

Perspective, Malachi 2:17-3:1

Picture within picture



Picture within a picture



Your perspective in life matters greatly in understanding and seeing the picture of your life clearly

- Your perspective matters greatly to live in godly wholeness
- Wholeness is different from healing
 - Healing will make you well; disease (*or problem*) will stop, but only wholeness will allow you to move forward, fully repair, and rebuild

Your perspective in life matters greatly in understanding and seeing the picture of your life clearly

- Wholeness is different from healing
 - Wholeness is not a place where there is no pain, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of all of life's challenges and still remember that you are complete. Wholeness does not mean perfection: it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life.

Your perspective in life matters greatly in understanding and seeing the picture of your life clearly

- **John 10:10 AMP**, “10 The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows].
 - This is God’s will for you here in this dark and lonely world

To move toward wholeness in our lives we have looked at a few words to lead us

- We examined the words - honor and respect
- **Deuteronomy 10:12 NLT**, “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? He requires only that you fear (*honor and respect, be in awe of*) the Lord your God, and live in a way that pleases him, and love him and serve him with all your heart and soul.”
 - This would be the path to wholeness

To move toward wholeness in our lives we have looked at a few words to lead us

- Then we examined the word - holiness or “set apart”
- **1st Peter 1:16 NLT**, “16 For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’”
- Seeing ourselves as God sees us - **1st Peter 2:9 NIV**, “9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

To move toward wholeness in our lives we have looked at a few words to lead us

- Last week we examined the word – faithfulness
- **2nd Corinthians 5:7 NLT**, “7 For we live by faith (*faithfulness*), not by sight.”
- Scripture is the tool God has given us to move toward wholeness
- Everything we need to keep marching toward wholeness is found in His Scripture given to us to use

To move toward wholeness in our lives we have looked at a few words to lead us

- This morning we will examine the word - perspective
- Perspective - a particular way of thinking about something, especially one that is influenced by your beliefs or experiences
- How you view God, Scripture, your life, your experiences....

Scripture

- **Malachi 2:17-3:1 NIV**, “17 You have wearied the Lord with your words. “How have we wearied him?” you ask. By saying, “All who do evil are good in the eyes of the Lord, and he is pleased with them” or “Where is the God of justice? 3:1 “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.”

Do you hear a hint of frustration in God's voice in these verses?

- **Verse 17**, "You have wearied the Lord with your words."
- Wearied could easily have been the word frustrated
- Do you hear God rolling His eyes sighing?

Do you hear a hint of frustration in God's voice in these verses?

- You hear a hint of frustration in Jesus' word in **John 16:29-31 NLT**, "29 Then his disciples said, "At last you are speaking plainly and not figuratively. 30 Now we understand that you know everything, and there's no need to question you. From this we believe that you came from God." 31 Jesus asked, "Do you finally believe?"
- There were two false truths being lived in Israel at this time and you will find them in our culture as well

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- The middle of **verse 7** reads, “All who do evil are good in the eyes of the Lord, and he is pleased with them.”
 - **MSG**, “God loves sinners and sin alike. God loves all.”
And also by saying, “Judgment? God’s too nice to judge.”
- The nation was coming to the temple, offering up the required sacrifices and yet God was not responding as they thought he should have right then and there

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- Everyone knew there was sin in the land of Israel based upon the commands God gave them and the nation accepted
- It was open and flagrant = glaring, gross, conspicuously bad or objectionable, flagrant applies usually to offenses or errors so bad that they can neither escape notice nor be condoned

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- **Numbers 25:4-5 NLT**, “4 The Lord said to Moses, “Arrest all the leaders of the people, and hang them up before the Lord in broad daylight, so that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.” 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, “Each of you must execute those of his men who were joined to Baal Peor.”

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- **Numbers 25:4-5 NLT**, “6 Just then one of the Israelites came and brought to his brothers a Midianite woman in the plain view of Moses and of the whole community of the Israelites, while they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting.
- Since God did not respond immediately with judgement some believed they could get by with it and sinned even deeper

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- They did not see their current spiritual condition as God’s judgement
- The same thinking Adam had after Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and did not die immediately
- That kind of thinking spread throughout Israel because that is what sin does
- God’s covenant with Israel was all about God and others, but they made it about themselves

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- **Psalms 86:15 NLT**, “15 But you, O Lord, are a God of compassion and mercy, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.”
- **Isaiah 30:18 NIV**, “18 Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!”

