

Old Testament

Malachi: Don't cheat God

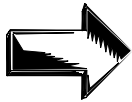
Malachi 3:5-17

Younger Verse

A Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

Older Verse

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.
Luke 2:11



Teachers: This unit is designed to help your children understand some of the stories in the Old Testament.

PLEASE remember to always include the New Testament verses—this helps each child see how God's ultimate plan was fulfilled in Christ!

Welcome Time

Have you ever played a game? What did you do when you thought someone was cheating? How did you feel? Listen...in today's lesson God tells the people that they have been cheating Him! Try to listen and tell us how they cheated God.

Bible Story

Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do NOT read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.

Can you believe that Malachi (Mal-a-ki) is the last book of the Old Testament. We have gone through all 39 books. We've learned lots of interesting things. Can you think of one thing that you remember? (wait for answers)

Malachi had a special word from God to the people. The people began to doubt that God loved them. They thought that He had forgotten about them or didn't care about them. God reminds them that He loves them and wants us to talk to Him about all the things that we are going through. God also told the people that they had been robbing Him.

They were shocked. They asked, "How have we cheated God?"

Malachi told them that they had forgotten to give God an offering or a tithe of the money they received. A tithe (Tie-th) is giving God part of the money you have received. For example, if you earned \$10, a tithe would be \$1 that you gave back to God. It is our way of thanking God for giving us the things we need and showing Him that He is first in our lives—and not money.

It says in Malachi 3:16 that those who respected the Lord began to tell others about Him. It says that God heard them and was pleased. He wrote their names on

Lesson Goals

Explain what a tithe is
Know that we cannot cheat God
Understand that God loves us and sent Jesus

a “scroll of remembrance,” or a book that reminds Him of the good things people did. Have you ever thought that God is listening to you too? It says here that God heard them. What about your words? Are they words that God would be pleased with? Could He write your name in the memory book too? This week, let’s try to speak GOOD words to each other and tell others about God.

It says in Malachi 3:17 that those that do this are a treasured possession to God. We’ll be like sparkly diamonds—bright and beautiful to God.

In the beginning of chapter 3, Malachi tells us that God will be preparing the way for someone special—His Son. God kept His promise. He sent Jesus to us. Jesus took our punishment for us. He died in our place. Then, 3 days later, He came back to life! He died but now He is alive! The Bible tells us that if we trust Jesus, and believe in Him, He will take us to Heaven when we die. Would you like to know more? Talk to me anytime. I would like to tell you good things about Jesus.

Learning Activities

Choose activities that will help your kids learn how much God loves them. Be a model of His love too.

Memory Verse Activities

Make hearts of different sizes. Print a word of the verse on each heart. Turn them over and scramble them. Divide the group into teams and see how fast the group can put the verse in order.

Prayer Time

As you pray today, thank God verbally for each child. Say their names in your prayer.

Snack Time/CleanUp

For fun, have a contest to see which table can clean up the fastest (make sure the winning table has done a good job at cleaning up). Let the winning table help serve OR be the first in line for refreshments.

Planning for Next Year
Thru the Old Testament in a Year
Creation
Genesis 1

Preschool Lesson
For
Malachi

We are looking at the very last book of the Old Testament! Open your Bible and show the kids how they have learned things from the whole Old Testament.

One of God's friends was named Malachi. He helped remind the people that God really, really loved them. He helped the people see that they had stopped loving God. This had made God very sad.

When the people heard this, they could not believe their ears! They asked how they had forgotten God. Malachi explained that they had forgotten to give back to God as a way of showing Him how much they loved Him.

Malachi told the people that God loved them and that they were a very special treasure to God.

Did you know that you are a treasure to God? You are! He loves you and cares for you very much.

Let's thank God for loving us. Sing, "God is so Good."

Hands-On Activities For Malachi

Bring 3 jars or cups for each child. Explain that when they receive money, they should put coins in each cup. The first cup is money to give back to God. The second cup is money to save and the third cup is money to spend. Share how important it is to give back to God and also the importance of saving money.
(Adapted from Crown Ministries)

Make treasure boxes. Decorate little boxes with sequins and glitter.

Make a memory book of good things that you see the kids doing. It will be a great source of encouragement for the kids.

Bring a game to play. Ahead of time, ask one person to purposefully “cheat.” Explain that there is a reason that you will explain later. Now, play the game with the children. Soon enough, the kids will realize that someone is “cheating.” Now share how God felt when the people of Malachi’s time were cheating God. Challenge the kids to give to God and not “cheat” Him out of what He deserves.

Bring play money (or cut out green paper to resemble money). Give them a certain amount and help them calculate how much they should give back to God.

Bring chocolate coins to munch on for snack.