

Not First #1:
SUBMISSION

Word

Scripture Reference

Matthew 26:36–46

Discussion Questions

1. Share examples of how people demonstrate pre-occupation on self. In other words, how are you the center of your attention?
2. Since the fall of man, mankind has the problem of being the center of his or her own attraction. From the way we live and the words that come out of our mouths, reality shows that we make things all about us. Even in your own prayer life, you often pray for things that only concern you. Advancement of technology that prioritizes your convenience has only fed the belief that you are number one. However, Scripture reminds us that you are not first in this life. In fact, you are last. In our study of spiritual disciplines that remind us daily of your place in this world, we first look at the discipline of *submission*. Read Matthew 26:36-46. This passage shows us how Jesus Christ, God the Son who did not have to submit but chose to do so, modeled submission to God the Father. From this example, we draw out five principles of how you can practice the spiritual discipline of submission:
 - a. **Admit that submission is a very real struggle (v. 36-38).** Jesus was about to die for the sin of mankind. Because He is 100% God, He knew this long before He came to earth. Yet in complete submission to the will of the Father, Jesus chose to become man and die. Because He is also 100% man, Jesus felt shattered at the thought of His death. This is why He went out to the garden to pray to His Heavenly Father. How did Jesus describe his feelings in that moment (v. 38)? Why would He feel that way when He knew all along about His impending death? Share how you struggled over submitting

to something or someone, feeling like you did not have a choice in the matter. Do you find it difficult to submit to God's will? What are the things that you need to give up when you submit yourself to the will of God?

- b. **Acknowledge that it is not about me (v. 39).** Jesus' prayer tells you that submission is not about Him, but about the will of God. And so, even if you think it is your right, it is still not about you, but the will of God. As a Christian, what are the things that you struggle about in submission to God's will? Discuss why it is so difficult to submit to someone else, even to God, when you think that life is all about you. How could this attitude be remedied?
- c. **A daily reminder in prayer to submit (v. 40-41).** Jesus' disciples, whom He brought with Him for prayer support, fell asleep. Jesus told them to watch and pray so that they would not fall into temptation. What does the statement, "the spirit is willing, but the body is weak," mean? As a Christian, you know what you ought to do, but why is it a struggle to do them? If it is a struggle, then you need help. How should daily prayer help you? Discuss what praying according to God's will mean.
- d. **Accept submission's consequences (v. 42-43).** Jesus prayed for a second time, and this time it was an acceptance of the inevitable. He prayed that God the Father's will be done. What was the consequence of Jesus' submission to His Father's will? Share how a result of submitting to God's will has affected your life. Have you ever prayed, "Lord, help me to accept the consequences of my submission to your will." What big difference did it make?
- e. **Submission to God's perfect will always bring joy (v. 45-46).** As Jesus submitted to His Father's will, He was able to go and welcome His betrayer. He was able to accept what had to happen: His arrest and eventual death on the cross for your salvation. It was Jesus' death that gives you the joy of salvation. When you submit to God's will, you end up getting the best because it is from Him. This gives you true joy. Share an experience of how submitting to God's perfect will has

brought you so much joy in your life. Would you consider it as one of the best, if not *the* best experience of your life?

Walk

*“J” is for Jesus for He has first place,
“O” is for others you meet face to face,
“Y” is for you, in whatever you do,
Put your self LAST and spell JOY.*

Do you want to be FIRST or do you want the BEST? Ponder of how you can live out JOY in your walk with God.

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, I must admit that to submit to Your will is not an easy task because of my own pride and stubbornness. But thank You that through the example of my Lord Jesus Christ's submission to your will, which led me to the joy of salvation, I know that I can completely trust that Your will is the best for me. I also admit that praying for Your will means that I acknowledge that Your will is much greater than mine. Help me to define my walk with you in submission. In Jesus' name. Amen.