

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 3/28/2021

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Revelation 19:1-10 (NIV)*

19 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,² for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants."

³ And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever."

⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!"

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small!"

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

⁹ Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."¹⁰ At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For it is the Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus."

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 Starter (Ice Breaker)

- What is the most memorable wedding celebration you've ever attended?

Revelation 19:1-10

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: Read Revelation 19:1-10. How does this passage emphasize the intensity of the celebration that takes place? Why is there so much celebration in heaven?

O: Revelation 19 is not the first biblical use of the bridegroom/bride/wedding metaphor between God and his people. Look at some of the following texts for background. How do they fill out our understanding of this relationship?

- Wedding supper metaphors: Hosea 2:16, 19-20; Isaiah 54:5-7; Jeremiah 2:2; Matthew 25:1-13
- Israel as YHWH's bride: Isaiah 49:18; 54:5-6; 62:5; Jeremiah 2:2; Ezekiel 16:15-63; Hosea 2:14-23
- Jesus as bridegroom: Mark 2:19-20; John 3:29
- Church as bride of Christ: 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-33; Rev 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17

I: Compare and contrast the mournful laments of the three groups most affected by Babylon's demise in 18:9-19 and the great joy of these who were most hurt by the murderous policies of the evil empire in 18:20; 19:1-5. What is your heart response to these very different cries coming from very different places?

I: In verse 10, why do you think John is tempted to worship the angel who has revealed 17:1-19:9 to him?

A: What are the implications for you of the fact that Christ's relationship to the church is described as a marriage? Do you act as one betrothed to the Lamb? How can this affect your life more deeply?

A: At the close of Sunday's service, Ila reminded us that in order to put on the wedding garments of our righteous deeds, we need to be washed in the blood of the Lamb, and cleansed through the waters of baptism. Is there anyone in your group who has not openly received the saving grace of Jesus or been sealed with the waters of baptism? Are they being invited to do so today?

-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 together, and really focus in on that we are meeting with God, He's in the room, and He wants us to KNOW Him. Pray together, spend some time being silent (so we can listen, aka, "Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Then pray in response to the content from this letter in Revelation as well as to what the H.S. reveals to us.
- **Respond:** Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's devotional guide.
- **Read:** Next week is Easter Sunday. Christ is Risen!

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: *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 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).*