**Returning to God, or robbing God? (Mal. 3:6-12)**

“Did you know that a tithe is not a debt we owe, but a seed to be sown?”

What is Malachi 3:6-12 all about?

Recap

The Father speaks

**1. The declaration: I, the LORD, do not change! (3:6-7a)**

What does it mean for God to be unchanging?

Unlike human beings

The accusation

The evidence

It isn’t just God who hasn’t changed (v.7)

Utterly consistent

**2. The summons: Return to me! (3:7b-9)**

“How can we return when we’ve never gone away?” (v7b, NLT)

Diogenes Syndrome

The spiritual ECG test – what are you doing with what you have?

Tithes under the Mosaic Law

i. Levitical tithe – to support the Levites serving in temple (Numbers 18:20-29)

ii. Festival tithe – for worship and celebratory meal in Jerusalem (Deut. 14:22-27)

iii. Tithe for the poor – every 3 years (Deut. 14:28-29)

What God really cares about

**3. The challenge: Bring it all! (3:10-12)**

How to apply?: *Let our giving come from the overflow of a heart gripped by grace & gratitude.*

1. We’re no longer under the Mosaic Covenant, so the law doesn’t apply to us today in the same way it applied to the people in Malachi’s day.

2. God is still interested in what our heart treasures.

3. If our hearts are shaped by Jesus and his grace, it will overflow in the way we give.

→ according to our means; generously; cheerfully (see 2 Cor. 8-9)

<http://www.castlechurch.org.uk/downloads/Stott%2010%20Principles.pdf>