

# RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH



## Community Group Discussion Guide – Prove It #2

*Prove It In The Church / October 18, 2020 / Pastor Paul Taylor*

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Icebreaker – Highs and Lows | Have each person in the group briefly share their best (“high”) and worst (“low”) moments from the previous week. If a group member needs additional time to talk through a low moment they’re experiencing, be intentional as a group to listen to and care for this person.
2. What has your engagement with the local church (be it Rivers Crossing or another church) looked like during COVID-19? Are you continuing to watch online or have you begun attending in-person services? Recently, have you found it easier or more difficult to connect with God at church? Explain your answer.

What impact, if any, has COVID-19 and its restrictions had on your view of church and the importance of routinely gathering with a local body of believers?

### DIVING DEEPER

3. As a Community Group, read Malachi 1:6-8 and discuss the corresponding questions.

**Malachi 1:6-8 (NLT)** – <sup>6</sup>“...A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. If I am your father and master, where are the honor and respect I deserve? You have shown contempt for my name! “But you ask, ‘How have we ever shown contempt for your name?’ <sup>7</sup>“You have shown contempt by offering defiled sacrifices on my altar. “Then you ask, ‘How have we defiled the sacrifices?’ “You defile them by saying the altar of the Lord deserves no respect. <sup>8</sup>When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn’t that wrong? And isn’t it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor, and see how pleased he is!” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

God’s instruction to the Israelites for worshipping and encountering His presence involved offering unblemished sacrifices (see Deuteronomy 17:1, Leviticus 22:24). But as Malachi describes, the Israelites neglected God’s instructions and were simply going through the motions.

- a) Do you ever struggle with going through the motions or insincerity when it comes to worshipping God? If so, what does this look like? How might the familiarity of corporate worship lead us, if we aren’t careful, into a place where our worship actually dishonors God?
  - b) How do you (or can you) overcome the familiarity of corporate worship to routinely encounter God?
4. Since Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament sacrificial system (see Hebrews 10:19-22), God’s primary concern for how to worship Him is the posture of our heart. Read the following Bible passages together and discuss the corresponding questions.

**Isaiah 8:11-14 (NLT)** – <sup>11</sup>The Lord has given me a strong warning not to think like everyone else does. He said, <sup>12</sup>“Don’t call everything a conspiracy, like they do, and don’t live in dread of what frightens them. <sup>13</sup>Make the Lord of Heaven’s Armies holy in your life. He is the one you should fear. He is the one who should make you tremble. <sup>14</sup>He will keep you safe.

**Psalms 43:3-5 (NLT)** – <sup>3</sup>Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me. Let them lead me to your holy mountain, to the place where you live. <sup>4</sup>There I will go to the altar of God, to God—the source of all my joy. I will praise you with my harp, O God, my God! <sup>5</sup>Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!

**Psalm 42:1-4 (NLT)** – <sup>1</sup>As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. <sup>2</sup>I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him? <sup>3</sup>Day and night I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, “Where is this God of yours?” <sup>4</sup>My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks amid the sound of a great celebration!

a) What elements of this heart posture do you find in the verses above? Why do all of these elements matter when it comes to honoring God with our worship?

b) How do you (or can you) monitor the posture of your heart when preparing to worship God?

5. Corporate worship of God as a church should overflow into personal worship of God in our daily lives. How does this work out in your life? Do you see personal worship as being limited to worship music, or is it more than that? Where might God be calling you to grow in offering yourself as a “living sacrifice?”

**Romans 12:1 (NLT)** – And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

6. What financial lessons have you learned during this period of COVID-19?

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NLT)** – <sup>9</sup>Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. <sup>10</sup>Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

Why is it dishonoring to God to neglect financially contributing to the local church you call home? How can you either go deeper with or begin honoring God with your finances?

## TAKING IT HOME

### 7. Group Activity | Worship and Pray Together

During your time of prayer, we encourage you to move from talking about worship together to *actually* worshipping God together! Select and play a worship song and sing it together. Below, we’ve recommended a song from worship artist Shane & Shane and provided the accompanying lyrics to get you started, but feel free to choose your own. If you’re meeting online, most online meeting platforms offer the ability to share your screen. For a tutorial on how to do this with Zoom, click [HERE](#).

*Come Thou Fount (Above All Else)* by Shane & Shane / <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDw8t6nv0f4>

Come, thou fount of every blessing  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise  
Teach me some melodious sonnet  
Sung by flaming tongues above  
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it  
Mount of Thy redeeming love

Here I raise my Ebenezer  
Hither by Thy help I'm come  
And I hope, by thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home  
Jesus sought me when a stranger

Oh to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be  
Let thy goodness, like a fetter  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it  
Prone to leave the God I love  
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it  
Seal it for Thy courts above

(Above) all else  
I adore Your name  
Above all else  
Tune my heart to sing your praise

Wandering from the fold of God  
He, to rescue me from danger  
Interposed His precious blood

The highest praise, the loudest praise  
To the name above every name

Prone to wander Lord I feel it  
Prone to leave the God I love  
Here's my heart Lord Take and seal it  
Seal it for thy courts above

After worshipping, share personal prayer requests and pray for one another.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- 
- 
- 

## RIVERS CROSSING – THINGS TO KNOW

1. 2021 Discipleship School. Discipleship School is a one-year program that helps Christians from all backgrounds become fully engaged followers of Christ. The school helps students learn to hear God's voice clearly, experience a full and free life, develop intimacy with God, develop Christlike living, and understand their spiritual gifting. For more information, or to register for Discipleship School, click on the link below.  
<https://riverscrossing.com/discipleship-school/>
2. If you're not yet giving to Rivers Crossing, we encourage you to take our 90-Day Tithing Challenge. We commit to you that if you tithe for three months and God doesn't hold true to His promises of blessings (see Malachi 3:10-11), then we'll refund 100% of your tithe. No questions asked.  
<https://riverscrossing.com/tithing-challenge/>
3. Everything we do at Rivers Crossing is made possible because of our incredible volunteer teams. Whether they're leading a group in River Kids, welcoming first time guests or helping produce our online services, each person makes a huge impact. If you'd like to find a place to serve, click the link below to get involved!  
<https://riverscrossing.com/get-involved/>