



Put God First – Week 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Overview

In the third and final week of our series, *In God We Trust*, we examine the principle of putting God first in our lives. We will learn how putting Him first results in peace and provides the opportunity to grow our trust in God.

Discussion Questions

The real test for a believer is whether or not we are putting God first with our finances. To fully follow God, we must be obedient by honoring Him with our money. This means we honor the principle of tithing laid out in Proverbs 3:9-10 and give the first and best portion of our income back to the Lord.

“Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.”
(Proverbs 3:9-10 NKJV)

- Share a time where your obedience led to the fulfillment of God’s promise to bring an increase.

Matthew 6:33 says, **“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”** God desires to be first in our life. In order to place Him first, we must make Him our first priority. If we seek God first in everything, our natural desire will be to put God first in our finances.

1. The firstborn is God’s.

Exodus 13:12-13 explains that God’s people, the Israelites, were to reserve the firstborn of their lambs as a sacrifice to God. A donkey was an unacceptable sacrifice to God, due to it being an unclean animal.

This may sound like a familiar story. Jesus was the perfect, and acceptable sacrifice given for us to be made clean. God gave what belonged to Him, His **first** and **best**, for us.

- How does this knowledge encourage you to honor God with your first and best?

2. The firstfruits are God's.

In addition to the firstborn, we also see in Scripture the principle of the firstfruits of the land must be given. Exodus 23:19 says, **"The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the House of the Lord your God..."** Offerings go to missions, charity, or the poor, but the tithe, or firstfruits, go to the place you worship, the House of the Lord.

The firstfruits of any increase are to be given to the Lord. According to Proverbs 3:9, anything that is considered an increase is to be tithed.

"...The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives."

Deuteronomy 14:23 (TLB)

- Share a time where honoring God first did not seem natural, but changed your heart as a result.
- Read Genesis 4:3-5. Have you ever realized that Cain's offering was not accepted because He did not honor God first? How does this change your view of honoring God with your tithe?

3. The tithe is God's - and must be first.

Leviticus 27:30 assures us that the tithe belongs to the Lord and is holy. It is important that we give God our first and best, not what is left. We have to search our hearts and ask if we are following this principle from God because we are told to, or because we desire to. Remembering that we were lost, without hope, until we put our faith and trust in Jesus, helps us remember why we follow Him.

- Reflect on the motives behind your decision to tithe. Do you feel you honor God out of the desire in your heart or out of duty?

Life Challenge

God tests our faithfulness each time we receive an increase. Malachi 3:10 says, **"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.'"** When we put God first in our lives and in our hearts, we can be confident that He will not only take care of us, but will also bless us abundantly. Ask God to reveal any doubt you may have about honoring Him with your tithe.

Prayer

Lord, help us to honor You with our first and best. We know Your commands are established to protect us and guide us back to You. We receive Your grace and mercy for the areas we don't measure up to, and we know that Your forgiveness covers us. Help us to grow into maturity as Your children. In Jesus' name, amen. Pray for the specific needs of the group.