

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/20/2019

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Philippians 4:4-9 (NIV)*

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

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

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- In general, how do you try and make yourself feel good or happy?
Follow-up: How do you try and make yourself feel good or happy in moments of anxiety or depression?
- 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?)

Note: The message from Sunday focused mainly on v.8 and how we steward and use our minds.

The questions with *** by them indicate questions that are the most relevant to Sunday's message.

v.4-9

- *** O: Observe/identify the *verbs* (the action words) in this passage?
- O: Based on v.7, what do our hearts and minds need to be guarded or protected from? (BE)
-Practically speaking, how are we guarded "in Christ Jesus" (v.7)?
- I: How would you describe "rejoicing in the Lord" from v.4 to someone who doesn't know Jesus? (BE/DO)
- I: How would you describe the "peace of God" from v.7&9 to someone who doesn't know Jesus? (BE)
-Follow-up: Why would this happen as a result of following this passage's teaching?
-Follow-up: How have you experienced the peace of God (v.7&9) in the midst of difficult circumstances?
- *** I: How does the mind fit into our experience of God (v.8) & our ability to live a life "worthy of the gospel" (1:28)? (KNOW)
Also see Phil. 1:27, 2:2, 2:5, 3:15, 3:19, 4:8
-Follow-up: Picture in your mind two Christians, one who has learned to obey the command we are given in v.8, and one who has *not* learned how to do it. What practical differences do you see in the way these two people live?
-Follow-up: What for you are the greatest hindrances to obeying the command in v.8? (DO)
- *** A: What sorts of things tend to occupy your mind? (BE)
-How does your preoccupation with these things affect your relationships?
-How does it affect your joy in the Lord?
-How does it affect your peace or your relationship with the God of peace?
- A: How do you personally respond to the challenge to *not be anxious about anything* in v.6? (BE)
Follow-up: what things can we pray for each other (v.6, situations, request, etc.)

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray together; based on v.8, spend a lot of time thanking God for the true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, and praiseworthy things that come to mind.
- **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 (10/27/19) will focus on Philippians 4:11-13. 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