

# Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/11/2020

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; Revelation 2:8-11 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> “To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. <sup>9</sup> I know your afflictions and your poverty—yet you are rich! I know about the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup> Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown.

<sup>11</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death.

## 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)

- Think of a time when you compromised in your life just to fit in. What was the result?

## V. 8-11

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: Jesus begins each letter with a title/description of Himself that is relevant to the theme of the letter. Why might v.8 have been an especially relevant for the church in Smyrna? **Know**

*Another way to ask: How might Jesus’ statements about himself, as well as his promises, solidify their faithfulness and ours?*

O: How does Jesus describe the believers in Smyrna? (v.9) **Be**

O: In the church at Smyrna, Jesus finds nothing to condemn. What seems to be the main focus of this letter?

O: In response to persecution; what is Jesus’ advice to the church at Smyrna when it comes to responding to such accusations and their consequences (v. 10)? **Do**

A: How might we take the promise of **verse 11** to heart and live as those who know that the “second death” has no power to harm the faithful?

-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 the persecuted church (with a focus in India where our mission partner Asha is located). Pray for endurance for each other.
- **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 (10/18/20) will focus on Revelation 2:12-17. 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. We believe the process for this transformation happens in community, hence the **“Together”** part of the Riverside mission as well.

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**?”
- **“Together**, what is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?

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: *“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 on Revelation: Wright (978-0830821990), MacArthur (978-0718035198), Navigators (978-0891092735), Lucado (978-0310086666), Witmer (978-1433543203), Stott (978-0830821792), Wiersbe (978-1434702319), Hathcoat (978-1511401296), Smith (978-1645070726), Hewitt (978-1501855443), Stevens (978-0830830213), Arthur (978-0736908061).