

# GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

## MALACHI: THE DANGERS OF HALF-HEARTED DEVOTION

### SERIES THEME//

God called Malachi to declare a powerful message to his people: Beware of half-hearted living. God doesn't want the leftovers. He wants all that we are. He has called us to be a nation of priests, and our lives are meant to be a living sacrifice. In this, the last book of the Old Testament, we discover just how precious Jesus really is, because he has done everything we could not and empowers us for every good endeavor.

Malachi comes in the form of a *disputation*: God is leveling charges at Israel.

## SERMON REVIEW

### MARRIAGE MATTERS | MALACHI 2:10-16

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2017

### SERMON THEME//

Marriage matters because it is a God-forged image of His covenant love.

### LEADER//

Remember to create an atmosphere where everyone is comfortable to share their lives and faith. Keep discussion away from the quality of the sermon and focus on the content of it, and what God would have us do in our lives with it.

### OPENING UP//

- For those who are married: what is a funny story from the first few years of your marriage?
- For those who aren't married: Who in your life has a marriage that you value, and explain why?
- For those who are married, when and how do you feel most supported in your marriage from someone other than your spouse?
- For those who aren't married and if you're comfortable, explain how you feel being a single person at Peace Church; where is there tension, where is there joy?



## **DIGGING DEEPER//**

The theme of this sermon was Marriage Matters. Pastor Adam describes it like this, "Marriage matters because it is a God-forged image of His covenant love. Let's re-read the passage now."

## **Malachi 2:10-16 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup>Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? <sup>11</sup>Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob any descendant of the man who does this, who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!

<sup>13</sup>And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. <sup>14</sup>But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. <sup>15</sup>Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. <sup>16</sup>"For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."

After hearing a sermon on this passage, did re-reading this passage bring new light or new life to what Malachi wrote?

## **SERMON DISCUSSION VIDEO//**

Watch the sermon discussion video, taking note of what you found intriguing or insightful as you consider how to take the word preached and make it the word lived.



## DISCUSS THE SERMON//

### LEADER//

Your growth groups are meant to be safe spaces for believers to share, confess sin, and encourage one another toward holiness. As you discuss the sermon, think about how you might facilitate this sort of environment. How you might model this as a leader?

- What from the sermon discussion video helped you to think about the sermon, or this passage's implications for your life differently?
- Is this video helpful to you? Is it helpful to hear some other thoughts from the Pastor on this sermon? In what way?
- What would you have liked to ask Pastor Adam if you were giving this interview?
- Based on Malachi 2:10-16 and the sermon, what is God's view of marriage?
- What is the disputation discussed in this passage; What has God declared and how have his people responded?
- Where in American Christianity could this charged still be levied? Lets get real. How guilty are you?
- Love and marriage are often portrayed with a romantic lens in our culture, but the reality is that marriage is often difficult, inconvenient, or just plain boring. How can we act like the people of God in the midst of *real* marriage? How does this translate to our spiritual marriage to the Lord as his covenant people?
- Pastor Adam closed with a section called Living Devoted where he posed three questions. Spend the rest of your time giving your personal answers to these questions, and also discussing how you can living out these challenges in your marriage and/or life

*Have I embraced Scripture's uncompromising message?*

- What is this message?
- What makes this message hard to embrace?
- What is life like when it is embraced?

*How am I honoring God in my marriage?*

- What specific examples can you point to?
- How would you like to be living out this challenge?

*Have I experienced God's compassionate restoration?*

- Where has God brought you, what has he brought you through, and where has he brought you to?

- Where can the people of your group come together to hold each other accountable in your embracing Scripture, honoring your marriage, and living into the testimony God is writing through your life?



## **CLOSE IN PRAYER//**

### **LEADER//**

Your time of prayer should have two focusses. First, your growth group should pray to thank God for his word and ask for his help as you seek to be doers of the word and not hearers only. Second, your time of prayer should be a time of lifting up each other's needs to the Lord. Make sure to allow time before the prayer to ask if there are any prayer requests. Think about how you might model vulnerability & honesty as you ask for prayer.

Try to involve everyone in your time of prayer. This facilitates a deeper sense of community. Here are some ideas on how to do that:

- Pray in a circle. Have every person pray for the person to their right.
- Assign prayer requests to other members of the group.
- Gather in a huddle, hold hands while you pray, or lay hands on those asking for specific prayers. This posture includes the whole group in a relational way.
- If someone in your group is musical, close your time by singing together. Songs of worship are simply prayers that we all sing together!

