

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/13/2019

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)*

¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- What are the most important ways in which your thought patterns have changed in the last 5 years?
 - A different potential starter question: So... the singing in church; some people love it, some dread it, some just put up with it. Be honest, what are your thoughts (and experiences) with "singing in church." *And feel free to share any funny stories you have with it (maybe you had a wonderful Michael W. Smith solo in front of your church when you were young, this would be the time to share! ☺)*
 - O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?
- Know** (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)

v.1-2

- O: v.1 begins with the word "Therefore", so it's important to understand what came before this passage as it's in response/builds upon what comes prior. Look at **11:33-36** and summarize what it says/declares.
Another way to ask: *Romans ch. 12 is a turning point in which the letter moves from theology to application. Being that ch.12 begins with the word "therefore," summarize in your own words some of God's truths from the first 11 chapters that the application/responses in ch.12 respond to. (KNOW)*
- O: What is the the motive and design of a follower of Jesus' worship of God? (again, the "therefore" is a very important clue) **(BE)**
- I: What is "worship" and how would you describe it to a fellow follower of Jesus? **(v.1)**
Follow-up: How would you define "worship" to someone who have no context for God?
- I: One primary way that Old Testament worship was manifested was through animal sacrifice. In light of that, what does Romans mean by "Offer your bodies as a LIVING sacrifice?" (See also *Romans 6:13-16*)
Follow-up: What is the main difference in sacrifices made in the Old Testament vs. the kind of sacrifice expected in the New Testament?
- I: In response to v.2, why does the mind need to be "renewed" in order to worship God and know His will? **(BE)**
Some awesome additional verses for this: O.T.- Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 36:26-27 N.T.- Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-10
- I: How would you describe the "will of God?" We use the phrase "will of God" a lot, but I wonder if we know what it means. What is the "will of God" and how can we know it? **(KNOW)**
- A: In what ways do you pattern (conform) your thinking from the ways of the world (be honest, we all do this)? **(KNOW)**
Follow-up: How would you live/think differently if your mind was more transformed/renewed? **(BE)**
(note: the text says you will be able to do something with a renewed mind)
Follow-up: What do you think your/our role is in this transforming/renewing process? **(DO)**
What's God's role in the process? What is the church's role?
- A: This past week, how have you "offered your body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God?" **(DO)**
- A: There are so many potential ways to respond to these 2 verses, so take some time to be quiet and listen to what the Holy Spirit is convicting you of (and encouraging you of) from tonight's discussion. Then share one concrete way that you believe God is calling you to respond. It would be good for group members to write down what each person shares (keep it confidential in the group!) and then keep each other spurred on (accountable) to actually do it! **(DO)**

Recommended Follow-up:

- Pray: Pray together, and really focus in on that we are meeting with God, He's in the room, and He wants us to KNOW Him.
- Respond: Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's companion devotional guide.
- Read: Next week's sermon (10/20/19) will focus on Philippians 4:4-9. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, as well as journey through this week's companion devotional guide.

An explanation on how Riverside structures these discussion guides*:

Riverside defines a disciple of Jesus as a **“Know, Be, Do”** person. And since Jesus told us to “make disciples” we use the “Know, Be, Do” framework in our discussion guides.

Riverside leadership regularly asks questions around these areas:

- “What do we need to **know** about God?”
- “Who do we need to **be**?”
- “What do we need to **do**?”

Here is what we mean by “Know, Be, Do” (based on Colossians 1:9-10, see below)

Know – *“to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives..., growing in the knowledge of God”* Not just knowing about Jesus, but knowing Him personally, intimately, and deeply. This is also about knowing the scriptures, knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit, even knowing yourself.

Be – *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way”* Becoming more like Jesus (sanctification). This is about our character and our heart and our motivations, our passions and convictions change the more we get to Know Jesus (and others).

Do – *“bearing fruit in every good work, ...”* Knowing Jesus and Becoming like Jesus practically will change our actions. As we grow in these areas we will naturally DO the things that Jesus did while in the flesh on earth (living and loving like Jesus). Some broad categories around DO are evangelism and justice and service.

Notice *“bearing fruit in every good work”* then yields more *“growing in the knowledge of God.”* In other words, while “Know, Be, Do” are three distinct words, they are deeply interconnected.

As a side note, the next chapter states: *⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)* To aid in this process Riverside also has a **daily devotional guide available each week.**

Colossians 1:9-10, NIV

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,...

* As discussed in Riverside’s HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guide relies heavily upon the following resources: Thomas, Mack. *The Complete Bible Discussion Guide: Old Testament and New Testament, Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study*, Zondervan