

SMALL GROUPS

Key Scripture References

- Mark 14:36 - Jesus in Gethsemane
- Matthew 26:31-35 - Peter's declaration
- John 21:15-17 - Jesus restores Peter
- John 19:30 - "It is finished"

Main Takeaways

1. You can't get to the end product without going through a process of pain

The sermon emphasized that anything worth doing will be difficult. Growth, championship, character development—all require enduring hardship.

2. Jesus understands wanting to quit

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus experienced the weight of what was coming and asked if there was another way, yet He chose not to quit.

3. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak

Peter's failure wasn't a lack of love for Jesus—it was human weakness. We all face this tension between what we want to do and what we actually do.

4. Jesus can forgive more than you can fail

Peter denied Jesus three times, and Jesus forgave him three times. No failure is too great for God's forgiveness.

5. On the other side of your pain, there is a Pentecost coming

Peter went through his process of pain and became the preacher who birthed the church with 3,000+ salvations on Pentecost.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message

1. The Garden of Gethsemane: What does it mean to you that Jesus asked God to "take this cup from me" yet still chose to go through with it? How does this change your view of Jesus?
2. Peter's Journey: Peter went from declaring he'd never deny Jesus to doing exactly that. What do you think caused the gap between Peter's intentions and his actions?
3. The Three Denials and Three Restorations: Why do you think Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him? What's the significance of this matching Peter's three denials?

Personal Reflection

4. Your Own Garden: Have you ever had a "Garden of Gethsemane" moment where you desperately wanted God to change your circumstances? How did you handle it?
5. Quitting on Yourself: The sermon mentioned that Peter wanted to quit on himself, not necessarily on Jesus. Have you ever felt this way? What does it look like to quit on yourself versus quitting on God?

6. The Process of Pain: Pastor Mack said, "God is doing something IN you before He does something THROUGH you." What might God be doing in you right now through your current challenges?

Application-Focused

7. What Do You Want to Quit On? The sermon listed several areas:
 - Marriage
 - Kids
 - God
 - Yourself
 - A relationship
 - Prayer for someone
8. Which of these resonates most with your current situation? (Share as you're comfortable)
9. The Only Thing to Quit: The pastor said, "The only thing we need to quit is trying to fix it ourselves." What are you trying to fix in your own strength that you need to surrender to God?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following actions to commit to this week:

Option 1: Don't Quit Praying

- Identify someone you've been praying for but feel like giving up on
- Commit to praying for them daily this week
- Journal what God shows you through the process

Option 2: Surrender What You're Holding

- Write down what you're trying to control or fix on your own
- Literally give it to God in prayer (consider a symbolic act like writing it down and burning it, burying it, or placing it at the foot of a cross)
- Each time you're tempted to take it back, pray: "Not my will, but Your will be done"

Option 3: Forgive Your Own Failures

- List the ways you feel you've failed (yourself, God, others)
- Read 1 John 1:9 and claim God's forgiveness
- Destroy the list as a symbol of God's complete forgiveness
- Write out: "Jesus can forgive more than I can fail"

Option 4: Encourage Someone Else Not to Quit

- Think of someone you know who's struggling and ready to quit
- Reach out to them this week with encouragement
- Share your own story of perseverance if appropriate

Going Deeper

Memory Verse for the Week:

"After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord,' Peter replied, 'you know I love you.' 'Then feed my lambs,' Jesus said." - John 21:15

Reflection Questions for Personal Time:

1. What would change in my life if I truly believed "Jesus can forgive more than I can fail"?
2. Where is God asking me to say, "Not my will, but Your will be done"?
3. What "Pentecost" might be waiting on the other side of my current pain?

Key Quote to Remember

"If quitting is in your vocabulary, then quitting is in your future."

Instead, declare: "I will not quit. I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to stop. I'm going to keep on."

Prayer Focus

Closing Group Prayer (Pray together or have someone lead):

Lord, thank You that You understand what it feels like to want to quit. Thank You that even in Your darkest moment, You chose not to quit on us. We confess the areas where we feel like giving up. We surrender our pain, our failures, our weaknesses to You. Help us remember that You're doing something IN us before You do something THROUGH us. Give us strength to persevere. Remind us that You can forgive more than we can fail. We choose today not to quit, but to trust You with everything. Not our will, but Your will be done. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Before Next Week

- Share with the group (via text/email) one way you applied this week's message
- Pray for each other's specific "don't quit" areas
- Prepare to share testimonies of God's faithfulness next week

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to group members who may be in deep pain or contemplating giving up
- Have resources ready (counseling referrals, pastoral contact info) for anyone who needs additional support
- Create a safe space for vulnerability—model transparency about your own struggles
- Celebrate small victories of perseverance when members share them
- Follow up individually with anyone who seemed particularly impacted by this message