



AUTO-SERMON TRANSCRIPT

How has Jesus collaborated with you recently?

Real Talk 3 of 4, February 25th, 2024

"Jesus' redemption plan brings glory to Him and salvation to creation."

Malachi 2:17-3:18 by Ryan Gagnon (@RyGagnon)

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[Music]

Well, good morning again church and welcome to our neighbors. So what you should take away from all those announcements is you should really text Pastor Michael so he doesn't nap all the time. So really,

I mean, let's save this guy from the naps, right? So, quick show of hands. Who here are football fans? Football fans,

okay? You like football? All right, so, like, 10 % of us, okay, so, I'll break this down. So here's the idea, right? I love football.

Like, I love it. I love football. football. Okay. Everyone's. Come on. I love football. Okay.

Now one of the things I love about football is the strategy. Okay. So I'm going to kind of give you a bit of an understanding here. If I lose you, don't worry. We'll get back. I promise. But one of the great things about football is you have like a play caller,

right? You have a coach on the sideline who is designed to plays and they have these plays and the goal, of course, is to what? - Win. - Well, win, but you gotta score before you win,

but yes, so you guys got this, right? So when they're designing these plays, these plays are designed to put stresses on the defense. So they'll have a wide receiver, which is one of the people on the outside, go really far deep to stretch the defense lengthwise, right? And then a good play will have somebody coming across the middle to stretch the defense lengthwise. here and then another player would then go to what they call the sideline to stretch the defense here.

What you should be understanding is that it's stretching the defense. The goal is to put as many stretches on that as possible to get the ball to the open person to move the ball down the field.

Is everybody tracking? You guys can now coach like middle school football. Nicely done. Okay. Yes, you're crushing it. Okay. So these plays are all designed to score and some of these plays are worth like 75 yards,

like huge plays, and some of them are a handoff to the running back, which is just a run up the middle and it's one yard, but maybe it's a positive play. The reason that I share this with you is we've been talking in Malachi about God's plan and what he's going to be doing,

and I want you to think about God like a play caller, as we unpack the passage this morning. Okay, so go ahead and flip to Malachi, that's where we're going to be today, we're going to be covering Malachi chapter three and the last verse of chapter two,

but think about God, the Creator of all, looking at His creation and His goal, He's wanting to score, wanting to win,

and the way that He scores and wins is when people decide to follow Him. He wants to reveal Himself to people so that they'll get on the team. That's what he's trying to do. You are a piece of that play.

And some of us are wide receivers that are running down the field, stretching the defense this way. Some of us are running backs, running up the middle. Some of us are linemen. That block, you should laugh 'cause I'm wide.

Linemen are big, you don't have to laugh at that. Some of us are that, right? But everyone has a role, and God is great. has a play designed that he's doing and you're a part of it congratulations you're on the team if you're a follower of Christ so whether you like football or not you're on the team give yourselves a round of applause guys good yes okay so what we're gonna learn today is that Jesus redemption plan

brings glory to him and salvation to creation it's twofold so Jesus is planned to redeem creation does two things.

Notice which came first. What's it say? His glory. And salvation to creation. It's about both of those things. So that's our big idea that we're going to get back to, but we're going to dive into the passage. But before we do that, as is our custom, we're going to recite the disciples prayer together. So we have it up on the screen. "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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power.

and the glory forever and men." So let's go back a step. So we're in Malachi. We're going to be in verse 17 of chapter 2.

That's where we're going to begin. But let's go back to the context to make sure that we're all tracking. What Malachi is, it's a book written to God's people about 100 years after they've come out of captivity.

So now they're back in Malachi. the temple's been rebuilt, they're worshiping at the temple, but it's not going all that well. If you're thinking in terms of a timeline, this is 400 years, say 400 years before Jesus.



like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner, and who can stand when he

offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in the former years. Verse 5, "Then I will draw near to you for judgment.

