



THE FOUNDATION SERIES

"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
John 13:35



The One Others

Experiencing the Life of Christ in the Fellowship of Believers

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.

This book is dedicated to my dear sister in Christ, Irene Johnson, whose love and life have made the manifold grace of Christ vividly beautiful to me.

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Will You Be in the Book of Remembrance?

Malachi 3:16-18

¹⁶ Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. ¹⁷ “They will be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “on the day that I prepare *My* own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.” ¹⁸ So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.



Here is the **BIG IDEA** in this lesson:

We can trace who we really are by our thoughts, our words, and our actions toward God and others.

Introduction:

The Book of Malachi is the last prophetic book in the Old Testament; however, we best understand it when we set it beside the book of Nehemiah, for they refer to the same period in the history of Israel. The abominations denounced by Nehemiah in his book are precisely the same as those denounced by Malachi in his book. It was a period of spiritual degeneracy. The temple, which had been finished with tremendous celebration, was now run-down and neglected because of a lack of funds. The priests were corrupt and dull. Families were falling apart. The economy was depressed. Sound familiar? Nevertheless, some still feared the Lord. **Malachi's mission** was to *light the lamp of faith in a disheartened people by reminding them that God had previously kept, was keeping, and would continue to keep His word—and so must they.*

Let's try to place ourselves beside Malachi so that we might understand God's promise. May we be encouraged to examine ourselves to see whether we belong to those whose names are written in the “*book of remembrance.*”



Lesson: Thinking Truth Through

- A. What does it mean to “*fear the LORD*,” according to these verses?
- Proverbs 1:7; Romans 3:18
 - Proverbs 8:13
 - Jeremiah 32:39-40
 - Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 14:27
 - Hebrews 12:28
- B. According to Malachi 3:16, what did those who “*feared the LORD*” do?
- C. Why is one’s speech important? Read Luke 6:45.
- D. Why is one’s conversation important? Read Matthew 12:36-37.
- E. What was the subject of their conversation in Malachi 3:16-18?
- List three things that we can say for sure that it was NOT.
 - List the one thing we know from David’s testimony (*Ps.66:16*).
- F. According to Malachi 3:16, what was the Lord doing that reveals to us something about His activity?

The phrase “***gave attention and heard***” speaks of God’s attitude of watchful guardianship. He is like a mother who lovingly listens to her children’s voices, is quick to note the slightest cry of distress, and runs to assist in a moment of need. This is God’s posture toward those who fear Him. (*Cf. Ps.147:11; 103:17; 115:11; 34:8-10*)

- G. Does God need a book to remember anything?
- H. Why, do you suppose, the Bible speaks of this book here?

Writing in the **“book of remembrance”** recalls a custom of the Persians. We find it in the sixth chapter of Esther (6:1-9), where it was usual to enter into certain records the names of those who honored the king and those whom the king desired to honor in return. In the same way, the names, actions, sorrows, and sufferings of the righteous are written in a book before God, a truth revealed to us now that we might be reminded that God will not forget us. (Read Ps.56:8; Heb.6:10)

- I. Three things are said of **“those who fear the LORD and esteem His name.”** What are they?
1. *“They will be Mine”* (v.17a; Cf. 1 Chr.29:3; Ex.19:5; Deut.7:6)—They are God’s special treasure.

The word “Mine” (Heb. segullah) is one of the most endearing terms in the Hebrew language. It means a private treasure; the part of a man’s possession that he values most, his crowned jewel, and special treasure. That’s what you are if you fear the Lord and esteem His name.

2. *“...I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him”* (v.17b)—They are God’s spiritual sons.
3. *“So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God and one who does not serve Him”* (v.18)—They are God’s shining servants.

Who are God’s special treasure, His spiritual sons, and His shining servants? They are those who fear the Lord. Remember, God does not claim people because of their:

- physical stature
- mental qualities
- educational background
- material wealth

Here God reveals that one can discern His people by their:

- Harmony with His will—are you in harmony with God’s will? (Read John 6:40; 1 Thess.4:3ff; 5:18; 1 Pet.2:13-15; 4:12-19)
- Sympathy with His people (Read 1 John 4:20)
- Thoughts about His name—A.W. Tozer once said, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”



Application: Making Truth Stick

What do we learn from this study about:

- **God:** God is a *listening God* with a *loving face* who delights in His children. (Ps.139:1-4)
- **Ourselves:** We can trace who we really are to *our thoughts, our words, and our actions* toward one another. (Eph.4:29)

What does this mean FOR you?

- Ask yourself: Am I in harmony with God's will in my life?
- Do you care about what other Christians are going through in the church? In your church? What are you doing to show that you care?
- When you hear the name of Jesus what happens to your heart? Can you honestly say from the heart:

*Who can cheer the heart like Jesus
By His presence all divine?
True and tender, pure and precious
O, how blest to call Him mine.*

*All that thrills my soul is Jesus;
He is more than life to me;
And the fairest of ten thousand,
In my blessed Lord I see.¹*

Being a Doer of the Word (2 Tim.3:16)

1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?

¹ Thoro Harris (1873-1955), All That Thrills My Soul

Answer Key

Lesson: Thinking Truth Through

A.

- to know the Lord and to be taught by Him
- to hate evil and that which displeases God
- to be faithful to Him
- to walk in wisdom
- to serve Him acceptably

B. they spoke to one another

C. it reveals something about who they are

D. it reveals if one is justified or not

E.

- NOT: sports, politics, fashion, or other common day things
- they spoke about what the Lord had done in them and for them

F. he was listening

G. no

H. to encourage us that He has not only a perfect accounting of our deeds, but also of our sorrows