

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 3/1/2020

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Hebrews 6:13-20 (NIV)*

¹³ When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” ¹⁵ And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

¹⁶ People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. ¹⁷ Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. ¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. ¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰ where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, 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)

- Where in your life does trusting in God come the hardest? Easiest? Why?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

v.13-20

O: How would you summarize this passage of Scripture? What do you think the writer's goal was in writing it?

O: How does this passage encourage believers through the example of Abraham and the promises of God? **Know**

I: What are the “two unchangeable things” mentioned in v.18? **Know**

Note from N.T.Wright: The “two unchangeable things” mentioned in 6:18 are God’s promise to Abraham and the oath he swore by himself that he would keep the promise (6:13–14, 17). God can’t lie in either of them. This is why the promise can and must be regarded as firm and secure; and this, in turn, explains what lies underneath the exhortations in the previous passage to hold on to hope and to persevere in faith.

I: How is Jesus (practically speaking) our anchor in the storms of life? (how would you explain Jesus as our anchor to a non-Christian?)

Note from N.T.Wright: “Behind the curtain” (6:19) refers to the great moment, once a year, when the high priest goes into the temple, behind the last curtain, into the innermost sanctuary of the temple, into the holy of holies. There, on what Jews believed was the holiest spot on earth, the high priest would make atonement for the people. Jesus, through his death, resurrection and ascension, went into the very presence of the loving Father, and we are attached to him as though by a great cable. He is there, in the very presence of God, like an anchor. As long as we don’t let go of the cable, we are anchored to the presence of God.

I: What kind of hope does this passage describe (v.19)? **Be**

(think back to the sermon where Keith described/contrasted Biblical hope with the way we typically use the word hope).

*Follow-up: What kind of hope do you have today?

*Follow-up: What concerns are you carrying today, and how can you apply Hebrews 6 to your life today?

A: What promises of God have you been most recently encouraged/anchored by, and why? **Know**

*Follow-up: Where in your life do you need to keep on trusting God’s promises?

Note from N.T.Wright: Christian faith isn’t optimism, a vague sense that things will probably turn out right. Christian faith is trusting - and going on trusting through thick and thin—in the God who made unbreakable promises and will certainly keep them.

-How WILL you respond this week? What one question do you want us to ask of you next week in regard to this? **Do**

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray together, maybe even pray in silence for a few moments and meditate on God’s promises. Ask God to speak His promises to you/us and then listen for His voice.
- **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 (3/8/19) will focus on Hebrews ch.7. 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).