



FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

Small Group Guide: For the Whole World - Week 4

"Jesus Came to Reprioritize the Role of Religion"

Ice Breaker: Share about a time when you followed "the rules" so strictly that it actually made a situation worse or hurt someone's feelings. What did you learn from that experience?

Sermon Summary

Jesus came to put religion in its proper place—second to loving God and loving people. When religion becomes our highest priority, mercy suffers, leaders become self-righteous, and followers become hypocrites. Jesus consistently demonstrated that people matter more than religious rules, and that all of Scripture hangs on two commands: Love God and love your neighbor.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message

1. The Problem with Religion in First Place

- Dave said, "When religion is the highest priority, mercy always suffers." What examples of this have you seen in your own life or in the world around you?
- Why do you think it's so easy for religious people to become self-righteous or for followers to become hypocrites?



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2. The Sabbath Principle

- Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." What does this statement reveal about God's heart toward us?
- Can you think of religious rules or traditions that sometimes get prioritized over people's actual needs?

3. The Greatest Commandment

- Why did Jesus give us TWO commandments instead of just one? How does "love your neighbor" make "love God" measurable?
- Dave said, "If you read anything in the Bible and come up with a conclusion other than love God and love your neighbor, you're reading the Bible wrong." How does this challenge or change the way you approach Scripture?

Personal Reflection

4. Your Religious Background

- Did you grow up in a rule-based home or a more grace-filled environment? How has that shaped your view of God and religion?
- Where have you seen yourself becoming more focused on "getting it right" than on loving people well?

5. Compassion vs. Consistency

- Dave said, "Jesus' conscience was informed by compassion rather than consistency." Why is this challenging for us? Why do we prefer consistency?
- Share about a time when showing compassion required you to be inconsistent or break your own "rules."



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6. The Core Question

- "When you don't know what to do, you simply do what love requires of you." What situation in your life right now needs this approach?
- Who in your life is more important than your view, even if you disagree with them?

Going Deeper

7. Isaiah's Challenge

- Read Isaiah 1:11-17 together. What is God saying about the relationship between worship and justice?
- How can we avoid "showing up to church" as a way to feel better about how we lived during the week?

8. Jesus' Priorities

- Dave said, "Jesus never allowed theology to get in the way of ministry." When have you seen theology used as an excuse not to help someone?
- What would it look like for your small group or church to truly prioritize people over religious preferences?

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. Identify Your Rules

- Make a list of your personal "religious rules" (things you think Christians should or shouldn't do). Ask yourself: Are any of these getting in the way of loving people well?



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2. Break a Rule for Love

- Is there a preference, tradition, or personal boundary you need to adjust to show compassion to someone in your life? What would love require of you?

3. Practice Compassionate Inconsistency

- Look for one opportunity this week to prioritize a person over your preference, schedule, or comfort. Journal about the experience.

4. Have a Difficult Conversation

- Is there someone you've been avoiding or judging because of how they live? Reach out to them this week—not to fix them, but to show them they matter to you.

5. Read a Gospel

- Read through one of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) this week, specifically looking for how Jesus prioritized people over religious rules.