don’t know. I really don’t know. That’s none of my business. But I want to tell you something, my dear friend: God knows, and God is taking your picture.

2. If You Don’t Tithe, You Rob the Church and the Needy

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me” (Malachi 3:8). You know—listen, friend—think about it: I mean, when you fail to return the tithe, you do rob God. You do rob the Church. You do rob missions. You do rob the needy.

3. If You Don’t Tithe, You Rob Yourself

But have you ever thought about the fact that you’ve robbed yourself? I mean, you are cursed with a curse. Now you know, the Bible says we’re to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and we’re to render unto God the things that are God’s (Matthew 22:21). April the 15th, you are going render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s. Boy, you are going to get down there, and you are going to pay that income tax. You would not think of not rendering to Caesar on April the 15th. Question: Do you fear Caesar more than you fear God? Do you love Caesar more than you love God?

“Well,” you say, “now, wait a minute, Pastor. What is the tithe, anyway? I mean, I’m

new at this thing. I don't even know what the tithe is." Well, the tithe is the first tenth of all of your income. Let me give you some Scripture here—Leviticus chapter 27 and verse 30: *"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD"* (Leviticus 27:30)—all of the tithe. And the word *tithe* simply means "a tenth." Jacob said, in Genesis chapter 28 and verse 22: *"Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee"* (Genesis 28:22).

And so here it is. Listen, folks. First of all, recognize your failure. Secondly, you need to renew your fellowship. Just say, "God, I'm coming back to You. And wherein will I return? I'm going to return unto You, Lord, with my tithes and with my offerings." That is the starting place. You cannot plow around it. You cannot say, "Well, I'll get right in every other area but this area." Get right in this area, or you will not be right with God. Tithing is God's way to bless you. It's always a blessing, when you give it; it's always a curse, when you steal it.

C. Release Your Finances

Number three—now, watch it: recognize your failure; renew your fellowship; and then, here it is: release your finances—just release them. Look, in verse 10: *"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat"*—food, that means—*"in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it"* (Malachi 3:10). All right, how are we going to do this? When we release our finances to the Lord, what do we do? Well, God tells us exactly what steps to take, if we want the windows of Heaven—the floodgates of Glory—to be opened on us.

1. A Definite Proportion

First of all, there is a definite proportion that we're to bring. Look at it, again: *"Bring ye all the tithes"* (Malachi 3:10). I've told you that the word *tithe* means "tenth." One-tenth of all of our increase is to be set aside for God's use. And the other nine-tenths belong to God, and we are stewards of it. But one-tenth is to be set aside and consecrated for God's use. Again, Genesis chapter 28 and verse 22—Jacob said, *"Of all that thou shalt give me I will give the tenth unto thee"* (Genesis 28:22).

Now I know how the minds of many folks are working today. You are saying, "Now wait a minute, Pastor. That tithing business—that's all legalistic. And you know, we're under grace; we're not under the law." Well, friend, when Jacob said, *"Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee,"* that was before the Mosaic Law was ever even thought of (Genesis 28:22). As a matter of fact, Abraham, who was the brightest star in the Hebrew Heaven, 400 years before Moses and the Mosaic Law, gave tithes to Melchizedek, and Melchizedek was a picture and a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham tithed, before the law. Jacob tithed, before the law.

And then, after the law, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ talked about tithing. In Matthew chapter 23 and verse 23, He said to the scribes and the Pharisees, *“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done,”*—that is, to pay tithe—*“and not to leave the other undone”* (Matthew 23:23). Tithing is not a substitute for justice, mercy, and faith. But we ought to tithe. Jesus Christ said so.

And if you really want to read something interesting, you just get your Bibles, and read Hebrews chapter 5, and Hebrews chapter 7, and you’re going to find out that, when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, it is a picture of the Church paying tithes to the Lord Jesus Christ. May I say this about the tithe? Listen to me, friend. Abraham commenced it. Jacob continued it. Moses commanded it. Jesus commended it. Who am I to cancel it? May I say that again? Abraham commenced it. Jacob continued it. Moses commanded it. Jesus commended it. Who am I to cancel it? Somebody says, “Oh, oh, I’m not under the law.” I’ve heard that so much. “I’m not under the law; I’m under grace.” So am I...under grace.

