



AUTO-SERMON TRANSCRIPT

How has Jesus loved you?

Real Talk 1 of 4, February 11th, 2024

"Jesus' kindness leads us to repentance."

Malachi 1:1-5 by Ryan Gagnon (@RyGagnon)

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[Music]

If you see miss Ashley after thank her because she's covering for an entire month in condition Say it with me entire month and you guys have to bear up here with me for an entire month same tire month Okay,

So do we have the clicker? It was up here All right so think back in your life where you've all had this situation probably happen to you where maybe you were off track,

things weren't going well, you were doing the wrong thing and someone pulled you aside and had a very frank conversation with you. In kind of the societal term is a come to Jesus talk,

But we don't always mean Jesus. You know what I'm talking about? So maybe you're a kid and your parents pulled you aside and were like, hey, this and this needs to change. Maybe it was a friend of yours and they saw what was going on and they wanted to check you.

It could have even been a work relationship, but also within the church context, it may have been you being in sin and someone here within the church body pulling you aside and going hey Let's talk about this.

It seems like things are off a little bit We're going to spend the next four weeks in Malachi and if you if you have one of the house Bibles It's going to be on page 1002 But we're going to in Malachi.

We're going to get to see this is the reason I love the Prophet so much We get to see the God of the universe interacting with Israel his chosen people and how he deals with this kind of stuff This is going to be a very frank conversation between God and his people.

It's going to get nuts. We're going to hear about lame and blind sheep. We're going to be covering divorce. We're going to be covering Jesus' prophecy. We're going to be covering end-time stuff.

We're going to be covering pastoral leadership that's all off. I mean literally that's all going to be in four weeks. Say four weeks. Okay it's going to be a lot, right? Now,



hopefully when someone pulls you aside and talks to you, you responded well in that love confrontation. Hopefully you did. Odds are, you did.

Fair? Because we're people and we got big egos and sometimes it takes a lot of times of people pointing out, sending our life for issues in our lives.

life before we actually respond. And many of times it takes more than one person. Sometimes it takes years. Well, we're going to get to hear how God does that in the Book of Malachi.

So before we jump into the passage, as is our custom, we're going to recite the disciples prayer together. So it's up on the screen if you need it, but let's begin together. Our Father in Heaven.

hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen So let's begin with a little bit of background about Malachi was written around 400 BC, okay,

so about 400 years before Jesus it was written to Israel when Things weren't going all that well, and if you know anything about Israel's history There's a lot of times when things weren't going all that well,

okay a lot of times So if you know any of your past with that, so the book of Daniel, if we studied that recently, so they were away in captivity and then they came back.

They were there for 70 years. Now they get back to their homeland. They build the temple. Things are going to be going great, right? We got a refresh. We got a restart.

Well, after a hundred years is when this is written or so, it's not it's not going to low at all The same sin issues are popping up. They're doing the same things that they were doing before They're still following after other gods.

They're still selfish. There's this sounding like us Right you hearing it and So this is what this book is written into when you hear Malachi that means my messenger So it's a message from God to his people to try to get them straight.

This is a love confrontation that we're going to be spending this morning talking about. So let's jump into the first five verses which we'll be covering today. The Oracle of the Word of God to Israel by Malachi.

"I have loved you," says the Lord, "but you say how have you loved us?" "I have loved you." Is not Esau Jacob's brother, declares the Lord? Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert. If a dome says we are shattered,

but we will rebuild the ruins, the Lord of hosts says they may build, but I will tear down. And they will be called the wicked country. and the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.

Your own eyes shall see this and you shall say great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel. Anybody completely lost? Hands up?

Okay, that's good. Good place to start. So to wrap our heads around this, we're about to cover about three chapters in Genesis in 10 minutes.

You ready? That don't sound ready. Three chapters in about 10 minutes. You ready? Okay, so we're going to go back. If you want just to keep notes, this is around Genesis 25 to 28.

I'll be faithful to the passage. We're not going to have time to read each thing, but I want to give us an overview because to understand what they heard, when they heard these verses being recited to them, you gotta know the history.

You gotta know the-- context of the why's it doesn't matter. So you have Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Isaac gets married, okay? Isaac,

his wife is named Rebecca, right? So he gets married and they want to have kids, but it's not really going the way that they want. She's barren, scripture says. So they pray and God answers the prayer.

