

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 2/28/2022

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Exodus 5:1-6:1 (NIV)*

5 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'"² Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go."³ Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."⁴ But the king of Egypt said, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!"⁵ Then Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working."⁶ That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and overseers in charge of the people:⁷ "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw."⁸ But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.'"⁹ Make the work harder for the people so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies."¹⁰ Then the slave drivers and the overseers went out and said to the people, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you any more straw.'"¹¹ Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all."¹² So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw.¹³ The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, "Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw."¹⁴ And Pharaoh's slave drivers beat the Israelite overseers they had appointed, demanding, "Why haven't you met your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?"¹⁵ Then the Israelite overseers went and appealed to Pharaoh: "Why have you treated your servants this way?"¹⁶ Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, 'Make bricks!' Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people."¹⁷ Pharaoh said, "Lazy, that's what you are—lazy! That is why you keep saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.'"¹⁸ Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks."¹⁹ The Israelite overseers realized they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day."²⁰ When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them,²¹ and they said, "May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."²² Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me?"²³ Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country."

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's the worst job you've ever had? Share a little about it!

Exodus 5:1-6:1

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 were the major outcomes of the first encounter between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh (vs. 1-5)? How did Pharaoh interpret their demand (vs. 8, 17)?

I: What kind of a person do you think Pharaoh was? Why do you think he rejected Moses and Aaron's request?

O: Study Moses' cry to God (vv. 22-23). What was Moses feeling toward God while his people suffered?

I: What was Pharaoh's purpose in making the Israelites gather their own straw (vs. 8-9)? How does it make you feel to read of the Israelite slaves being abused in this way? How has your own work felt like this type of lose-lose proposition?

I: What things in your life might stand in the way of you receiving or obeying a word from the Lord?

A: After Moses complains to God about Israel's worsening circumstances (5:22-23), God initially responds not by alleviating their difficulty but by recalling his covenant and reiterating his promises. What do you think God was teaching Israel by doing this? How might this apply to us when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances?

A: At the end of this week's service, Andrew mentioned a few distinctives for work as a spiritual practice: 1) motivated by love, 2) guided by Scripture, 3) done to the very best of your ability. Use this to guide your work this week, and read more about work as a spiritual practice at <http://riversidecommunity.org/practices>

-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.

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.

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 was created in consultation with *Echoes of Exodus*, Alastair Roberts and Andrew Wilson, 2018; *Exodus: Life Change Series*, The Navigators, 1989; *Exodus 1-19*, James Reapsome; and *Exodus: Knowing the Bible*, Matthew Newkirk, J. I. Packer.