ALDERWOOD

MESSAGE OUTLINE

Sunday, November 22, 2026

Title: Test Me in This
Texts: Malachi 3:7-12
Big Idea: Our money competes with God for our trust.

Malachi 3:7 “Since the days of your ancestors, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Armies.

Yet you ask, “How can we return?”

Malachi 3:8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!”
“How do we rob you?” you ask.
“By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions.”

Leviticus 27:30 Every tenth of the land’s produce, grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.

1 Chronicles 29:14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? For everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your own hand.

How much does God ask us to give?

Malachi 3:9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me.

Malachi 3:10 Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house.

“Test me in this way,” says the Lord of Armies. “See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.”

Malachi 3:11-12 I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not ruin the produce of your land and your vine in your field will not fail to produce fruit,” says the Lord of Armies. 12 “Then all the nations will consider you fortunate, for you will be a delightful land,” says the Lord of Armies.

What we do with our money reveals what we really trust.

The Universal Truth:
God blesses the generous and withholds from the greedy.

Proverbs 11:24-25 One person gives freely,
yet gains more;
another withholds what is right,
only to become poor.
[25] A generous person will be enriched,
and the one who gives a drink of water
will receive water.

How much does God ask us to give?

NT Giving Principles

1. **Giving is worship, not obligation**

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.

2. **Generosity is measured by sacrifice**

Mark 12:43-44 Summoning his disciples, he said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. [44] For they all gave out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had—all she had to live on."

3. **To whom much is given, much is expected.**

Luke 12:48b From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be expected.

The Giving Challenge:
1. Give Generously for 3 months
2. Pray Weekly for what you give to
3. Watch for God's Blessing

LIFEGROUPS

MESSAGE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sunday, November 22, 2026

LOOK BACK (5-10 MINUTES)

Open your group with a moment to **connect** and look back.

1. How is everyone doing? Did anything notable happen this week?
2. Did anything in the reading for this week impact you?

DISCUSS THE MESSAGE (30-45 MINUTES)

No one likes to talk about money in church. Except for Jesus. He talked about it all the time—not because he wanted something from us, but because he wants something for us.

In this three-week series, we're going to wrestle with three simple but searching questions: **Who is your master? What do you love? Who will you trust?** As we listen to the teaching of Jesus and the wisdom of Scripture, we'll discover that money isn't just a resource—it's a revealer. It exposes our hearts, shapes our lives, and quietly competes for our allegiance. This week, we are in **Malachi 3:7-12, and the big idea is: Our money competes with God for our trust.**

Use these questions to discuss the message from Sunday, focusing on how you can **grow** as an everyday follower of Jesus and how you can **go** accomplish what Jesus calls you to do.

1. Have someone read **Malachi 3:7-9** and **1 Chronicles 29:14**. God accuses the people of robbing him by withholding their tithes and contributions, reminding us that everything we possess comes from his hand first. Why do we often feel like giving to God is losing something of our own rather than returning what already belongs to him?

2. Have someone read **Malachi 3:10-12** and **Proverbs 11:24-25**. God invites his people to test him in generosity and promises to open the floodgates of heaven and rebuke the devourer. How does trusting this universal truth—that God blesses the generous and withholds from the greedy—shift the way we view financial risk?

3. Have someone read **2 Corinthians 9:7, Mark 12:43-44**, and **Luke 12:48b**. Looking at these New Testament giving principles, how does Jesus' praise of the poor widow show that true generosity is measured by sacrifice and cheerful worship rather than the size of our surplus?

4. Since what we do with our money reveals what we really trust, what is one specific step you can take—such as participating in the 3-month Giving Challenge—to **grow** in trusting God as your ultimate provider?

5. Knowing that God blesses his people so that all nations will see his goodness, how can you **go** and generously invest your resources, hospitality, or financial support this week to meet a tangible need in your community or through local ministry partners?

CLOSE AND PRAY (5-10 MINUTES)

As the discussion comes to a close, transition to a time of prayer. Praying together is one of the best ways for your group to **connect.** Often, splitting into smaller groups for prayer can be beneficial. This can look many different ways, but the goal is for your group to be comfortable praying together, sharing what is really going on in your lives, and asking God to work as you follow Jesus together.