



The Principle of Priority

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Focus The principle of priority is about putting God first in our lives. When we put God first and honor Him with our firstfruits, He will always take care of us.

Fun What is your favorite springtime activity?

Review Key Scriptures: Exodus 20:18–21; 1 Kings 17:12–16

1. It's about relationship.

God designed us to be in right relationship with Him and with others. When God gave the ten commandments, they were more than a set of rules. Each one contains a principle that enhances our relationships. God created and redeemed each one of us, so we could be in relationship with Him.

2. Worship God only.

In Exodus 20:3, God said, “You shall have no other gods before Me.” God wasn’t saying we can have other gods but just not before Him. The statement means you shall have no other gods other than God—period. When the Israelites came out of Egypt, that culture had 29 main gods and more than 2,000 lesser gods. The statement was to clarify that there is only one God, the Father and maker of us all.

3. Put God first.

We are all born selfish, but God wants to be first in our lives. The Bible expounds upon giving God the firstborn, or firstfruits, of our labor. Abel brought God the firstborn of his flock and it was accepted, while Cain brought an offering after a period of time had passed. When God sent Elijah to the widow, she prepared his cake *first*, using the last of her flour and oil. Because she

obediently gave the first, her flour and oil never ran out. In the same way, God will always take care of us when we put Him first.

Group Dynamics Idea New people are coming to Gateway every week and looking for a way to get to know others and build relationships. The best way for people to find a group is through a personal invitation. Have each person in your group invite at least one or two people each month that they meet during a service. When everyone works together to make connections, more people will find the joy of belonging in a Gateway Group!

Discuss

1. When you read the ten commandments, have you ever considered their purpose was relational? How does it change your perspective to think of the commandments as relational principles rather than simply a list of rules?
2. In Psalm 103:7 we read that God made known his ways to Moses and His acts to the children of Israel. What is the difference between knowing the acts of God and knowing the ways of God? What are some examples of the ways of God?
3. Read 1 Kings 17:12–16. What do you think the widow might have been thinking or feeling in this story?
4. What does it look like to put God first in your life? What are some examples?
5. Have there been things in your life where you've struggled to put God first? What was it like when you finally surrendered to God and put Him first? Share the testimony of that situation.
6. How does tithing and giving above our tithe demonstrate God is first in our life?
7. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you about putting God first in your life? Take a moment for people in your group to quietly respond to God in their hearts.

Take Home As we conclude, remember the following:

- The commandments are about relationship.
- Worship God only.
- Put God first in our lives.

Prayer Heavenly Father, we honor You and praise You as the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords. You are the only God, and we worship You and put You first in our lives. Show us any areas of our lives that are not in order with Your commandments, and help us to make You first in everything. In Jesus' name, Amen.

New Leader Tip This message is a great reminder of the key to a successful small group—putting God first. As a leader, take time to pray about your group, and ask God to give you His perspective. Ask Him to show you how you can put Him first in this group. Ask Him for practical ways to keep Him as the focus of everything your group does.