Did you know that there’s a law that says a man has to feed his children? And if you don’t feed your children, you can be arrested for child neglect. Is there anybody who feeds his children for that reason? Of course not. You feed your children, because you love them. But suppose you fail to live by love, but the law is still there. Suppose there’s a Christian who says, “I’m not going to live by grace.” The law is still there. Does grace make void the law? No, faith establishes the law. Listen to me, friend—listen to me.

Any—any—Christian who would let a Jew do more under law than he will do under grace is a disgrace to grace. Let me say that again: Any Christian who would let a Jew, in the Old Testament, do more under the law than he himself would do under grace is a disgrace to grace.

Jesus never revised the law downward. Listen to Romans 3, verse 31: *“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law”* (Romans 3:31). You see, my dear friend, tithing is not just a part of the Old Testament ceremonial law; it was here before the Old Testament ceremonial law ever got here. But the truth of the Old Testament ceremonial law is established in the tithe through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. A Designated Place

So here it is: If you’d release your finances, number one, there is a definite proportion; that is a starting place. Number two: There is a designated place. Look at it—He says here—look at it, in verse 10: *“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse”* (Malachi 3:10). Now in the Old Testament, they had a temple, and in that temple there was a storehouse. And so they brought all the tithe into the storehouse in the temple. They

would bring their tithe, and it was put in the storehouse. You say, “Pastor, there is no temple today.” Well, friend, you’re wrong. There is a temple today. The Bible says, of the Church, “*Ye are the temple of God*” (1 Corinthians 3:16). In 1 Corinthians 3, and 1 Corinthians chapter 6, the Bible teaches that the Church is the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19). And so the Apostle Paul said, in 1 Corinthians chapter 16 and verse 2: “*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*” (1 Corinthians 16:2). And the words *in store* are translated in the Septuagint, in the Old Testament, “storehouse.” *Storehouse*, in the Old Testament; *in store*, in the New Testament. What’s he saying? We just bring to the storehouse, to God’s temple, on God’s day, God’s tithe, that God’s work will be done in God’s way.

There’s a definite proportion: Bring all the tithe. And my dear friend, there is a designated place: You bring it to the storehouse. Your tithe is not to be used for other good things, not to be used to help your relatives who need help, not to be used for the work of Love Worth Finding, or the Billy Graham Evangelist Association, or something else. Thank God for these things! We ought to give to them, but we give, over and above, our tithe. My dear friend, *God’s tithe is to be brought to God’s house on God’s day, that God’s work will be done God’s way*. “*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*” (1 Corinthians 16:2). “*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse*” (Malachi 3:10). That is what God’s Word says. And I believe it, my dear friend.

3. A Determined Purpose

Now there is not only a definite proportion, and a designated place; but, my dear friend, there is a determined purpose. And what is the determined purpose? “*That there may be meat in mine house*” (Malachi 3:10). That is, that God’s work is going to have all that it will need to get done. There are other good projects; but, my dear friend, if God’s people today, in all of our churches—in all of our churches—would just do what the Bible says, they would be blessed, and the work of God would prosper. We would be able to reach the teeming millions without Christ, as God has commanded us to do.

It breaks my heart to say it, but I read a statistic the other day. I am telling you it just absolutely broke my heart to read it. It said this, and this is the statistic: It said that, if all of the church members in the average church were on welfare, and they tithed, the income of the average church would more than double. If all of the members were on welfare, and they tithed, the income of that church would more than double. Now that breaks my heart, because people are not being blessed, and there’s not the wherewithal in God’s house to get the work done. Now you can not only rob God in your tithe, but you can rob God with your offerings. You haven’t finished, when you tithe. As a matter of fact, when you tithe, you really are just paying the tithe; you’re returning the

tithe. The tithe is the Lord's.

