

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 11/07/2022

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Exodus 34 (NIV)*

34 The Lord said to Moses, “Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. ² Be ready in the morning, and then come up on Mount Sinai. Present yourself to me there on top of the mountain. ³ No one is to come with you or be seen anywhere on the mountain; not even the flocks and herds may graze in front of the mountain.”

⁴ So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the Lord had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. ⁵ Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

⁸ Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. ⁹ “Lord,” he said, “if I have found favor in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance.”

¹⁰ Then the Lord said: “I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the Lord, will do for you. ¹¹ Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ¹² Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. ¹³ Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their Asherah poles. ¹⁴ Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

¹⁵ “Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land; for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to them, they will invite you and you will eat their sacrifices. ¹⁶ And when you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons and those daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will lead your sons to do the same.

¹⁷ “Do not make any idols.

¹⁸ “Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Aviv, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

¹⁹ “The first offspring of every womb belongs to me, including all the firstborn males of your livestock, whether from herd or flock. ²⁰ Redeem the firstborn donkey with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem all your firstborn sons. “No one is to appear before me empty-handed.

²¹ “Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.

²² “Celebrate the Festival of Weeks with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and the Festival of Ingathering at the turn of the year.” ²³ Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign Lord, the God of Israel. ²⁴ I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the Lord your God.

²⁵ “Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast, and do not let any of the sacrifice from the Passover Festival remain until morning.

²⁶ “Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God.

“Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

²⁷ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” ²⁸ Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.

²⁹ When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. ³⁰ When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. ³² Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

³³ When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ But whenever he entered the Lord’s presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵ they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord.

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)

- If God told you he was going to show you all his goodness, what specifically would you expect to see?

Exodus 34

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 stipulations does the Lord make for Moses as he invites him up Mount Sinai to meet? (vs. 1-3)

O/I: vs. 5-7 is a defining passage describing the character and actions of God. Take some time to discuss and reflect each of the aspects of God's nature described here. What comfort does it bring? What questions does it raise?

O/I: What was Moses' request in vs. 8-9? What does this request reveal about Moses' character?

I: What are the central themes of the new covenant God makes with Israel in vs. 10-28? Why do you suppose these themes stand out?

I: Look at Galatians 5:16-26 and Ephesians 4:20-32. Do you see any parallels between these NT texts and Exodus 34?

O: What effect did this meeting with God have on Moses? The other leaders? The people? (vs. 29-32)

A: What is required of us in order to reflect God's glory? (see 2 Corinthians 3:16-18)

A: This week's suggested practice is centering prayer. Go to <https://riversidecommunity.org/practices/> to find the detailed practice. Perhaps take 3 minutes in your home group meeting tonight to practice centering prayer—simply be still in the presence of our God who is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness. Like Moses, hidden in the cleft of the rock (end of Exodus 33), receive the gift of God's good and glorious presence.

-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 20-40*, James Reapsome; and *Exodus: Knowing the Bible*, Matthew Newkirk, J. I. Packer.