

## **Group Discussion Guide** for Week of **2/27/2023**

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Matthew 5:27-30 (NIV)*

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup> But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

### **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)

- Did you experience any conviction or stirring related to last week’s teaching on anger and murder? How does God’s intention for you to flourish in the Kingdom prepare you for this week’s message on lust and adultery?

### **Matthew 5:27-30**

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, according to Jesus, is the full meaning of the seventh commandment: “You shall not commit adultery” (vs. 27-28)?

I: How would you describe what Jesus is doing by adding this interior/lust reflection to the long established command against adultery? Moving the goalpost? Raising the bar? Some other non-sports related analogy?

I: Dave helpfully described what *Jesus* means by lust: “He does not mean that if you see someone who is attractive, you are lusting. He does not mean that if you see someone who is attractive, and you think to yourself, ‘that person is attractive’, that you are lusting. So what *does* He mean then? He is talking about the act of your will that, seeing a person you think attractive, you then use that image to mentally cultivate lust for them in your mind and heart.” How can this idea of lust hurt yourself and others?

I: After turning adultery inward, to the will and intent of our hearts, Jesus on the surface prescribes a purely external solution to the issue! How does Jesus intend us to read vs. 29-30? (Dave used the philosophical term *reductio ad absurdum*)

I: If we deal ruthlessly with the first signs of lust, we prevent the escalation outlined in vs. 29-30. What forces in the world work against us dealing ruthlessly with lust in the first place?

A: What does it look like for us to take responsibility for our own sexual intentions and behaviors? And what does it look like for us to submit those intentions and behaviors to Christ and his Kingdom?

A: Ask God to help you rid your life of anything that causes you to sin. Pray to be able to follow him in your attitudes as well as your actions.

**-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: *“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,...*

---

\* 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 *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing*, Jonathan Pennington, 2017; *Sermon on the Mount: LifeGuide Bible Studies*, John Stott; *Matthew for Everyone Bible Study Guide*, N. T. Wright; and *The Story of God Bible Commentary: Sermon on the Mount*, Scot McKnight; *Sermon on the Mount*, Amy-Jill Levine; *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, 2020; *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, David Martin Lloyd-Jones, 2011.