

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 2/23/2020

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Hebrews 4:14-5:10 (NIV)*

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,^[1] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

^{5:1} Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.² He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. ³ This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. ⁴ And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵ In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

⁶ And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

⁷ During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)
Know (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Were you raised in a religious tradition with priests? If so, what did it mean to you?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

v.4:14-5:10

- O: How does Jesus fulfill the role of a high priest as explained in **verses 4:14-5:10**?
How do these same verses say that Jesus surpassed the function of the high priest of Israel? **Know**
- I: What about Jesus' priesthood is most encouraging to you in this section? Also see **Heb 2:17**? **Know**
- I: "There's evidence that Jews may have criticized the early Christian movement, and Jesus Himself, for claiming a position (High Priest) which belonged, uniquely and forever, to the temple in Jerusalem. How does **5:4-6** address this concern?
Follow-up Note: We will hear more about Melchizedek in Hebrews 6-7. For the moment we can say that he meets Abraham briefly in Genesis 14:18-20. He was a priest of the Most High God, but obviously not of Aaron's priesthood, since Aaron (along with Moses) lived hundreds of years later."
- I: What scenes from Jesus' life are called to mind by **5:7-8**?
Follow-up: How does Jesus' suffering and sympathy help Christians to have confidence in God? (**5:8-10**)
- I: What does Jesus as the High Priest both offer us and demand of us (**5:9**)? **Be**
- A: What does it look like for believers to approach the throne of grace with confidence (**4:16**)? **Be**
- A: How does it affect you knowing that Jesus can sympathize with your weaknesses (**4:15**)? **Be**
Follow-up: In what area of your life today do you need the mercy and grace that can only be found when you "approach God's throne of grace with confidence"?
- A: In light of what Christ has done for us as the great High Priest, how are we encouraged to approach God (**4:16**)? **Do**
-How WILL you do that this week? What one question do you want us to ask of you next week in regard to this?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray together, and really focus in Jesus as our High Priest; keep the passage open as it gives rich direction on how to pray to and interact God; 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 (3/1/20) will focus on Hebrews 6:13-20 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, along with the following group studies specific to Hebrews: Tom Wright (978-0-281-06379-6), Kay Arthur (978-0-7369-2306-4), Wiersbe (978-0781445665), MacArthur (978-0-7180-3515-0).