

# Group Discussion Guide for Week of 6/28/2020

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Hebrews 11:17-19 (NIV)*

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." <sup>19</sup> Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

NOTE: The full (original) account is found in Genesis ch.22

## General Question Bank

**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?)  
**Together** (What is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?)

## Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Discuss the hardest decision you have ever had to face in your life.

## v.17-19

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

*\*\*\*Another way to ask: "Choose one verse or phrase from the passage that stands out to you. This could be something you're intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that puzzles you, something that resonates with you, or just something you want to examine further." Now share it with the group*

O: What are the things we learn about God from this text (press in, there are many)? **Know**

Follow-up: How can we reconcile that God is good and God is Love (1 John 4:8) with the fact that God asks Abraham to sacrifice his own son? *(Note: the passages that outlaw child sacrifice, pointed out in Keith's message, are Lev. 18:21, 20:3, Deut. 12:30-31.)*

O: How was Abraham able to reconcile God's promises concerning Isaac (Gen 15:5-6) with what God was asking Abraham to do? Ensure you look at both the Heb 11:19 reason, as well as the indication in Gen. 22:5,8,14.

Note: Another way to ask this question – What made it possible for Abraham to trust God to the point of being willing to sacrifice his son?

I: Discuss how the story of Abraham and Isaac foreshadows Jesus on the cross:

Hint:	Abraham offered his son.	The Father offered his Son.
	Isaac carried the wood.	Jesus carried the cross.
	Isaac was laid on the altar.	Jesus was nailed to the cross.
	Abraham was willing to put his son to death.	The Father willed that his Son should die.
	The ram was offered in the place of Isaac.	Christ was offered in the place of sinners.
	Abraham received his son back "figuratively."	Jesus literally rose from the dead.

A: What response is God looking for when He tests us (Heb. 11:17, James 1:2-4)? **Be**

How can we learn/apply Abraham's example?

*(note: don't just think about tips & techniques; heart transformation & character dev. is part of this. Answers shouldn't just be "the 3 tips to more faithfulness")*

A: Describe one hard call or test from God presently in your life?

How are you exercising your faith in God in response to these circumstances?

How can you intentionally live out your faith in the midst of it and build the kingdom of God? **Do**

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

## Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray for bold faith in our group. That we would follow God regardless of the cost. Potentially share different struggles with idols or lack of faith in God's promises among group members, and pray boldly over these situations.
- **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 (7/5/20) will focus on Hebrews 11:20-24 (Genesis 27,47-48; Exod 1-2). 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: *<sup>6</sup> So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. <sup>8</sup> 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,...*

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\* 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).