D. **Restore Your Fruitfulness**

Now here's the fourth thing, and I want you to see the good part, now. Here's the good part. And here are the steps God says. First of all, you recognize your failure—you're cursed with a curse. Secondly, you renew your fellowship. God says, "Just return to Me. Just come back to Me." But remember, you can't plow around your stewardship in order to get to your fellowship. Recognize your failure. You renew your fellowship. And then, my dear friend, you release your finances. You bring all the tithe to the "*storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts*" (Malachi 3:10). And here's the last thing; here's the wonderful thing—what a blessing it is, my dear friend!—at that time, you restore your fruitfulness. That's the fourth thing. You just restore your fruitfulness. God says, "I am going to open up Heaven on you. I am going to pour you out a blessing; there will not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

And let me show you the three-fold blessing. Look at it. And oh, there's not a person here today who doesn't want this blessing. Oh, what a blessing this is going to be! First of all, look at what God promises to do. And may I tell you, dear friend, this is a promise of God. There was an old lady that used to read the Bible, and she would find certain promises; and, she would put a *t* and *p* by it—just *t* and *p*: that meant *tried and proven—tried and proven*. Now here, friend, here is a recipe for blessing that will restore your fruitfulness; it is tried and proven.

1. **God Will Renew Your Faith**

Look at it here—God says He's going to do this: "*I will...open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing*" (Malachi 3:10). Wait, wait, let me back up again. "*Bring...all the tithes into the storehouse*"—first—"*that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts*" (Malachi 3:10). I want to start right there. The very first thing He will do—listen—is, He will renew your faith. "*Prove me*"—"prove me" (Malachi 3:10). God is giving you a challenge, my dear friend. God is saying, "Put me to the test."

Many people say, "I just can't grow in my Christian life. I wonder why I'm not growing. I wonder why I don't have more faith. Why is it, when I pray, the heavens are like brass? Why is it I don't understand the Bible?" Well, get right with God in your finances. Do you remember the scripture we used last Sunday? Luke chapter 16 and verse 10—Jesus said: "*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*" The *least* is the material things; the *much* is the spiritual things—if you'd go back and read Luke chapter 16. And then, Jesus said, in Luke 16, verse 11: "*If...ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous*

mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”(Luke 16:10–11). May I explain that to you? Friend, if you can’t trust God with your finances, how is God going to trust you with true spiritual riches? God says, “Listen. If you will just prove Me, I will renew your faith. Your faith will begin to grow.”

I want to tell you that one of the things that has strengthened my faith down through the years has been God’s faithfulness to me in the matter of finances. And all since the time I was a teenager and gave my heart to Jesus, I have wanted to tithe, and go beyond the tithe. And Joyce and I have tithed, and gone beyond the tithe. We have; we do; by God’s grace, we will. And I can tell you that God has proven Himself faithful to me—faithful to me. And that just causes my faith to grow. And I believe that one of the reasons that God has allowed me to preach the Word of God with power, I believe that one of the reasons that God has put faith in my heart, I believe that one of the reasons that God has given me an understanding of the book that we call the Bible is that—and I’m not bragging on myself, but it is a testimony—I’ve tried to be faithful in that which is least, and God has made me a steward of that which is much. You see, God says—listen, listen—“If you’ll do this, I, first of all, will renew your faith. Prove me,” God says. “Prove me. Prove me. Put me to the test.”

2. God Will Rebuke Your Foes

God will renew our faith, and I’ll tell you something else He’ll do: He’ll rebuke our foes. Look in verse 11: *“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts”* (Malachi 3:11). These were farmers. Maybe you’re not a farmer, but you still have foes: hospital bills, car repairs, your loss of job, recession, depression, all of these things. God says, “I will come to your side. I will rebuke these things that have been devouring your income.” You see, people say, “Oh, I can’t afford to tithe.” Friend, you can’t afford not to. *You’ll do far more with nine-tenths and God as a partner than you would ever do with ten-tenths by yourself.* God will renew your faith. “Prove me,” He says. And God will rebuke your foes.