Rebecca's name is Rebecca. now pregnant and something's off. She's a mom and moms can tell these things and it's not feeling great. So she prays and she's like,

God, what's going on? We prayed and I'm pregnant, it's something's off. And he says the words that every parent that's heard it, I'm sure probably freaks out, says it's going to be twins. So they're already wrestling in the womb.

womb, these two kids. He also gives her a prophecy and he says that the older will serve the younger and one will be stronger than the other. Now, this is odd,

right? Because remember, the first born would have a birthright and the first born would literally in terms of an inheritance or a will, it's not like it is in America where we want to make everything exactly like you get this,

you get this, you get this. The first born would. take on the role of head of the family. So she's hearing this and she's hearing the younger will be greater than the older. That's a little crazy.

So then they have the kids, but something really nuts happens as they're having the kids, right? So as Esau, the first one is being born, they named him Esau because he was covered in hair.

It means literally like hairy one. So Esau is being born. and the second born Jacob is holding him by the heel so just picture this right trying to get that there's that wrestling right trying to be in front so they name the second kid Jacob which means trickster if we did this kind of stuff with our names it would be hilarious right but so now you have you have Esau older son you have Jacob younger son and we're

now going to be in a little bit of a dysfunctional family. Isaac and Rebecca play favorites. Parents in the room,

how well do you think it goes if you play favorites? Pretty rough, right? That's not that that's not in any of the parental handbooks about how to raise kids properly,

but that's what they do. Isaac loves Esau more because Esau, this ruddy, powerful, masculine, hairy dude, goes out in the wilderness and hunts and brings back food,



and Isaac's into that. That's my boy right there. Whereas Jacob stays back in the tent. Jacob hangs out with mom. Jacob is Rebecca's favorite.

Now remember what Rebecca's already learned. Rebecca's already learned how to raise kids properly. Rebecca already heard through the prophecy that what, the younger would actually be served by the older. So she's leaning into this kid because she heard from God,

you know, the God who made her from barren to now they're having twins. Something, yeah, I'm on team Jacob is what she's saying. So then we fast forward a little bit and Esau is out,

he's hunting, doing, doing Esau things, probably cutting down trees and building stuff, hunting, comes back into the house and he's exhausted. And scripture says he says,

I'm famished, I'm going to die, so hungry. Jacob, his name means trickster. Jacob's like, oh, I got this stew. And Esau's like,

yeah, yeah, give me some of that stew. And Jacob goes, okay, sell me your birthright. Does that sound nuts? Now,

full disclosure, feel bad about throwing 'em out here like this. I've watched my kids do this. Our kids have fought over who's getting the house, right?

They've done it, they've done it, okay? Now, Esau gives up his birthright because he's so hungry. hungry, he's so famished. He takes what is right now versus what he can get in the future and he trades it for a pot of stew.

Say silly, that's silly, he does it. Now, about a chapter or so later, God does something really cool and all of a sudden the family becomes rich.

So, now the birthright worth a little bit of money. bit more. Now all of a sudden if I'm Esau, I know my younger son tricked me, and if you guys have any kids, you know when one kid tricks the other,

it's not great. So this happens, and now he's sitting here going, he's got my birthright, we now have a lot more money. Esau goes and marries a couple of foreign women.

How well do you think that goes with mom and dad at home? Not what he's supposed to do We have God's building a nation here not supposed to go off into these foreign countries and find a bride And he does he finds to later on scripture.

He finds even more than that Mom and dad not happy. It says in Genesis chapter 26 35 They brought grief to Isaac and Rebecca so no show of hands here,

but in laws, that could be a problem, right? So they're now in grief, so do you see this functional family just getting worse? It's not going well. This is, we got problems here.

Now we're going to fast forward again. Isaac is old. He's literally on his deathbed. He can barely see. He says to his son Esau,

Esau, "Go out, hunt some game for me, bring it back "so that I may eat it and I may bless you." This is literally him saying for the last time,

this last time with my son, my favorite, "Go do what I know that you can do so well, "that I love that you do so well, "please go do that when you come back, I want to bless you." Mom was listening.

listening. Mom hears this conversation. The moment Esau steps out, she goes to Jacob. She says to Jacob, "Go into the land.

