



Small Group Guide: Put God First

Summary: This sermon explores the tension between knowing what is right and actually living it, using Romans 7 to describe our inner struggle with sin and emotional baggage. The sermon emphasizes that real, daily victory and freedom from these “chains” come by making Jesus first—and only—in our lives, especially by seeking Him first each day.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

- ✓ **The struggle is real:** Even mature believers battle between wanting to do right and actually doing it.
- ✓ **Jesus breaks chains:** We don't need to know the name of every problem; we need to know the name of the Chain Breaker—Jesus.
- ✓ **First means only:** Making God first isn't just about sequence; it's about giving Him exclusive priority in our hearts.
- ✓ **The loading dose principle:** The first time we spend with God each day sets the spiritual tone and provides power for everything that follows.
- ✓ **Marination produces transformation:** Consistent time with God allows His character to soak into us, changing how we respond to life.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message

1. Read Romans 7:14-25 together. What part of Paul's struggle resonates most with you? Why do you think even mature believers face this internal battle?
2. The sermon mentioned that "knowing what to do and actually doing it is different." Can you share an example from your life where you knew the right thing but struggled to do it?
3. The "First" Challenge: On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate God's priority in your daily life right now? What typically comes before Him?
4. The sermon mentioned various things fighting to be "first"—phones, news, work, relationships. What are the top 3 things that compete for first place in your life?

Going Deeper

1. The sermon mentions that making God first releases His power to fight our battles. What battle have you been fighting in your own strength that you need to surrender to God?

Personal Application

- What "shore" is God calling you to leave right now? What makes it difficult to cross over?
- Is there an area where you're living in "comfort" rather than "calling"? What would it look like to surrender that area to God's purposes?
- The sermon asks: "What voices are you listening to?" What voices (social media, news, friends, family, your own thoughts) tend to distract you from what God has said?

Practical Applications

Choose 1-2 to commit to this week:

This Week's Challenge: The "First 15"

Commit to spending the first 15 minutes of each day with God before checking your phone, email, or engaging with anyone else.

Daily Practice:

- Day 1-2: Simply sit in God's presence. Tell Him, "You are first in my life!"
- Day 3-4: Read a Psalm and let it marinate. Ask God to flavor your day with His truth.
- Day 5-6: Bring your struggles to Him. Ask Him to break specific chains.
- Day 7: Reflect on how making God first has changed your week.

Reflection

Memory Verse for the Week: *"But thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."* - **Romans 7:25 (NLT)**

