

FIRST THINGS FIRST

One Surrender

January 18, 2026

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Message Summary.

In Mark 10, a young man asks Jesus how to inherit life. Jesus names the “one thing” blocking him: money and possessions have become first. This message calls us to identify what we’re gripping too tightly, to loosen our hold, and to trust God to do what we can’t, because clinging to anything besides Jesus costs us freedom and joy.

Key Scripture Summaries.

Mark 10:21-22 | Jesus loves the man enough to confront the idol in his life; the man walks away grieved because possessions own him.

Mark 10:23-27 | Wealth can create a false security that makes surrender feel impossible. What’s impossible for us is possible with God.

Malachi 3:10 | God invites His people to trust Him with the tithe and experience His provision; generosity is an act of faith.

Proverbs 3:9-10 | Honoring God first with our resources reorders our hearts; trust shows up in “first fruits.”

2 Corinthians 8:9 | Jesus let go of riches for our sake. His surrender becomes the foundation for ours.

Start Talking.

1. What’s one purchase (or subscription) you’ve made that you didn’t realize would become a “monthly relationship”?
2. When you hear “giving” in church, what’s your first reaction: joy, guilt, skepticism, pressure, gratitude, confusion?
3. What’s a funny example of how “one thing” turned into more (one errand became five stops, one project became a weekend)?

Start Thinking.

- In Mark 10:21, Jesus “looked at him and loved him.” Why is that detail important before Jesus challenges him?
- “When a good thing becomes the ultimate thing, that ultimate thing becomes a destructive thing.” Where have you seen that play out, money-related or not?
- Why do you think money and possessions so easily become a “master”?

- Jesus says some things are “impossible” humanly speaking (Mark 10:27). What makes surrender feel impossible for people in our culture?

Start Sharing.

1. What (“banana”) have you been tempted to cling to for security: money, control, comfort, reputation, a relationship, approval, being needed?
2. Have you ever had a season when finances felt tight, and fear rose? What did that season reveal about what you trust?
3. Where is it easiest to have a moment with Jesus while avoiding long-term obedience?
4. What would make you “walk away sad” if Jesus asked you to let it go? (No shame, just clarity.)

Start Praying.

Jesus, thank You that You look at us and love us, especially when You confront what’s holding us back. Give us clarity to name our one thing, courage to loosen our grip, and faith to trust You with what we’re afraid to release. Do the impossible in us: replace fear with trust, greed with generosity, and control with surrender. You are enough. Amen.

Start Doing.

- Name it out loud: Say your “one thing” in prayer, out loud. Write it down. Tell someone you trust.
- One act of surrender: Choose a specific step that loosens your grip (give something away, set a spending boundary, cancel an impulse purchase, obey God in an area you’ve delayed).
- Reorder one priority: Make a tangible schedule change that puts Jesus first (prayer, Scripture, serving, or worship).
- Generosity step: If you’ve never given consistently, choose a next step for 90 days. Start tithing, increase by 1-2%, or set an intentional “generosity line” in your budget. Talk about what you’re learning with your group.