I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner,

and do not fear me says the Lord of hosts For I the Lord do not change Therefore you all children of Jacob are not consumed From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from the statutes and have not kept them Return to me and I will return to you says the Lord of hosts But you say how shall we return?

return? Well, man, rob God, yet you are robbing me, but you say, how have we robbed you in your tithes and contributions? You are cursed with a curse for you are robbing me,

the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithes into the storehouse that there may be food in my house and thereby be put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts. If I will not open the windows of heaven for you,

and pour down on you a blessing until there is no more need, I will rebuke the devourer for you so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil and your vine in your field shall not fail to bear,

says the Lord of hosts. Then all nations will call you blessed for you will be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts. Your words have been hard against me,

says the Lord. Lord. But you say, "How have we spoken against you?" You have said it is vain to serve God. What is the profit of keeping this charge or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts?

And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evil doers not only prosper, but they put God to the test and they escape. Verse 16,

"Then those who feared the Lord," says the Lord. Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.

'They shall be mine,' says the Lord of hosts. 'In the day when I make up my treasured possession and I will spare them, as a man who spares his son who serves him,

then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked between the one who serves God and the one who does not serve him. So as we unpack these verses think about what God's redemptive plan is.

He's talked about how he loves them, he's talked about how they've missed the mark and now he's gonna give them the step by step on what he's gonna do to bring about redemption.

Those first couple of verses, the idea for those of you guys who are keeping notes is that Jesus's redemptive plan is collaborative. Notice he starts out by saying you've wearied God.

Did I kind of catch somebody off like we've wearied God? Parents, have you ever been wearied by kids that you love deeply?

Yeah, you feel it, right? God loves us deeply. And when he sees us so far off track and missing the mark and not understanding, it breaks his heart.

You've wearied the Lord with your words and then remember, 'cause that's what's so cool about Malachi, he knows what they're thinking so he responds with what they're asking. You've weary the Lord, yet you say,

how have we done that? And then he points out by saying evil, everyone who does evil is good on the side of the Lord. Now, this can be a little bit confusing, but let's unpack it here. Have you heard anybody say,

if there's a good God, why does all this bad stuff happen? Yeah, everybody's nodding, right? Maybe you've been that person, I know I've been that person, right? So, what they're saying is, is they're looking at the lay of the land,

and they're going, if God is so great, if God is so good, then why are all these things happening? Why does it feel like up is down and down is up and nothing makes sense? You feel it?

A couple of things to understand is Peter writes that in the end times, there'll be scoffers that say, where is this Jesus who you promised? promised is coming? "Where is the God of justice?

"Who's going to make these things right?" To tackle this question, first off, we got to acknowledge the fact that we're people and we're looking at this through our eyes, not God's. And sin is a big deal.

Sin has marred creation. Nothing is as it was supposed to be. Nothing is working the way it's supposed to have worked.

God's design has been completely jacked up through our own sin, through our own selfishness, through our own desire to do our own thing and not listen to him. We live in a world that is busted,

but God being rich in mercy, Jesus offered himself as the sound to do that redemptive work,

that redemption plan. The plan's Jesus. Skipping ahead, that's it. It's Jesus. It's not some great evangelistic strategy or some way to talk to people better.

It's the fact that the God of the universe loves you and He's equipping us to tell other people that. Jesus' redemption plan is collaborative,

how cool is that? He references here John the Baptist and how he's going to send a messenger to prepare the way for him. So how is God collaborating with you?

How is Jesus equipping you in the neighborhood you're in to reach the people that he's called you to reach? Because he wants to work with you He doesn't need you He doesn't need us,

but he works with us anyway Notice that they ask God where he is and then it gives him this plan He says that he's going to come after sending the messenger Remember that we learned last week also that we're a royal priesthood and as that royal priesthood we're called to declare the excellencies of God to the people that are in darkness because we were once in darkness and we're called to marvelous light.

How cool is that? We are called by God to go interact with our communities and to share with them the love of Jesus to pull them out of darkness into marvelous light All the while knowing we can't do it It's him,

but he chooses to collaborate with us It's mind -blowing because he ain't got to do it Think about the dad who's putting together the thing with all the screws and the boxes and all this kind of stuff He could do it without his kids But he does it with his kid Why?

Because it's what's best for the kid It's what's best for the kid The God of the universe wants to work with us because it's what's best for us Come on man.