Get a couple of our small goats. Bring them to me because your father is going to bless Esau. I want them to bless you." We're going to kill the lambs.

We're going to feed them to your father and we're going to make them. your father think that it's that year Esau You think your family's jacked up? Crazy, right?

We just sang Jacob in one of our songs. This is nuts the stuff that's going on here Jacob responds to her and says but if he figures it out, I'll be cursed and Rebecca says no no the curse will be on me.

We'll figure it out. We got this He goes gets the lambs lamps, she prepares them. They take some of Esau's clothes and cover Jacob and Esau's clothes.

Because remember, Jacob, smooth, Esau, hairy. They put skins on his arms. Dress him up. This is literally like one of those things from those bad sitcoms in the 90s where the kids would get on top of each other in the thing.

And they'd walk up and make it look like this. like a whole person But he saw or he said Isaac is on his deathbed. He can't see He hears the son's voice and he's like that's not he saw but they lie to him They lie to his own father lie to her husband and they actually pull it off and Isaac blesses Jacob as if Jacob was Esau.

Then Esau shows up, walks into the tent, "Here, my father, here it is." And he says, "I've already,

what's going on?" And then Esau realizes that for the second time, Jacob has outmaneuvered him, manipulated him, tricked him. Are you feeling the dysfunction?

of this family yet? Esau's response is once my father is dead. I'll kill my brother, Jacob That's where we are so Jacob Bales runs off because obviously he doesn't want to get killed God we don't have time to go into the rest of it,

but I would highly recommend you continue that from Genesis like 29 on God does this really? cool thing in Jacob's life where he tricks the trickster and puts him through all of these different things to make him have to understand that it's about God,

not him. It's not about his selfishness and what he wants. And God then proceeds to build the nation of Israel through the sons of Jacob. The 12 tribes are the sons of Jacob. Does this sound like a solid foundation for a family?

You should answer. answer, no, right? It doesn't at all, it's crazy. But this is what God is doing. God, because he said what he was going to do, has a plan and he's working that plan and this is what he does with Jacob.

For those of you that are writing your notes there, Jacob's family was perfect for reality TV. They were the keeping up with the Kardashians of their day. Just crazy stuff that was going on with this family.



But there's a reconciliation that happens with Jacob and Esau. It's way later on. They're in a much better place. And Esau takes his group and he goes and they become a neighbor of Israel and they are called the Edomites.

Now it's important to understand who the Edomites were. At the time they were neighbors and sometimes neighbors fight. or in Edom's case, sometimes neighbors invade your house and try to kill you,

'cause they did. They tried to take over Israel. They actually fought multiple times. When in Exodus, when Israel's coming out of Egypt, they go up to Edom just to walk through the path,

and they're like, "You can't cross our land." So the fighting kept going. going. In some of the other prophets, God calls the people of Edom a proud and violent people.

Not good. So, that was about 100 years almost, maybe longer, of history that you just did in 10 minutes.

Congratulations. Nice job. Now we're going to jump back into the passage, and I want you to think about this passage as if you're a Hebrew who knew that story.

You knew your history. You knew about your father, Jacob. You knew about his twin brother, Esau. You knew about everything that went on between the two of them. And this is how the prophet Malachi opens up what he has from God.

Verse one, the oracle of God. of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi I Have loved you says the Lord But you say how have you loved us is not he saw Jacob's brother declares the Lord Yet I have loved Jacob But he saw I have hated I Have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.

If Edom says we are shattered, but we will rebuild the ruins, the Lord of hosts said they may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called the wicked country and the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.

Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel." comes across a little different now,

right? Now that you understand the history and you understand what had happened between these two brothers I want you to think about the fact that God wasn't even necessarily specifically only talking about the brothers He was talking about the nations that came from them Jacob becomes Israel Esau becomes Edom and God is speaking not only about that relationship between them as brothers but as their relationship as nations

because he's addressing the nation of Israel. He's addressing this fallen kingdom that's not listening to him that he has been over backwards over and over and over again to point out to them I love you I am your God you are my people and they keep turning their back on him So when the verse reads verse 2,

"I have loved you," says the Lord, "but you say how have you loved us?" He selected them out of all the other peoples in the entire world.

world and said to them, "I'm going to build my relationship with humanity based on how I treat you and everyone will learn more about me because of the way I interact with you." And that nation said to him,



"How have you loved us?" What they heard.

was that God had a plan from the beginning in Jacob's life. He selected Jacob before they were born. God knew what he was going to do because he is sovereign, he is in control, he is the God of all, not just the God of your house. And he had a plan, and what that is, for those of you guys that don't know,

that's a picture and a Kid Nation in every sermon time I preach, I put it up because it just keeps hitting me over the head. That is God's story. From the beginning to the end, it was painted by Rachel. What that is,

the kids see all of God's timeline, and they can point to where on that timeline we are, and we can point and illustrate to them where this is.

