

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 7/19/2020

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Hebrews 11:29-30 (NIV)*

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days.

Note: the O.T. Passages referenced in v.30 is Joshua ch.6, verses 1-21

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)

- What is the greatest accomplishment that you've experienced with a team/group of people?

Joshua 6:1-21

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 promises did the LORD make to Israel? Did this mean they (Israel) did not need to do anything?

Note (Joshua 6:2, as well as the broader promises to give them the "Promised Land")

O: What instructions did the LORD give to the Israelites in regards to Jericho (Joshua 6:3-5)? **(KNOW)**

What do you find to be significant in these instructions? *Note: See v.4, the Ark of the Covenant being in the midst of the plan is key.*

I: Admittedly, these instructions (v.3-5) from the LORD are weird. Why do you think the Israelites were willing to follow God's unusual plan? *(note: this is after they wandered the desert for 40 years, and had a strong rebuking/forming from the LORD.)* **(BE)**

I: If God had already determined that Jericho would fall (Joshua 6:2), then why did He tell Israel to go through all the marching and shouting? *(note: see Romans 8:28-30).* What does this tell us about faith? **(DO)**

I: What parallels can we draw from God delivering Jericho to the Jews and the salvation we have received from Jesus?

A: What kind of Jericho (barrier/walls) are you and our group/church facing right now? How does God's faithfulness revealed in Joshua 6 towards the Israelites give you hope in our circumstances? **(TOGETHER)**

A: Israel received "battle plans" from God that seemed odd and made little sense in the context of the world's ways. How could this speak to the situations you/we are facing? Are there biblical ways that God has spoken into these type of situations that are strange according to the world's ways?

NOTE: there is a good chance that Joshua 6:21 will come up in the discussion as a question to God's goodness and "why" such a brutal attack. While answering this faithfully would take a long response (and still would leave some grey that we just have to trust God in), here is one commentator's perspective:

"It appears in Deuteronomy 20:16-18 in the instructions to destroy completely all the population centers that are found in the land that God has given to Israel. The reason given there is so that the inhabitants of the land will not teach Israel their 'detestable practices', those associated with the worship of their gods. (TNTC)"

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray for our community to be unified like the Israelites we're when they encountered the walls of Jericho. Pray for the walls and barriers in each other's lives, as well as walls that our church faces/will face. Pray for faith, God's provision, and our obedience and faithfulness.
- **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 (7/26/20) will focus on Hebrews 11:31-39. 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).