

UPHILL  
HOPES &  
HABITS  
DOWNHILL

- Most people have uphill Hopes and downhill habits.

2 ...fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. Romans 12:2 (MSG)

- We **form** habits and then our habits **form** us.
- Habits are **strategies** that God uses to **shape** us.

#### Habit #1 - Get close to God.

- Coming close to God means we're all in.

8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. James 4:8 (NLT)

#### Habit #2 - Put God first.

- Priorities are more than a **list** in our **head**; priorities are about what we **do first**.

8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. James 4:8 (NLT)

#### Ways to live out this habit:

- **Reorder** our lives to show that **God** has **first place**.

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.  
3 "You shall have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:2-3 (NIV)

#### In putting God first:

- We **give** God the **first** of **everything**.

30 A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. Leviticus 27:30 (NIV)

23 The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives. Deuteronomy 14:23 (TLB)

#### I'm going to give God:

- The first of my **year**.
  - **Complete** fast.
  - **Selective** fast.
  - **Partial** fast.
  - **Soul** fast.
- The first of my **month**.
- The first of my **week**.
- The first of my **day**.

The First of my day we take **time** with God.

- 5 minutes in the **Word**.
- 5 minutes in **worship**.
- 5 minutes in **prayer**.

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- Expect God to **bless the rest**.

6 Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. 7 Don't assume that you know it all. Run to GOD! Run from evil! 8 Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life! 9 Honor GOD with everything you own; give him the first and the best. 10 Your barns will burst, your wine vats will brim over. Proverbs 3:6-10 (MSG)



## TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Have Questions? Text them to: (559)-464-5754

#### Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

*These questions also work well for personal time with God.*

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Why?
- How would your life be different if you implemented the habit of putting God first?
- How would you describe to someone what it means to put God first? What do you do "first" that shows that God is first in your life?
- Dave mentioned that reordering our lives means eliminating some things and adding other things. If you feel comfortable to share, what are some things you feel need to be eliminated and/or added to your life?
- What does it mean to give God the first of everything in our lives?
- Most Christians understand giving God 10% of their finances. Have you ever considered that God wants 10% of everything? What does that mean to you?
- Are you participating with us in giving God the first of your year through prayer and fasting? What kind of fast are you doing?
- How are you doing at giving God the first of your month (your budgeting and schedule)?
- How do you do at giving God the first of your week (your worship & rest)?
- Talk about how we can give God the first of our day? Is this difficult for you?

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