

# Group Discussion Guide for Week of 12/12/2022

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Table of Presence and Christ's Presence*

<sup>23</sup>“Make a table of acacia wood—two cubits long, a cubit wide and a cubit and a half high. <sup>24</sup>Overlay it with pure gold and make a gold molding around it. <sup>25</sup>Also make around it a rim a handbreadth wide and put a gold molding on the rim. <sup>26</sup>Make four gold rings for the table and fasten them to the four corners, where the four legs are. <sup>27</sup>The rings are to be close to the rim to hold the poles used in carrying the table. <sup>28</sup>Make the poles of acacia wood, overlay them with gold and carry the table with them. <sup>29</sup>And make its plates and dishes of pure gold, as well as its pitchers and bowls for the pouring out of offerings. <sup>30</sup>Put the bread of the Presence on this table to be before me at all times. (Exodus 25:23-30)

<sup>5</sup>“Take the finest flour and bake twelve loaves of bread, using two-tenths of an ephah for each loaf. <sup>6</sup>Arrange them in two stacks, six in each stack, on the table of pure gold before the Lord. <sup>7</sup>By each stack put some pure incense as a memorial portion to represent the bread and to be a food offering presented to the Lord. <sup>8</sup>This bread is to be set out before the Lord regularly, Sabbath after Sabbath, on behalf of the Israelites, as a lasting covenant. <sup>9</sup>It belongs to Aaron and his sons, who are to eat it in the sanctuary area, because it is a most holy part of their perpetual share of the food offerings presented to the Lord.” (Leviticus 25:5-9)

<sup>3</sup>Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find. <sup>4</sup>But the priest answered David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here. . . <sup>6</sup>So the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the Lord and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away. (1 Samuel 21:3-4, 6)

<sup>12</sup>At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. <sup>2</sup>When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.” <sup>3</sup>He answered, “Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? <sup>4</sup>He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. <sup>5</sup>Or haven’t you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? <sup>6</sup>I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. <sup>7</sup>If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the innocent. <sup>8</sup>For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” (Matthew 12:1-8)

<sup>10</sup>Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup>“Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.” <sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup>He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, <sup>16</sup>for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste. (Isaiah 7:10-16)

<sup>17</sup>On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus. . . <sup>26</sup>While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” <sup>27</sup>Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. <sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup>I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” (Matthew 26:17; 27-29)

## 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)

- Who from your childhood or youth do you picture as being uniquely present in your life?

## Exodus 25:23-30; Leviticus 25:5-9; 1 Samuel 21:3-4; 6; Matthew 12:1-8; Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 26:17; 27-29

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: Look at the Exodus and Leviticus texts above. What features of the table, its furnishings, and its function in the tabernacle stand out to you?

I: Exodus 28 details the clothing the priest would be wearing while setting out the unleavened bread in the tabernacle. The great attention paid to the 12 (6x2) stones, names, and loaves is notable. Why would the priests need so many visual reminders of the 12 tribes they represent?

- I: What might be significant about the bread being set out “Sabbath after Sabbath...as a lasting covenant”? Note that this is the only bread in all Israel baked on the Sabbath day!
- I: When Jesus refers back to the story of David and his men eating the consecrated from 1 Samuel 21, what aspect of the story does Jesus emphasize? How do Jesus’ words in v. 6 communicate unique authority—unique presence?
- I: Jesus fulfills the promise of Isaiah 7:14 with his very presence. How does God being with us, embodied as a human, impact humanity’s potential for relationship with God?
- I: What promises/proclamations does Jesus make in Matthew 26:26, 28? How is our celebration of communion a continuation of the ministry of the tabernacle? How is it different because of Jesus?
- A: Every week on the Sabbath, the tabernacle/temple priests would place fresh bread on the table and eat the previous week’s bread. How does it feel to be part of such a long historical line of priests eating the bread of presence in God’s house on the Sabbath? How does God being with you in this way animate you for mission?
- A: This month we have a beautiful Advent devotional book that includes original artwork from several Riversiders. Get your hands on a print copy or check out the daily online devotions as we keep Advent together:  
<http://riverside.church//devo>

-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: *<sup>6</sup> 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 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.