

## Sermon #11

# First Church Will Be Last

God's ways are so far above our ways that sometimes they just don't make sense to us.

But His ways are always right.

God's way leads to eternal life and fulfillment, joy and peace.

I want these things!

I have just discovered reading my Bible that this church is going to be last in God's kingdom!

This is an urgent matter which we must attend to quickly before it is too late.

I am calling a special congregational meeting after the service today, to request that the name of our church be changed from [First Church of the Ozarks] to "Last Church."

Will everyone please stay for it?

Here is what Jesus said:

*"But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."*

Matthew 19:30

Since we call ourselves "First Church", that means we will be last!

Of course, we'll have a lot of company, along with First Christian, First Methodist, First Presbyterian, First Baptist, First Church of the Nazarene, First AME, First Assembly of God, First Church of Christ Scientist, First Church or God, First Evangelical Free Church, First Free Will Baptist, First Fundamental Methodist, First Korean Presbyterian, First Southern Baptist, First Unitarian Universalist, and scores of other "First" churches.

But do we really want to be in with this group of churches who will be last in God's kingdom?

If we logically infer Jesus' ranking system, that means Second Church will be next-to-last, and Third Church (if there is such a thing) will be one step ahead of Second Church. We could change our name to one of these and be ahead of all the First Churchers.

But we would still be way back behind the masses of people who are poor and humble.

Frankly, I do not want to wait that long to enter the kingdom of God. Do you?

Although changing the name of our church will not guarantee us first place in God's kingdom, it is a step toward getting in the necessary position of "last."

And once we get in last place,  
we know we have gained the first place in God's kingdom.

I realize this sounds like nonsense, but it is what Christ preached.

And since we claim that Christ is the head of our church,  
let's just trust Him and follow Him on this.

Let's change the name of this church to Last Church,  
and begin to walk on His path of humility and love.

I apologize for the brevity of this sermon, but I felt it was more important to devote the time to a congregational meeting than to elaboration and analysis.

**"I the Lord dwell in a humble and contrite heart;  
humble yourselves and let Me in."**