

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 7/23/2023

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Psalms 40 (NIV)*

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord;
he turned to me and heard my cry.

² He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.

³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the Lord
and put their trust in him.

⁴ Blessed is the one
who trusts in the Lord,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods

⁵ Many, Lord my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare.

⁶ Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—
but my ears you have opened—
burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.

⁷ Then I said, "Here I am, I have come—
it is written about me in the scroll.

⁸ I desire to do your will, my God;
your law is within my heart."

⁹ I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;
I do not seal my lips, Lord,
as you know.

¹⁰ I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;
I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.
I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness
from the great assembly.

¹¹ Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord;
may your love and faithfulness always protect me.

¹² For troubles without number surround me;
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see.
They are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart fails within me.

¹³ Be pleased to save me, Lord;
come quickly, Lord, to help me.

¹⁴ May all who want to take my life
be put to shame and confusion;
may all who desire my ruin
be turned back in disgrace.

¹⁵ May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!"
be appalled at their own shame.

¹⁶ But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who long for your saving help always say,
"The Lord is great!"

¹⁷ But as for me, I am poor and needy;
may the Lord think of me.

You are my help and my deliverer;
you are my God, do not delay.

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)

- On what sort of occasion do you imagine someone singing a new song? Have you ever written a song?

Psalm 40

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

- I: Psalm 40 begins with an encouragement to wait patiently for the Lord (v. 1). What does this mean practically? How did David express his patience for God to deliver him?
- I: God's law required His people to offer sacrifices (e.g. Leviticus 1-7). So how can David say: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire" (Psalm 40:6)? What is God's invitation to us in this verse?
- I: How do you draw on both pleasant (vs. 1-10) and painful (vs. 11-17) memories to help you navigate life's circumstances?
- I: Do you have any concrete practices to help you remember (and learn from) trials during good times and joy in hard times?
- A: How have you experienced God's favor recently? Share or write down ways you have gotten better than you thought you deserved. Practice gratitude today with a tool like the prayer of examen.

-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 *Psalms 90-150: A Christian Union Bible Study* (Christian Union Bible Studies), Tyndale House Publishers.