

SERMON NOTES: PREPARING FOR THE WORD THAT WALKS 5: RETURNING TO THE FATHER (22 November 2015)

SCRIPTURE

Malachi 4:4-6

“Remember the instruction of Moses My servant, the statutes and ordinances I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Look, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome Day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise, I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

KEY POINTS

- + Israel has a unique relationship with God in Him being a Father to them as a nation.
- + The role of a father is central to the healthy functioning of society, and where fathers are distant and disconnected, things become chaotic.
- + Shifts in authority emerge as people abusing power but also rebelling against legitimate power.
- + We rebel against the Father, we want to do our own thing - we end up being our own father. In doing this we create anxiety, we lose the relationship of wisdom, we are uneducated by those who have come before us.
- + We are called to fully step into the role of being a child of God. To step into a different world where we are held by our Father and come under His authority.
- + We are educated, taught wisdom, corrected, shown the road, embraced by Father God. We become like Him, and we continue the chain of discipleship.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- + How do you engage with God as Father? Is this a natural relational posture for you, or do you struggle to see God as Father?
- + Where are you turning towards the Father? Where are you rebelling against His authority?
- + We have been given the invitation to step into our proper place as children of God. What does it look like for you to embrace being a child of God?
- + How are you continuing the chain of discipleship, in leading others toward the Father? Is there someone in particular in your life who you feel needs to know they are loved and called as a child of God? What can you do to point them in that direction?
- + How has Malachi helped prepare you for Advent and the celebration of Jesus' arrival?