

## **Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/08/2023**

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Colossians 2:16-23 (NIV)*

<sup>16</sup> Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. <sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. <sup>18</sup> Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. <sup>19</sup> They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

<sup>20</sup> Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: <sup>21</sup> “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? <sup>22</sup> These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. <sup>23</sup> Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

### **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 a rule you’ve never understood the point of?

### **Colossians 2:16-23**

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: How in 2:16-19 does Paul say we should respond when people try to entice us with particular styles of piety or devotion other than single-minded devotion to Jesus?

I: When Paul mentions observing certain religious days or the regulations, “don’t handle, don’t taste, don’t touch” certain things (2:16, 21), he is focusing attention on the appeal to pagans of Judaism’s high moral code and heavy demands, a kind of religious fundamentalism. Why does fundamentalism (or legalism) in today’s world have such appeal to different people around the globe?

I: Often when people are sick and tired of the murky, immoral world, they are glad to embrace a way of life which offers clear, bright, clean lines. Why, according to Paul, may these “give an appearance of wisdom” (2:23) but not actually be wise?

I: In 2:20-23, why does Paul characterize the “fundamentalist” behavior as worldly (see v. 20)?

A: What aspects of legalism do you think you have been prone to in your Christian life? What truth about how God relates to us has helped you resist the pull of legalism?

A: Celebrate the completeness you have in Christ, who is God in all his fullness. Pray for discernment to recognize false teaching that tries to impose a need for anything in addition to Christ.

-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 Beetham, Christopher A. *Colossians and Philemon: A 12-Week Study (Knowing the Bible)*. Crossway. Kindle Edition; Meynell, Mark. *Colossians & Philemon For You: Rooting you in Christian confidence (God’s Word For You)*. The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition; Wright, N. T.. *Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups (N. T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides)*. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.