

Small Group Guide: The Best Is Yet to Come

Pentecost Sunday - Sermon by Tom Smith

Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by thanking God for His presence and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and application of His Word.

Icebreaker Question

Share a memorable graduation moment from your life (any level - kindergarten, high school, college, or another milestone). What made it significant?

Sermon Summary

This Pentecost Sunday message explored the theme "the best is yet to come" through the lens of life transitions, the Jewish Feast of Weeks, and the birth of the church. The sermon connected the giving of the law at Mount Sinai (where 3,000 died) with the day of Pentecost (where 3,000 were saved), demonstrating God's redemptive plan through Jesus Christ.

Key Scripture Passages

- **Acts 2:1-13** - The Day of Pentecost
- **Acts 2:38-41** - Peter's message and the 3,000 baptized
- **Revelation 21:1-4** - The new heaven and new earth
- **1 Corinthians 15:54-57** - Victory over death

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message

1. **What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why did that particular point resonate with you?**
2. **The sermon connected three Jewish pilgrimage feasts (Firstfruits, Weeks, and Tabernacles) with the message that "the best is yet to come." How does understanding these Jewish traditions deepen your appreciation of Pentecost?**
3. **Discuss the bookend between Exodus 32 (3,000 died after the golden calf) and Acts 2 (3,000 saved at Pentecost). What does this reveal about God's character and His redemptive plan?**

Personal Reflection

4. The sermon walked through life stages - high school, career, marriage, children, grandchildren - with the repeated message that "the best is yet to come." What stage of life are you in right now? How does this message speak to your current circumstances?
5. Tom shared the story of Mrs. Keene, who found comfort in Revelation 21:1-4 during her suffering. When have you needed to hold onto the promise that "the best is yet to come" during a difficult season?
6. The sermon mentioned that today there are 50 countries on the watch list for severe persecution of Christians. How does knowing "the best is yet to come" strengthen your faith when facing trials (big or small)?

Application and Action

7. Peter's message at Pentecost was simple and direct: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." Is there someone in your life who needs to hear this message? How can you share it with them this week?
8. The early church spread the gospel rapidly despite intense persecution because they believed in the resurrection. What would change in your daily life if you lived with a deeper conviction that "the best is yet to come"?
9. The sermon emphasized that after high school, what matters is "your character, your integrity, your work ethic, and how you treat other people." In what area of character development is God currently working in your life?

Key Takeaways

- **Pentecost represents God's redemptive reversal** - where 3,000 once died under the law, 3,000 were now saved by grace
- **"The best is yet to come" is the consistent message** throughout Scripture, from the firstfruits offering to the promise of eternal life
- **The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation** of our hope and the reason we can face any trial with confidence
- **The church was born in power** and spread despite persecution because believers knew death had been conquered
- **Our current circumstances, no matter how difficult, are temporary** - God promises no more tears, death, sorrow, pain, or crying in eternity

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. **Memorize Revelation 21:3-4** and share it with someone who is going through a difficult time
2. **Write a letter or email** to someone who is graduating (any level) with encouragement about their future and the hope we have in Christ
3. **Identify one area where you're facing difficulty** and consciously remind yourself each day: "The best is yet to come"
4. **Research a country where Christians face persecution** and commit to praying for believers there daily this week
5. **Share your testimony** with someone about how Jesus has given you hope for the future

Prayer Focus

Spend time praying for:

- Graduates in your church and community as they transition to new seasons
- Christians facing persecution around the world (in the 50 countries on the watch list)
- Group members who are facing health challenges, grief, or difficult circumstances
- A renewed sense of hope and expectation that "the best is yet to come"
- Boldness to share the gospel message as the early church did at Pentecost
- Those who need to make a decision to follow Jesus Christ

Closing Thought

"Death has been swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The best is yet to come."

Additional Resources

- Read the entire Book of Acts to see how the early church lived out their Pentecost experience
- Study the three pilgrimage feasts in Leviticus 23
- Read the Book of Ruth to understand its connection to Pentecost/Feast of Weeks