

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/27/2019

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Philippians 4:11-13 (NIV)*

¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

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 do you look upon as the happiest days of your life? Why?
- 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.11-13

O: We started in v.11, where it starts with “I am not saying this...” What is the “this” (context) previously in the chapter?

O: What is Paul’s (the writer) secret (v.12) and source to contentment?

Follow-up: What is contentment NOT based on?

Follow-up: Where/how do you think he really learned this secret?

I: It’s important to note that this section is embedded in Paul (who’s in jail) receiving a gift that the Philippian church had gathered for him (vv. 10, 18). How does Paul express his gratitude?

****Follow-up:** How do Paul’s words and his attitude speak to a culture of discontent and cynicism?

Follow-up: What do we learn from this passage (and it’s context) about both contentment and giving and receiving help from others?

A: What is the closest you have come to experiencing what this passage talks about?

****Another way to ask:** We tend to feel content when we are “well fed” and “living in plenty” (v.12).

Describe a time when you did not have some of the “basics” of life yet you still felt content.

- How did your faith in Jesus (relationship with Jesus/others) help you with contentment during this time?

A: How have you found (experienced) verse 13 to be true?

A: What outside force is most likely these days to upset your contentment?

****Follow-up:** Since God does not always change negative outside forces, what can He change IN YOU so that contentment is possible?

A: Based on v.14, with whom have you entered (or with whom is God calling you to enter) into sharing your troubles or their troubles together (as loving community is part of how God teaches us contentment)?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray together, and really focus in on contentment IN CHRIST and not just praying for changes in circumstances
- **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 (9/15/19) will focus on 2 Peter 1:3-11. 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