

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 11/3/2019

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; 2nd Peter 1:3-9(NIV)

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

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

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- When you think of the term *God's promises*, which of His promises come first to mind?
- : 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.3-9

- : Look at the entire passage (actually look at v.1-11), what are all the things that God has provided for us? (**KNOW**)
- : Small but important: In v.8, notice Peter's use of the little word *if*, a word that signals a condition (or supposition). What important condition does it highlight here?
- l: How exactly does "His divine power" (v.3) give us everything we need? (**KNOW/BE**)
Follow-up: If we have "everything we need for a godly life" (v.3), then why do we need to make "every effort to add to our faith (v.5)?"
- l: In what ways are verses 5-10 a prescription for someone who is feeling disappointed or unfulfilled?
- A: *"Peter says we have these blessings so that we 'may participate in the divine nature' (v.4). If the Holy Spirit is fully divine and comes to live within us and transform us from within, this is essentially saying that the divine nature is already dwelling within us, leading us forward, immersing us with God's own presence and power."* What difference does this make to you as you pursue life and godliness? (BE)
- A: v.4 states, "having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires." Are there any areas you want/need to confess where evil desires/corruption has seeped back in?
Follow-up: How will you respond? How can the group (or someone in the group) keep you accountable?
(note, try harder usually doesn't work, it involves the process and paradigm from this passage to make real strides in overcoming sin)
- A: How do v.5-9 challenge you concerning the times when you feel you are wasting your time, or failing to bear fruit (v.8)?
- A: Of the qualities in verses 5-7, which two do you possess in the greatest measure?
Follow-up: How can you grow ("make every effort to add to your faith") in one of the other qualities? (**BE/DO**)
-How can the group help you in this? What are you going to specifically do/make effort?
**Remember: As we look at verses 5-7, we could think this is about "me making myself good enough for God," which can then lead to pride or arrogance ("See what a fine Christian I've become!"). The surrounding verses indicate that Peter has something else in mind. God has already given us everything we need for such a life of godliness. Of course, all these take thought; all these take effort. They don't happen by accident. You have to want to do them; you have to choose to do them. But when you do, and pray for God's grace, promises and power to help, you will be coming to know Jesus the Messiah.*

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 and He wants to transform us.
- **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 (11/10/19) will focus on 1st Corinthians 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