



Dear heavenly Father, we worship You this morning with our tithe and offerings. We pray for the courage to put You first in our lives. In the name of Jesus, amen.

MARCH 20, 2021

When John put God First

Putting God first can be difficult. What can we learn from John that will help us put God first in our lives today?

John was the youngest of all the disciples. He loved Jesus with all his heart. When all other disciples scattered following Jesus' arrest, John stayed close to Jesus through the entire ordeal. Jesus honoured his faithfulness by giving him the mission of taking care of the woman who cared for Jesus the most: Mary, His mother.

But when he was young, John was vengeful and angry. It was hard for him to feel compassion for those who rejected Jesus. Once he suggested to Jesus that fire should come from heaven and completely destroy the Samaritans who rejected Jesus. Putting God first in John's life wasn't a single moment of courage. Instead, it was a life-long commitment to love as Jesus loved.

After Jesus returned to heaven, John remained faithful until his death, some 70 years later. He eventually became the pastor of the church in Ephesus and wrote many books of the New Testament—the gospel of John and the book of Revelation among them. However, his letters to the churches provide the greatest insight into his conversion. Here are his own words, recorded in 1 John 4:7:

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is from God."

Sometimes we are disappointed that we still can't control our temper and our desires. But John went through a profound transformation over a lifetime by putting God first every day of his life. His example compels us to do the same. As the deacons collect the tithe and offerings, we are challenged to also put God first today.