He doesn't stop there Malachi 3 -2 -3 -5, but who can endure the day of its coming? And who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire, like fuller soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver,

and they will bring offerings and righteousness to the Lord. Does this section kind of feel like it's starting off like a warning? But I thought Jesus coming was going to be awesome.

Come, Lord Jesus, come. For those of us that know Jesus and have surrendered our life to Him and are following Him, the day of Jesus coming is incredible.

For those that don't know Jesus, time's up. There's no easy way to say it It's it's over. They don't have the opportunity.

We are in grace time right now We are in the time where we have the opportunity we we know what scripture says we know it says Jesus is going to return What are we going to do with that information?

It kind of feels a little bit like when we were kids and you would hear your dad's coming home wait till your dad dad gets home. A little bit. That's how it read for me. I don't know what that says about my relationship with my dad.

But then he goes to these really cool illustrations, right? And don't miss this. So he says he's like a refiner's fire, okay?

And like fuller soap. So refiner's fire, here's what you should be picturing. Like a smelting pot, right? Where the temperature is insane. and They would have like a gold a clump of gold that has like different minerals on it Or maybe it was silver or what have you and they would put it in and then it would be burned to such a high temperature That the impurities would be melted away So literally would it would

become pure through the fire and Then he transitions into this idea of full or so now for those of you guys that don't know I got a lamb in my backyard and if you can't pick up on the fact that I'm frustrated I got a lamb in my backyard you can see on my face I'm not happy about having a lamb still in my backyard but I have a lamb in my backyard and I lied to you last week he's 171 pounds I was wrong on

the weight the reason I share this with you is they smell they smell awful it's you think a cat nope lamb okay the The reason that I share that with you is not just so that you can pray for me,

but The fact that he's talking about fuller soap So they would cut the wool off of the sheep But when they're doing that what would happen that it was matted and it smelled and I'll butch you But I don't want to make a cloak out of smelly matted cloth like didn't you want that?

So they would have this fuller soap, which would actually help with them, it would pull the smell out, right, think of like industrial -strength soap that they would have at the time, and it would also help them detangle so that when they actually cheered it off,

they could use it for yarn, it would make it useful. So what you should be hearing in these two illustrations that he's pointing out is the God of the universe purifies you and makes you useful.

What's that? I would think so, but that part we haven't gotten to yet. I'm still trying to sell the lamb. No,

it's okay, good question. So this seriously, that's what God does. God purifies us and makes us useful. So we need to be thinking about this on a couple of different planes here,

right? So, when I'd be with Kid Nation, at this point I would say to put your thinking caps on. So I'm gonna ask you guys, you ready? Let's put our thinking caps on. Okay, this is gonna be kind of difficult, okay? I want you to think about it from the perspective of a Hebrew at the time who's hearing this,

400 years before Jesus comes. Okay? So we're talking about Jesus coming and what it was gonna be like when Jesus came. So Jesus has John the Baptist come, prepare the way for him. Jesus is coming. now there with them. He's talking to the Jews and he's helping them understand who Messiah really is and it's him. That's what Jesus is doing in that moment.

Now for us in 2020, whatever the year is, that's, we're thinking about this. Now we need to also be thinking about Jesus's returning because the God of the universe promised that he would return.

and the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night and on that day the people who are following him will be with him and those that aren't won't.

We got to be thinking about it on multiple levels here. Jesus is purifying you. and he's making you useful all the way back for his redemptive plan and the thing that actually makes it work is Jesus's presence.

That's that's the second section there. Let's continue. Verses 6 through 9, "For I the Lord do not change, therefore you, all children of Jacob,

are not consumed." consumed. This is a passage that you've heard probably before make sure that we understand what he's talking about.

God had a covenant with the Jewish people and they didn't follow that covenant a lot. They didn't listen to him they didn't follow the laws that he had set up for them and what he's saying there is because I am God when you don't follow the covenant

I don't just wipe you off the face of the earth for I the Lord do not change therefore you are not consumed because he could if God says to live this way and we go

no we're good we're just gonna do it our own way he's the God of the universe he could do that but that's not who he is and he points out to them in verse 7,

"From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me and I will return to you." I think some of the best words in all of Scripture because over and over and over again what he says is you're off track.