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- Never assume even the smallest (*by your standard*) sin has no effect on you or it is hidden from God
- God knows what sin does in your life and He longs for your turning back to Him and His Word so He can once again be gracious to you

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- **Luke 18:9-14 NLT**, “9 Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: 10 “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! 12 I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- **Luke 18:9-14 NLT**, 13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ 14 I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

False truth one – We are God’s special people, so He really doesn’t care about our sin

- Someone, “Although His wheels of justice sometimes seem to grind exceedingly slow, they eventually grind exceedingly fine.”
- There is no wholeness of life from this perspective

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- The last part of **verse 17**, “Where is the God of justice?”
- God said He would protect us, bless us, be with us
- If that is true, why is there so much violence in our world?
- Why is God not helping the weak, the children, those most vulnerable?

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- Why do overt sinners seem to have God's favor?
- Why is God not helping me with my needs?
- Why is He silent when the needs are grossly evident?
- Do you really love me God?
- You hear this type of first in Scripture when the Serpent is questioning Eve in the garden on God's intent of forbidding the eating of the fruit in the middle of the garden

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- **Genesis 3:4-5 NLT**, 4 “You won't die!” the serpent replied to the woman. 5 “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”
 - God is holding out on you and keeping you from reaching your full potential
 - He doesn't care about you and Adam
 - You can't trust Him or His Word

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- There is not much wholeness to be found in this perspective
- Renee Swope, “Soon after I surrendered my life to Christ, I started struggling with painful things from my past that made me doubt God's promises for my future. I wondered: If God loves me, why has He allowed so much pain in my life?”

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- Renee Swope, “If He loved me, why did God allow my family to be broken by adultery and divorce, shattered by confusion and chaos, shaken by alcohol and drug addictions and so much more? And why didn't He stop me from the pain I brought on myself, or keep me from the darkness of depression?”

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- Renee Swope, “God's love is not a quick-fix for our wounds, but it has the power to redeem and restore us into confident hope. When we allow the Holy Spirit poured out like Living water to go deep into our pain, He can heal our hearts from the inside out.”

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- In response to their accusations God gave them a promise in **Verse 3:1**, “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty.”

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- Today Jesus would say in **Luke 19:10 NLT**, “For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”
- Not just for salvation, but for all Christians walking in a fog of circumstances
- He came to restore what the enemy has taken”

False truth two – God really doesn't care about His people

- **Joel 2:25 NLT**, “25 The Lord says, “I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts. Hear God say, “That’s how you know I truly love you”

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- Have you as a parent every allowed or did something that thoroughly threw you children into a fit
 - Maybe you allowed one child to do something and said no to another
 - Or maybe you just said no to all of them

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- What was their response?
 - Oh, thank you wise and loving mother or father for seeing what I cannot and protecting me from the innocence of my understanding?
 - NOT FAIR or WHY or YOU DO NOT LOVE ME?

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- What was their response?
 - We can clearly identify my child is not living in wholeness and is close having some of their wholeness put in isolation
- This is the reason perspective is so important to living in wholeness

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- We don't always understand the whys of life
 - If you try and understand God or your circumstances through your whys you will get off track
 - You must see and grasp life through the who of life

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- **Isaiah 46:9-10 NLT**, “9 Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me. 10 Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish.”

Be very careful about using your finite understanding to judge the intent of our Infinite and Eternal Heavenly Father

- We live is a brief slice of time, God is eternal and sees everything completely
- It amazes me that He is intimately familiar with me and my hurts, pains, failures
- And continues to mold me into an image of Jesus Christ
- Wholeness will come as we allow Him to be God in our lives and we simply look to Him for everything

This is not a new struggle with mankind

- Solomon said after examining life in **Ecclesiastes 1:9 NLT**, “9 History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new.”
- **Psalms 73 NLT**, “1 Truly God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure. 2 But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone.

This is not a new struggle with mankind

- **Psalms 73 NLT**, “3 For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness. 4 They seem to live such painless lives; their bodies are so healthy and strong. 5 They don’t have troubles like other people; they’re not plagued with problems like everyone else. 6 They wear pride like a jeweled necklace and clothe themselves with cruelty.

