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COMMUNITY GROUPS

RIVERS CROSSING CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide

April 14, 2024

Life is Like a Roller Coaster Week #2

When You're Waiting / Pastor Paul Taylor

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Icebreaker Question | Share about a memorable experience you've had while waiting in line for something (it could be a roller coaster, a concert, or any other event).
2. As he wrote on the future "day of the Lord" (i.e., the second coming of Christ), the Apostle Peter highlighted what Pastor Paul shared in his sermon - God doesn't work according to human timelines. Read 2 Peter 3:8-12 before reflecting on this idea.

2 Peter 3:8-12 (NIV) - ⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. ¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹²as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

a) How might this perspective challenge our national inclination to want things - especially things from God! - immediately?

b) Where have you been tempted to want a "FastPass" to a deeper relationship with God, greater Christlike character and behavior, or God's blessings?

3. Discuss a situation where you struggled to understand why God's timing seemed different from your own. Did you doubt God and His love for you during this time?

Did you eventually come to accept God's timing? If so, what helped you trust in His plan? How did God's timing prove to be better than you own?

If you didn't accept God's timing, share about why.

DIVING DEEPER

4. While we wait on God, we need to watch out for spiritual attacks from the enemy and resist the temptation to compromise. Read Psalm 27:1-6 before discussing the corresponding questions together.

Psalm 27:1-6 (NLT) - ¹The Lord is my light and my salvation—
so why should I be afraid?

The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger,
so why should I tremble?

²When evil people come to devour me,
when my enemies and foes attack me,
they will stumble and fall.
³Though a mighty army surrounds me,
my heart will not be afraid.
Even if I am attacked,
I will remain confident.
⁴The one thing I ask of the Lord—
the thing I seek most—
is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
delighting in the Lord's perfections
and meditating in his Temple.
⁵For he will conceal me there when troubles come;
he will hide me in his sanctuary.
He will place me out of reach on a high rock.
⁶Then I will hold my head high
above my enemies who surround me.
At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy,
singing and praising the Lord with music.

a) Have you experienced spiritual attacks during a period of waiting? If so, how did you recognize them? What strategies and/or practices helped you overcome these and press into your relationship with God?

b) Has there been a time when you've been tempted to compromise your values, beliefs, or course of action while waiting for something from God? If so, explain. How were you able to navigate that temptation?

5. While we wait, we should worship, develop and deepen our relationship with God, and learn how to practice righteous living. Read Psalm 27:7-14 before discussing the corresponding questions together.

Psalm 27:7-14 (NLT) – ⁷Hear me as I pray, O Lord.

Be merciful and answer me!

⁸My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."

And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."

⁹Do not turn your back on me.

Do not reject your servant in anger.

You have always been my helper.

Don't leave me now; don't abandon me,

O God of my salvation!

¹⁰Even if my father and mother abandon me,
the Lord will hold me close.

¹¹Teach me how to live, O Lord.

Lead me along the right path,
for my enemies are waiting for me.

¹²Do not let me fall into their hands.

For they accuse me of things I've never done;
with every breath they threaten me with violence.

¹³Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness
while I am here in the land of the living.

¹⁴Wait patiently for the Lord.
Be brave and courageous.
Yes, wait patiently for the Lord.

- a) How does worshipping God change our perspective and attitude, even when our circumstances remain the same? What does it look like to maintain a posture of worship and praise during challenging waiting periods?
- b) Oftentimes, our relationship with God is built in the waiting. How have you experienced spiritual growth and greater intimacy with God during periods of waiting? Is there a particular story that stands out to you from your life?

TAKING IT HOME

6. Pastor Paul shared that waiting for God's timing takes courage! What's something you're waiting for right now? If you're willing, share with the group.

Regarding what you're waiting for, do you sense there are areas in your life that God wants to grow, mature, or even prune (i.e., cut away) as you wait? If so, explain.

7. Final Reflection and Takeaway | Read Psalm 130 and Isaiah 40:25-31. What might God be speaking to you through these passages?

