

When we believe in Jesus, we are not just slightly improved or reformed, but we are made new. We are restored to the image in which the Lord originally created us. What is needed at this time is conversion. And faith is walking with Jesus daily and becoming more like Him. For this, repentance is necessary.

Repentance means a change of direction. It is not simply confessing the sins we have committed. True repentance is daily confessing from the heart that God alone is my Lord, turning away from a life where I was the master of myself or where something other than God was my master.

Through today's passage, God tells the people of Israel to turn back, repent, and be restored (v.7). God calls them to return. This is God's heart. From the moment humanity sinned and became separated from Him, God has been calling us to return (Ezek. 18:30-32; Isa. 55:7; Hos. 6:1; Matt. 4:17; Acts 3:19).

Yet the Israelites responded, "How shall we return?" As we see repeatedly in Malachi, this is not really a question about how to return, but a rebellious statement: "Why should we return?"

To such Israelites, God reveals both why they must return to Him and how they can do so.

First, why must we return to God? Because of our sin of not acknowledging His lordship.

They robbed God of tithes and offerings. God says they stole what belonged to Him. Since it belongs to God, stealing it means rejecting His lordship. Why is withholding the tithe a sign of having departed from God? Because the tithe goes beyond the Law (Gen. 14:20; Gen. 28:22; Deut. 14:23; Matt. 23:23). Even before the Law, the tithe was an act of faith, a confession given to God. Within the Law, it was given as training to fear the Lord. Today, tithing is not a mere obligation but a confession of faith, reverence, and trust in God.

In this light, Malachi 3:8-9 shows us that God's charge of robbery was proof that the people in Malachi's time had abandoned God and no longer acknowledged Him as Lord.

Second, how can we return to God? By confessing and restoring His lordship in every area of our lives.

Beyond words of confession, we must acknowledge God's lordship concretely in our time, possessions, strength, family, and church. In today's passage, God commands them to bring the whole tithe. This is an act of confessing His sovereignty by giving in faith.

Begin with wholehearted giving, and live as a steward, not as the owner. Live as one entrusted, not as the master.

Third, what promise does God give to those who return? When we return to Him, the windows of heaven will be opened, and blessings will be poured out (vv. 10-12).

Returning to God opens the windows of heaven and begins blessing. The opening of heaven means the channel of communion with God is opened. When the windows and doors to Him are opened, His blessings overflow into our lives. For God is the source of all blessing. He guards our lives, protects us, walks with us, and makes all things beautiful. Since He alone is the fountain of blessing, we must return to Him to receive and enjoy true blessing.

**Bible
Memorization**

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)

**Bible
Reading**

9/15(Mon)	9/16(Tue)	9/17(Wed)	9/18(Thur)	9/19(Fri)	9/20(Sat)	9/21(Sun)
Ezekiel 24-26	Ezekiel 27-29	Ezekiel 30-32	Ezekiel 33-35	Ezekiel 36-38	Ezekiel 39-40	Ezekiel 41-43

QT

Quiet Time Passage

9/15(Mon)	9/16(Tue)	9/17(Wed)	9/18(Thur)	9/19(Fri)	9/20(Sat)	9/21(Sun)
Romans 6:8-14	Romans 6:15-23	Romans 7:1-6	Romans 7:7-25	Romans 8:1-11	Romans 8:12-17	Romans 8:18-30

**Sharing
Questions**

1. Share about the grace of God you experienced in your life last week through the message or through your daily QT (Quiet Time).

2. Share what new insights or blessings you received through today's message.

3. Reflect on areas of your life where you have not confessed God's lordship. Share together the areas where you need to confess, restore, and return to God's lordship, and pray together.