This is not a new struggle with mankind

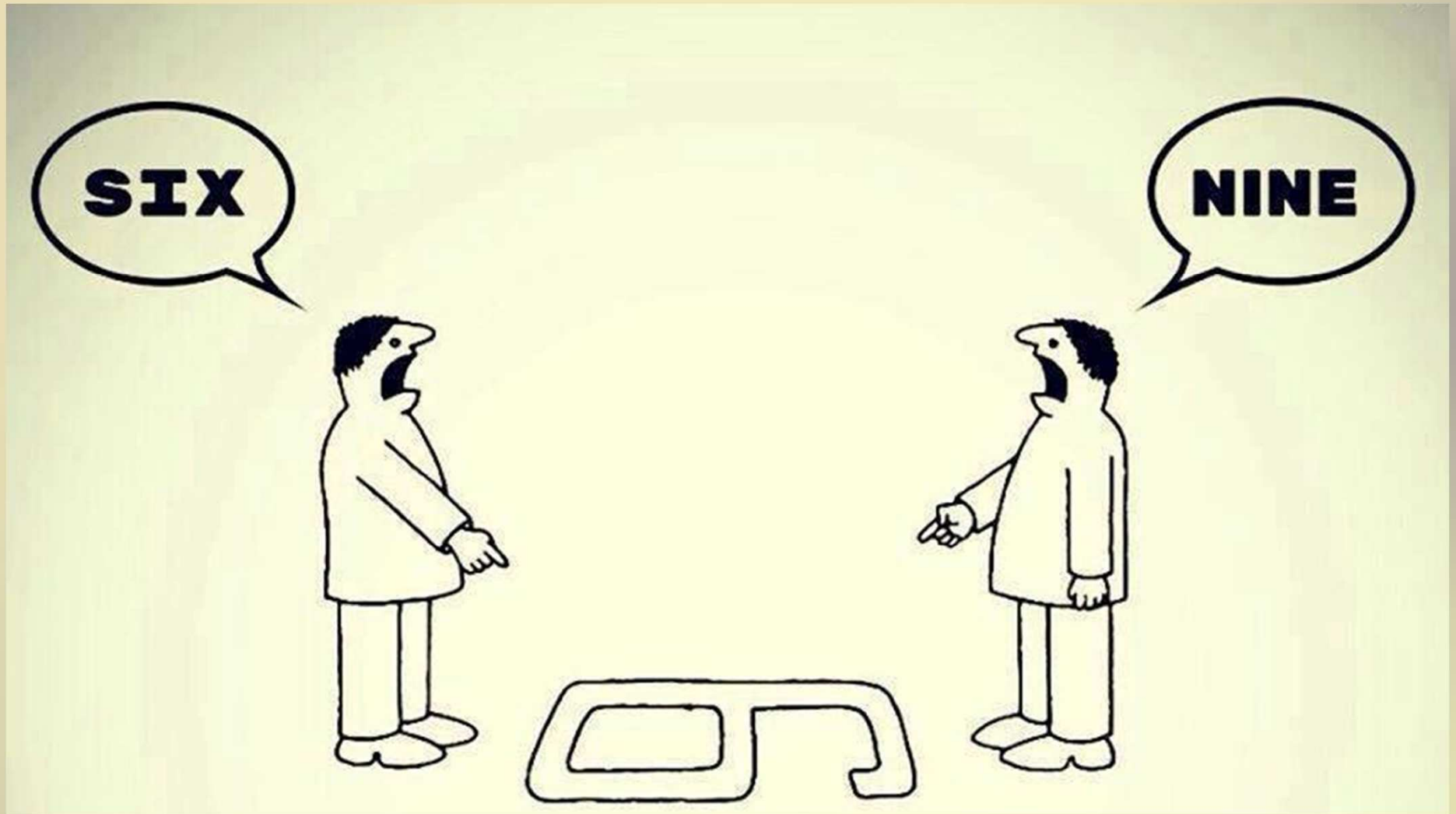
- **Psalms 73 NLT**, “7 These fat cats have everything their hearts could ever wish for! 8 They scoff and speak only evil; in their pride they seek to crush others. 9 They boast against the very heavens, and their words strut throughout the earth.

This is not a new struggle with mankind

- **Psalms 73 NLT**, “10 And so the people are dismayed and confused, drinking in all their words. 11 “What does God know?” they ask. “Does the Most High even know what’s happening?” 12 Look at these wicked people—enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply. 13 Did I keep my heart pure for nothing? Did I keep myself innocent for no reason? 14 I get nothing but trouble all day long; every morning brings me pain. 15 If I had really spoken this way to others, I would have been a traitor to your people.

This is not a new struggle with mankind

- **Psalms 73 NLT**, “16 So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! 17 Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked.
- **Verse 28**, “But as for me, how good it is to be near God! I have made the Sovereign Lord my shelter, and I will tell everyone about the wonderful things you do.”
- That is perspective that will lead you to wholeness



Perspective, Malachi 2:17-3:1