Psalm 130 (NLT) - ¹Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

²Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

³If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

⁵I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

⁶I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷Israel, put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

⁸He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

Isaiah 40:25-31 (NLT) - ²⁵"To whom will you compare me?
Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One.

²⁶Look up into the heavens.
Who created all the stars?

He brings them out like an army, one after another,
calling each by its name.
Because of his great power and incomparable strength,
not a single one is missing.
²⁷O Jacob, how can you say the Lord does not see your troubles?
O Israel, how can you say God ignores your rights?
²⁸Have you never heard?
Have you never understood?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of all the earth.
He never grows weak or weary.
No one can measure the depths of his understanding.
²⁹He gives power to the weak
and strength to the powerless.
³⁰Even youths will become weak and tired,
and young men will fall in exhaustion.
³¹But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength.
They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary.
They will walk and not faint.

What's your biggest takeaway from this week's sermon and our group discussion?
How can you put that into action this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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RIVERS CROSSING - THINGS TO KNOW

1. When Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary | Join us for a night of worship and prophetic ministry on Sunday, April 28th at 6pm at our Rivers Crossing Mason campus. When Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary is an incredible way to experience God's power firsthand in a tangible way through extended worship, ministry time, and corporate prayer. Come expectantly and join us as we seek the extraordinary life together.
2. Men's Night | We're hosting a FREE Men's Event on Sunday May 5th! We'll start at 5pm with a message from our Lead Pastor Paul Taylor. Then we'll have an extended and unhurried time of food (City BBQ), fun (outdoor games, fire pits, etc.), and fellowship as we enjoy our renovated outdoor lawn and lobby spaces! You're not going to want to miss Men's Night and you're going to want to invite a friend!
If you're planning to join us, please let us know by registering. Thanks!
<https://riverscrossing.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2212814>
3. Baptisms - Saturday May 18th | We believe baptism is an integral part of your spiritual journey and necessary as you seek to become a fully engaged follower of Christ. If you've recently decided to follow Jesus or you've been a Christ follower for a while but never gotten baptized, now is the perfect time to take this next step! This baptism service will be held on our renovated lawn space at 3pm. Learn more and sign up by visiting <https://riverscrossing.com/grow/>



COMMUNITY GROUPS

MISSION AND VISION

Groups Mission:

To provide people an opportunity to experience loving community as they pursue being a fully engaged follower of Christ.

Community Groups Vision:

To gather together regularly to share, study the Bible, and support one another. Community Groups are sermon-based, meaning they study a set of Bible passages and questions connected to the previous weekend's sermon.

Healthy Community Groups:

Community Groups are designed so that we can love and care for one another and put God's Word into action – all in pursuit of experiencing and living the extraordinary life. As you lead, keep the following in mind for evaluating the health of your group:

- **ENGAGE:** Groups are only successful when people invest their time and energy to genuinely engage the process by attending regularly, being honest, and developing relationship with other group members. This takes time, but it's worth it. | *Acts 2:42-27, Colossians 3:12-17*
- **ENCOURAGE:** One of the primary roles your group will play is in encouraging one another forward in your individual walks with Christ. This includes supporting one another through the messiness and trials of life.
 - *Hebrews 10: 23-25*
- **EQUIP:** Regularly encountering God's Word through the sermon, group discussion, and personal study will, over time, equip each group member to be a more fully engaged follower of Jesus. As this information permeates the heart, the Holy Spirit will provide application and personal growth.
 - *2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 14:25-26*
- **EMPOWER:** As your group meets, you will see some people naturally begin to exhibit spiritual gifts including leadership, shepherding, and hospitality. Be on the lookout for these developments. Empower these individuals to step into larger roles within the group, to consider leading or hosting their own group, or to serve where led. | *Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 3:10-14*
- **EXPAND:** As each member of your group begins to invest in their "8 to 15," it's natural for your group to add new members and to connect others into groups ministry. | *John 13:34-35*