God has a plan. He has a plan. is not lost control he is still God so when he says the first thing in his love confrontation I've loved you doesn't lead with you screwed up he doesn't lead with you bonehead he doesn't lead with you don't love me you don't listen you don't,

he doesn't lead with that. He says I've loved you. God of the universe is saying to you right now I have loved you.

I love you. And we look back at our own lives and are so hung up in what isn't going the way we want. And we say how have you loved me?

us how have you cared for us God as we sit in a chair in an air -conditioned room it's crazy right it's legit crazy so as we go through this book it's going to be kind of difficult but we're going to have to think on two planes we're going to have to think on the plane of the group of Hebrews that are hearing this so what it meant to them And then us as the church in 2024,

I think it is now. He led with love and they didn't get it.

And then he proceeded to talk about Jacob and Esau. I've loved you because look at all your history. look at all the times that you stepped out on me,

that you chose someone other than me, that you worship false idols, that you wouldn't listen at all, and I still provided a way home. That's how I've loved you. So think for us,

how has Jesus loved you? Because remember, this is the second plane. How has Jesus loved us? He bled and died. on a cross for us. He was the perfect sacrifice to meet every sin ever,

cover over all of it, make us have an opportunity, have a right relationship with God. I'd say that's love. Rose from the dead and promises that he will return.

If you don't hear anything else this morning, you need Jesus. That's it. Without Jesus none of this matters. matters. So think about how Jesus has loved you, and then think about how He's directing you in this moment right now.

Because if you're in the middle of one of those love confrontations, this is the love part. He's going to get to the sin. That's the next chapter and a half. But this is the love part.

I have loved you. That's not all they heard. They heard God has been gracious. Now, grace is love. one of those church words that we say a lot and sometimes, feels like you can lose its meaning 'cause we say it so much.

It's undeserved favor. It's getting something that we don't deserve. We can go over a million examples of how Israel did not deserve the grace that God gave them, but I can give you a million and one about me. It's a difference. It's crazy. crazy God has blessed us when we didn't deserve it We are sinful we look at God and we say yeah,

I know this is what you want for my life God I get it. Okay, cool, but I really just want this I'm just going to kind of ride this train as long as I can because I feel like I'm just going to kind of yeah I'll get to you later He's been gracious and that's a crazy look on you forest and he provides an opportunity back over and over and over again.

You'll hear it later on in this book but you hear it a million times in Scripture, "Return to me and I'll return to you." He always provides us a way back. He's been so gracious.

If you're off track currently, he's providing you a path back. He's giving you that opportunity. because he's leading with love and he cares for you.

It's not everything. They also heard that God has been protecting them because now let's go back into the other plane, right,

we're thinking in terms of the Hebrews hearing this. Edom over and over and over again was the neighbor that was trying to fight. The neighbor that signed up with some of the other folks who were trying to take on Israel and align themselves with them,

not their twin brother Jacob. God protected them, how did he protect them? Read it in the first, right? If Edom says we are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,

the Lord of hosts says they may build but I will tear down and they will be called the wicked country and the people with whom the Lord is angry forever. So, he's taking care of them in a way that they don't know.

they don't even understand. They're not in eat them. They don't know what God's doing there. We don't know what God is doing with our next -door neighbor. We don't know how he's protecting us every single day in ways we won't know this side of glory.

