

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide – **God Never Said That, Week #4**

It Doesn't Matter What You Do // May 19, 2019



Engage One Another – Connection

1. “Chart Your Life” Exercise: Distribute pens and paper to each individual. Thinking back as far as you can, draw a line graph to represent your life. Consider the high points, low points, moments of inspiration, moments of despair, leveling off times, and where you are now. The line will probably have a mixture of straight, slanted, jagged, and curved lines. Be creative! After you’ve finished drawing your line, share about what it means to you with the group.

Engage One Another – Introduction

2. In today’s culture, the value of tolerance has been elevated to the point where it is increasingly unacceptable to say that another’s behavior is wrong, let alone sinful. Why do you think the belief has arisen that it doesn’t matter what you do, as long as you don’t hurt anyone?

Engage One Another – Diving Deeper

3. Pastor Paul shared that one of the biggest culture misbeliefs about sin is that though we make mistakes, each of us is not actually a bad person. Reflect on the following questions together:
 - a. Read 1 John 1:8 and Romans 3:10 together. What do these verses communicate about the reality of sin and the status of mankind? At what point in your spiritual journey did you begin to realize the depth of your sin and brokenness in comparison with a holy God?
 - b. How does the recognition of our own sinful nature aid us in better empathizing with, as opposed to rushing to judge or condemn, those whose behavior we view as unchristian?
4. Pastor Paul shared that while all *unforgiven* sin does lead to eternal death (see Romans 6:23), not all sin is the same. How does this statement challenge or affirm your understanding of sin?
5. Pastor Paul taught that how we live influences three core things – our consequences here on earth, rewards in heaven¹, and punishment in hell². Which of these do you most often connect your behavior with? Which of these do you least often connect your behavior with? Explain your answers.
6. Read Romans 6:1-6 together. How does this Biblical passage address the cultural misbelief that if we’ve already committed a sin, we should just continue in that same behavior? When you reflect on your spiritual journey, how have you experienced both death to your old sinful self and new life in Christ?
7. According to Pastor Paul, some of the most miserable people in the world are Christians who know the freedom that is available to them, who know the standard for living, and yet still choose to intentionally disobey God. Reflect on the following questions together:
 - a. Have you experienced this type of misery? If so, and you’re willing, share about that time in your life. If you have moved past this season, how did God assist you in overcoming sin?
 - b. Read 1 John 1:8-9 together. Is confessing your sins, both to God and one another, a core part of your relationship with God? If not, how could you make the practice of confession more routine?

Pause & Reflect:

In the Psalms, it’s called a “Selah”. A moment to catch your breath, rest, and praise. It’s an intentional break to reflect and fully experience the moment before moving on. How did God challenge, encourage, correct, etc... as your group engaged one another in this conversation?

Engage God – Time in Prayer

The closer you get to Jesus, regardless of whether you're a Christian, the more you recognize just how much darkness there is in your life. The nature of sin makes it progressive. Sin will take you further than you want to go and it'll cost you more than you want to pay. And then there's the reality that sin grows best in the dark. The presence of unconfessed sin serves as fertile soil for additional sin to take root in your life. But when you confess sin, when you bring it into the light, you get to experience the good news that Jesus is a friend and redeemer of sinners. Jesus came not for the healthy, but for the sick and hurting (Luke 5:31).

As you close out your time in group, take time to practice the discipline of confession. Create an environment that welcomes the presence of God (perhaps you could play some worship music in the background) and pray for the Holy Spirit to move and convict where needed. If you wish to split your group by gender and/or into smaller parts to create more intimacy, then do so. Encourage everyone to participate.

Not everyone needs or will be prompted to make a public confession, but have pen and paper available if someone wants to write something down and keep it between themselves and God. Be thoughtful with how you end this time as well. For instance, you could collect written confessions and then collectively burn them in an outdoor fire pit or rip them up and throw them away. As you engage in this time of confession together, keep the following two verses front and center in your mind:

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. – 1 John 1:9 (NLT)

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. – James 5:16 (NLT)

Engage One Another + Engage God = *Extraordinary Together*

Additional Study

1. Scripture references regarding rewards in heaven: 1 Corinthians 9:25-27, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, Revelation 2:10, and 1 Peter 5:4
2. Scripture references regarding punishment in heaven: John 19:11, Luke 20:27, and 1 Corinthians 6:18