3. God Will Restore Your Fruitfulness

And my dear friend, God will restore your fruitfulness. Look, in verse 11—He goes on to say: *“And neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land”* (Malachi 3:11–12). God will just make you fruitful. “Well,” you say, “Pastor Rogers, I know somebody who’s poor. You wouldn’t expect a poor person to tithe, would you?” Of course. Of course. Who needs God’s help more than a poor person? You say, “You’re being unfair to the poor.” Oh, no. Oh, no! I want the poor man to have the power of God in his life. You say, “Well, I owe other people money. You don’t think I ought to

tithe if I owe, if I'm in debt." Well, friend, if you owe me money, don't rob God in order to pay me. As a matter of fact, if you'll get right with God, you will be paying me what you owe me.

Proverbs 3, verses 9 and 10: *"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:"*—the first fruits—*"so shall thy bonds be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine"* (Proverbs 3:9–10). Proverbs 11, verses 24 and 25: *"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth;"*—that is, people who give away; and yet, they have more—*"and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself"* (Proverbs 11:24–25). Luke chapter 6, verse 38: *"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again"* (Luke 6:38). Dear friend, you hold the key in your own hand.

Conclusion

Oh, I wish I could tell you this! I wish I could get this in your heart, dear friend: God wants to bless you. God wants to open the windows of Heaven upon you. Here it is—listen—recognize your failure; restore your fellowship; release your finances; receive your fruitfulness. God—God—will open the windows of Heaven and bless you.

Now if you're here today, and you don't know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, don't do this: Don't go away, and say, "Well, I went down there to that church, and all that man talked about was money." May I tell you this, friend, and our members will tell you this: They're always saying to me, "Pastor, you know, you just don't preach enough about tithing." And really, my deacons say, "You don't preach enough about it."

But you know, somebody may be here today, the last time you were here, maybe a year ago, I preached a message on tithing. The devil arranged it so you were here last year, and then, this year, the same Sunday. And you say, "Yep, same thing. That's what he was preaching last time I came here." Friend, let me tell you something: If you're here without Jesus Christ today, don't you think for a skinny minute that we are getting you in this place to try to extort something from you, or to try to twist your arm about giving. God perish the thought! We want you to know Jesus. We want you to be saved. We want you to say, "Hallelujah! I'm going to be in Heaven by knowing the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior." I'm talking to God's people. And when I'm talking to God's people, I'm not talking to God's people about how to be unhappy or to be unfruitful; I'm talking to God's people about how to have the windows of Heaven open, and God just pour out a blessing upon God's people.

Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Are you saved? Friend, if I

weren't saved... I tell you, I would not go 24 hours without Jesus Christ for one million dollars—10 million, you name it. I might die in that 24 hours. And besides that, dear friend, every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before. Being saved is not some punishment in order to go to Heaven. I'd be a Christian if there were no Heaven, if there were no Hell. There is both. Just to know Jesus in this life, to truly know Him—oh, what a joy! Oh, when we see Him, what a day that will be!

Would you like to receive Christ? Would you like to be saved? Would you like to be a child of God, with peace in your heart, and Heaven for your home? The Bible says, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”* (Acts 16:31). And that word *believe* doesn't mean mere intellectual belief; it means, “commitment” and “trust.” If you would, pray like this—“O God, I'm a sinner, and I'm lost; and, I am going to Hell, unless I get saved. I need to be saved. Jesus, I believe You're the Son of God. I believe You died on the cross to pay for my sins. I believe that God raised You from the dead. I believe that You will save me, if I trust You; and I do trust You”—friend, He will save you. You say, “Pastor, I can't remember all those words.” You don't have to remember all those words. You can just put it in a short sentence. You can say, “Lord, save me,” and include all of that in your heart. Just trust Him to save you, and He will save you.