I love you. Here's how you're off track. Return to me and I'll return to you. He's so full of grace and mercy and steadfast love that we can't understand it.

Return to me and I'll return to you. Jesus' redemption plan has been consistent. This is how you're off track.

is the same method from the Hebrew Scriptures as it is for us in the New Testament. Over and over and over again, we're gonna find ourselves not listening to God,

we're gonna find ourselves in sin, we're gonna find ourselves missing the mark, and his answer is return to me, and I'll return to you. I offer that grace over and over and over again because it's not about you and your good works in what you do.

think you bring to the party. It's all about him. It's all about Jesus. The redemption plan has been the same the entire time.

But notice when they ask, "How?" It's a reasonable question, right? How do we return to you? You don't understand God.

I'm so jacked up My life is so messed up. I haven't done the right thing in 20 years. I Have done the right thing my whole life. I've done the right thing in the last two days But you know I've done a lot of that stuff Whatever it is How?

How God? How do I return to you because you know what? I'm in darkness and I don't see light. I don't believe you. In a very Jesus way,

God's response is not to give him the answer. You see it? Not in the way that you'd want. You ask a question like that, you would want a booklet. Hey, here's a booklet, here's what you need to do if you don't apologize.

Yeah, exactly, right? It's not only this. He says, well, man, rob God. Yet you are robbing me, but you say how have we robbed you and your ties and contributions?

You are cursed with a curse for you are robbing me the whole nation of you." Now, a couple of things to understand here. Again, start getting your stuff about money.

It feels weird. The point is the agreement that they have. with God. They had a temple and they had an agreement. When you hear tithe,

just think tenth. That's all it means. They had an agreement that they would provide for the needs of the temple, for the temple to work because for the temple to work, that was the way that they would have atonement.

They would have a relationship with God where sin was being dealt with and the temple had people in it. The people had to eat. They had bills. they had stuff they needed to take care of,

so there was this agreement that they weren't meeting. But don't stay there, because that's not the point. The point is, they weren't giving their best to God.

The point was, they weren't honoring the agreement. That's the primary issue. The money illustrated where their heart really was, because their heart really was.

was not I have an agreement with the God of the universe and I'm going to honor that agreement there There their heart was I'm good I'm gonna do my own thing God You could be the God of my life in every other area,

but here, but he continues to impact that more Versus 10 through 12 Bring the full tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house And thereby be put me to the test says the Lord of hosts if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down For you a blessing that there is no more need.

I Were but the devourer for you so that it will not destroy the future of your soil and your vine in the field shall not bear the fruit bear Not fail to bear says the Lord of hosts hosts that all the nations will call you blessed for you will be a land of delight says the Lord of hosts now this passage has been taught poorly by prosperity gospel teachers for a very long time so it's first let's first get that

out what the passage says is God is in control and will care for your needs in profound way That's what the passage says.

It doesn't say I'm going to give to yet. That's a misunderstanding of the idea of an offering. That's a misunderstanding of the relationship with God.

I'm going to give to God because if I give to God then he's gonna give me all this other stuff. Well I'm misunderstanding the whole point anyway. I'm supposed to be giving to acknowledge that everything is his anyway,

and trusting that he will meet my needs in profound ways. Not that my bank account will be doubled, my needs will be met,

and that the God of the universe will use my offering, my gift, my contribution, my time, talent, and treasure for his redemption plan. Thank you for watching. again it's not about me,

it's about God and what he is doing and our role in it. The thing that we should understand is that our plan for our life cannot compare to God's plan for our life.

What this is, if you guys can see that picture, that's called the Pillars of Creation. James Webb Telescope took a picture of that. That's real. That's not doctrine.

That is where stars are forming in the galaxy. And what you're looking at is gas that is going to then become a star. The God you serve just did that.

He's capable of that. That kind of beauty, that kind of glory, and we want to have our own role so that we're in control of our life doing it our way,

how we want, when we want, and we think at the end of our lives we're going to look back and go I was right or do you think that the God that created that knows a little bit more about what your life should be?

What do you think? Real talk, his plan is so much greater than ours. It's so much greater.

