

## Malachi 3:2-5 \\\ Who Can Stand? \\\ 11-13-22 @ RCBC

The Messiah's coming into the temple was literally fulfilled at the presentation of Christ as an infant in Luke 2:22, His first coming wasn't to refine and judge. It was to redeem. It was to give His life as a ransom for many (Mk. 10:45).

*"There are only two important days on my calendar – this day and that day."* – Martin Luther

Who can stand?

- **Joel 2:11** – *"For the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; **who can endure it?**"*
- **Jeremiah 10:10** – *"But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and **the nations cannot endure his indignation.**"*
- **Nahum 1:6** – *"**Who can stand** before his indignation? **Who can endure** the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him."*

**Nahum 1:7** – *"The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows **those who take refuge in him.**"*

The reality is, standing before the searching scrutiny of this righteous Judge, *no one* will be able to maintain a successful defense of their actions.

- **Psalm 130:3**: *"If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?"*

**We demand that \_\_\_\_\_ be served, until we're the ones who are accused.**

We want the God of justice, as long as He overlooks *my* iniquity.

- **Psalm 130:4** says, *"But with you there is forgiveness, **that you may be feared.**"*

*"fuller's soap"* – fullers would wash clothes, oftentimes using their feet to agitate them, and specifically were known for getting stains out of garments and whitening them. Fullers would use alkaline deposits to wash & whiten clothes.

According to these metaphors of a refiner and a fuller, the goal wasn't to destroy, but to *purify*.

- The refiner would heat up the metal to remove the impurities.
- The fuller would clean and whiten clothing with soap and stomping out the dirt.

*"How do you know when it is sufficiently refined?"*

*"Whenever I see my own image reflected in it, I know the process is completed."*

God Himself looks over the precious material with constant *attention* and *dedication*. He *sits* over the fire, laboring and waiting, scraping the impurities away over and over, till His own face shines back at Him.

*"If you are just now in the fire, dear soul, be of good cheer - it shows at least that you are silver, and are capable of performing more acceptable service in God's holy Temple."* - F.B. Meyer

God is cleansing, purifying, and sanctifying us for His own glory.

**Purification and cleansing always \_\_\_\_\_ right worship.**

Once *character* has been transformed and purified, *then* the offerings will be given in the right spirit. And when they're not giving leftover worship and second-hand sacrifices, [v.4] says that they will be *"pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years."*

In [v.5] God calls an expert witness to take the stand – *Himself*. God not only comes as a witness, but also the Judge. The things that they've been guilty of all stem from the same root: ***not fearing the Lord properly.***

Like *sorcery, adultery, lying, and oppressing vulnerable members of society* were expressly forbidden by God (*Mal. 2:10-16; Lev. 19:10, 13; Deut. 24:14-15; Zech. 7:10; Ex. 22:22-24*).

By mistreating the most vulnerable in society, the people of Israel proved that they had forgotten their history. Israel had once been a small and helpless nation, and so they were specifically commanded to care for others in that same boat. They were failing to show others the kind of grace that the Lord had shown them.

**The person who claims the name of Christ but willingly mistreats other people reveals that they do not**

\_\_\_\_\_ as they ought.

The fear of the Lord preserves us for the Day of Judgment. This proper fear of the Lord teaches us to live in light of God's grace and mercy, because those are gifts that we have received.

- Do we demand justice, as long as it doesn't apply to us?
- Do we overlook and mistreat the vulnerable around us, forgetting what God has done for us in Christ?
- Do you feel as though you're being put through the fire, but are angry about it?

*"If any of you, my hearers, are seeking the Lord at this time, I want you to understand what it means: you are seeking a fire which will test you, and consume much which has been dear to you. We are not to expect Christ to come and save us in our sins, he will come and save us from our sins. Therefore, if you are enabled by faith to take Christ as a Savior, remember that you take him as the purger and the purifier, for it is from sin that he saves us." - Charles Spurgeon*

What is the difficult refining of the Christian is at the same time the terminal judgment of those without Christ as Savior.

*"The good news of Malachi 2:17-3:5 is that there was a 'Messenger of the covenant' who would come. He upheld the covenant between God and Israel in His life, and He sealed the covenant in His blood on the cross.*

**Every time Christians take the Lord's Supper, they proclaim that the \_\_\_\_\_ has come and He will come again.** We look back at His faithfulness, resting in the promise of his grace. In the courtroom of heaven, Jesus' blood will be our plea. And by His power, looking forward to His return, we live with a reverential fear of the Lord, doing good works that will be tested and approved, fully pleasing to God, just like our King Jesus."

— Christ Centered Commentary

Additional Notes: \_\_\_\_\_