The God of the universe has protected us. He's cared for us and he did it. Don't miss first five. Your own eyes shall see this and you shall say great is the Lord beyond the border.

of Israel That's them acknowledging that he's not just the God of us. He's the God of all You hear it for us He's the God of all He's protecting us in ways that we don't even get So if you're the Hebrews and you're hearing this and you're thinking okay,

God says he loves us. Okay. Got it not really feeling the love God and then he goes and he gives you the list of the ways in which he has loved you but he does it in a way that he can concise it down to five verses because he's God because he goes into the entire history and for us we can think back to all of our earlier part of your life up until this morning the ways that God has lived you and the ways

that he has cared for you. And he's done it so that you will say, "Great is the Lord beyond the border of my heart." It's a different thing.

In those love confrontations, the best place that you can be is in that beginning stage when someone is truly showing you that they care for you. and you're in that place where you know that they know what's best for you and they're talking to you because they care for you and they don't want the negative they don't want all the discipline they don't want all the consequence they just want you to see what's right and

that's where the Israelites are right now they're beginning to understand just it's right it's early, that God has loved them.

It's a good place to be. They were confronted with how God has been loving them. Now, normally when we preach we have our big idea,

but we haven't gone over the big idea yet. This is it. Jesus' kindness leads us to repentance. It's hard. It's a hard thing.

In our sinfulness, in our selfishness, in our ego, where we want to be the kings and queens of our own life, Jesus' kindness is the thing that gets our attention.

The fact that he cares, the fact that he loves you so much that not only would he bleed, die, raise himself from the dead and promise that he's going to return to make all things new,

but that he'll share that with you. He'll let you in on it. He could just be who he is, but a byproduct of who he is our salvation.

In those love confrontations, we shared a little bit of a story here, most of you know I think, but years ago my wife was deployed and she's gone through a lot and she's been sober for over six years and praise to God.

God. Amazing, yeah. Amazing, amazing stuff, amazing stuff. Now, we moved up here about 10 years ago. And God was doing stuff and pulling us along by our noses when we didn't want to listen.

And we were just being selfish and doing our own thing. And he just, he kept loving us. And he kept loving us, and he kept loving us. And when we came up here, I-- I firmly believed that I had a call on my life to be a pastor.

And it's a thing when you're in the middle of a mess where you can't see up. You're just so enamored with all the muck that you're just hurt.

And we were going through that for a while and there was there was sin that we were dealing with. and there were consequences that were still dealing with some of the consequences of that sin to this day.

The consequences are still there. Jesus is paid for it all but we went through it and in that time that whole idea of being called to be a pastor I just felt like it was over.

I felt like that was not what God had for me anymore. I felt like I had other things I had to deal with and tend to and it just wasn't for us,

for our family anymore. But that was a call that was gone. And I had multiple love confrontations with many people, but especially Pastor Matt and Pastor Michael,

where they would say the same things over and over and over again. And the thing they would say is, "Are you called or not?" And I hated it.

Because that was based on God, not me. I wanted it to be about me. I wanted it to be about what I could do. I wanted it to be about me, because I'm that guy.

The call didn't come from me. The call came from God. And they, through those days, loving confrontations over and over and over again, led with the kindness of the Holy Spirit,

brought me to a place of repentance, where I just, quite frankly, I just gave up. Just like, "Okay, if God, if this is what you have, this is what we're going to do." And our family is in a much better place.

It's insane, the healing that God has brought. But without those love confrontations, I don't know, I truly don't know.

So for those of you who are sitting here, maybe God's confronting you right now. Maybe he's nudging you to bring that love confrontation to someone else. What I can tell you is it matters.

it really matters because Jesus' kindness leads us to repentance. A couple of questions to close us out. First one is,

how has Jesus loved you? Be thinking about that and write it down, share it with somebody. How has his grace shown up in yours and your family's lives? Because a lot of times we end up thinking about ourselves but not how it's worked out in other people's lives and then finally how's he confronting you now because he's not done with the Israelites we're going to spend the next three chapters going through how we interact

with them and what was going on but he led with love because he's a God who loves you and loves you so much that he didn't quit even when you want to.

to that's the God we serve that's enough father and heaven Lord thank you for your word thank you for the way that you love us and the way that you care for us and the way that you correct in a way that is just meaningful and effective God.

You are the God of the universe and you care about us still. Thank you for who you are. Equip us to go show this love to others.

Thank you for Jesus and that you sent him, that he bled and died on that cross, and that he rose from the dead, and that he is returning because you have said it so. You are everything,

Lord. It's in Jesus' name we pray.

[Music]