Our plan cannot compare. No matter your wildest, most incredible dreams, whatever you want, everything will not compare to the fulfillment that you will get from following Jesus.

It won't, it can't. You weren't built for your dreams. own fulfillment. You were built to worship Him. You were made to reflect in the world that you are the beauty of the Creator who made you on your best day.

But I really want this job. But I really want to keep doing this thing. I really just want to do my own thing. Or do you want the God who created that to be in charge of your life?

That plan for our lives is way more life-giving than anything we could come up with on our own. It's not even close. Coming towards the end,

let's continue in verse 13 through 18. Your words have been hard against me, says the Lord. But you say, how have we spoken against you? You've said it is vain to serve God.

What is the profit of our keeping his charger of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evil does not only prosper, but they put God to the test and they escape.

Verse 16, "Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another." This Lord paid attention, the Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.

They shall be mine," says the Lord of hosts. "In the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him, then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked,

between the righteous and the wicked." one who serves God and who one who does not serve him The last point is the righteous or those that serve Jesus is redemption plan That's the righteous So notice he begins by pointing out that some have spoken out against him,

right? There's they're not getting the point point. They're continuing to speak out. They're looking at the world and they're saying, he doesn't know what he's talking about. And God's response isn't an argument.

Do you see it? His response isn't to say, no, you're wrong and here are the 10 reasons that you're wrong and blah, blah, blah, blah. His response is to point them to the righteous. He points them to those that are listening.

And it says that the Lord paid attention to what he's talking about. heard them. A book of remembrance was written. God is paying attention, guys. Even when sometimes it feels like he's not. He knows everything that's happening.

He's aware of your choices. He's aware of who you are. And his plan for your life is, well, we just looked at it. Think about in your own life The ways that you've served God Because it's easy to say stuff But serving is active Serving is washing someone's feet It's getting down with them in the muck of life and caring for them and Showing them the love of Christ Taking your ego pushing it aside Taking your



schedule pushing it aside Taking all of the things that are all saying you you you and pushing them to the side and serving someone else At the end of this life,

there's two camps. It says it pretty clearly here. "Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked. The difference is serving." There's a lot of people who claim the name of Christ but aren't serving Him.

There's a lot of people who claim to do a lot of good things but don't have any relationship with Jesus. Jesus. What does serving God look like? That's the difference between righteousness and wickedness.

Now, let's be clear on the term righteousness, though, because this can get really confusing because we're people and we kind of want to make it about us. Righteousness just means right choices. And when we stand before God,

the righteousness that we're close in that we have put on is not our own it's Jesus's. Remember it's his plan not ours.

We're the wide receiver running the route. We're not the coach, right? That righteousness that we have on is his. It's his righteousness not our own so sometimes we can get into that where we kind of want to go oh I'm such a great server.

I do all this for everybody. I, I, I, I, I, I, I, and you hear the sin in that? It's all about you, not about God and what God is doing. So just in closing,

understand there are two choices. Serve Christ or yourself. One is full of Jesus' righteousness and the other's full of our wickedness. He's the play caller. He called the play and we can do one of two things.

We can be on the team. We can be on the team. going to win because we know what the end of the book says or we can be the captain on the team by ourselves and it loses. It literally just comes down to that.

So a couple of application questions to be thinking about. How has Jesus collaborated with you recently? What's that look like? How has Jesus called you and collaborated with you in his redemption plan?

What impurities is he melting away currently? Have you shared them with someone? That's where we would encourage you to get involved in a small group and share some of that stuff that God is working on with you And what way is Jesus leading and you're holding back?

That's the tough one Who is he called you to be a part in reaching? Let's pray. Father in heaven,

thank you for your word. Lord, thank you for the way that you're so clear that you know what we need and you give it freely and when we're off track you give us the real talk that we need to get back on track.

You call us to return to you Lord. Lord. There's someone in the sound of my voice that doesn't know you Lord I just pray that you would make it abundantly clear who you are remove anything that would hold them back from deciding to follow you today and Realizing that fulfillment comes from Jesus not anything we can do Thank you that you are everything Lord,

and we do get to worship you so Jesus and we pray

[Music]