LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

NOVEMBER 8, 2026

Dive In (10 Minutes)

Go around and let everyone share... What is a time when you went through the motions of doing something (like a job task, a holiday tradition, or a favor) out of sheer obligation rather than genuine enthusiasm? How did it feel, and could people tell your heart wasn't really in it?

Dig Deep (40 Minutes)

Read Malachi 1:1-14 aloud.

- Examine verses 2–5 ("'I have loved you,' says the Lord. But you ask, 'How have you loved us?'"). Even after returning from exile, the people of Israel were cynical, doubting God's love because life was still hard. When life gets difficult or stagnant, how easily do we slip into questioning God's love, and how does looking back at His past faithfulness guard our hearts?

- Notice the indictment against the priests in verses 6–8 ("'A son honors his father, and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me?'... By offering blemished food on my altar you say, 'The Lord's table is contemptible'"). The people were giving God their "leftovers"—blind, lame, or sick animals they wouldn't dare give to a local governor. What does offering "defiled" or cheap sacrifices reveal about how they viewed the worth of God compared to the comfort of their own possessions?

- Look at the exhaustion and cynicism expressed in verse 13 ("'Oh, what a burden!' you say, and you puff at it with contempt"). Instead of worship being a joyful delight, it had become a tedious chore to the Israelites. How can religious routines, habits, or church attendance subtly shift in our own lives from a life-giving response to God into a burden or an annoyance?

- Look at the severe warning in verse 14 ("'Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished thing to the Lord'"). Malachi confronts the hypocrisy of holding back our very best. What does a "wholehearted" offering look like in our modern lives—beyond just money, extending to our time, attention, and daily obedience?

Do Big (10 Minutes)

- Tell about a time when you realized you were offering God "leftovers" in an area of your life (time, energy, or devotion) and what you did to realign your heart with His worth. How will you bring a renewed, wholehearted attitude of worship to God this week?