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# COMMUNITY GROUPS

**RIVERS CROSSING CHURCH**

Community Group Discussion Guide

October 1, 2024

Stuck Together Week #4 / Pastor Paul Taylor

A Generational Family

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Icebreaker Questions | What's one of your favorite things about the fall season? Do you have any fall traditions? What about favorite fall meals?
2. Icebreaker Questions | What was your relationship with God like when you were young (i.e., between the ages of 13 and 25)? Was there anyone in particular during this time period who significantly invested in your life and faith? If so, explain.

Why is it important for the church at large to pour into the next generation of kids and students? How has your family experienced this at Rivers Crossing?

**Psalm 78:4-8 (NLT)** - <sup>4</sup>We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders. <sup>5</sup>For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, <sup>6</sup>so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children. <sup>7</sup>So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands. <sup>8</sup>Then they will not be like their ancestors—stubborn, rebellious, and unfaithful, refusing to give their hearts to God.

## DIVING DEEPER

3. Pastor Paul shared that the church is a spiritual family. Read the following Bible passages together before discussing the corresponding question.

**Matthew 12:46-50 (NLT)** - <sup>46</sup>As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. <sup>47</sup>Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you.” <sup>48</sup>Jesus asked, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” <sup>49</sup>Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. <sup>50</sup>Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!”

**Ephesians 2:19-21 (NLT)** - <sup>19</sup>So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. <sup>20</sup>Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. <sup>21</sup>We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.

**1 Timothy 3:14-15 (NLT)** - <sup>14</sup>I am writing these things to you now, even though I hope to be with you soon, <sup>15</sup>so that if I am delayed, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth.

What has your experience been of the church at large? Is family one of the first words you'd use to describe the church? If not, what words would you use?

4. When speaking about how we should act in God's household (i.e., the church), Pastor Paul challenged us to move from being a consumer to being a contributor. To move from sitting and soaking (which is OK for season) to serving.
- a) How has serving been a part of your relationship with God and connection with the local church? If you currently serve at Rivers Crossing, share about that experience and how it's impacted you.

- b) Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and Mark 10:42-45 together. Based on these verses, should serving be viewed as a crucial component of following Jesus? Explain.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (NLT)** – <sup>12</sup>The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup>Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. <sup>14</sup>Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. <sup>15</sup>If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? <sup>18</sup>But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. <sup>19</sup>How strange a body would be if it had only one part! <sup>20</sup>Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. <sup>21</sup>The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." <sup>22</sup>In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. <sup>23</sup>And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, <sup>24</sup>while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. <sup>25</sup>This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. <sup>27</sup>All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

**Mark 10:42-45 (NLT)** – <sup>42</sup>So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. <sup>43</sup>But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup>and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. <sup>45</sup>For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- c) If you feel like more of a consumer instead of a contributor in your local church context (be that at Rivers Crossing or another church), how could you take a step to get more involved? Is there a particular area you'd love to serve in?

## TAKING IT HOME

5. Reflecting back on the entirety of the Stuck Together sermon series, what's been your biggest takeaway? How have you and/or you and your spouse begun putting that into action with your family? Do you have any "wins" to share so far?
6. **Group Challenge** | On Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>, Rivers Crossing is beginning a sermon series on the New Testament book of James. In advance of the series, spend time reading through James and investigating the book's background (author, historical and cultural background, key themes, etc.). Talk about your experience with this challenge the next time your group meets.

For some sample resources on the book of James, check out the following:

The Gospel Coalition | Introduction to James:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/james-introduction/#overview>

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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## RIVERS CROSSING - THINGS TO KNOW

1. Intentional Parenting Groups | If you've enjoyed Stuck Together and want to dive deeper into creating a Godly vision for your family, this 6-week study could be the perfect for you! Parents will gather together to work through the Intentional Parenting workbook created by Doug and Cathy Fields. The cost is \$20 per couple, which covers the cost of the workbook and video access. Childcare is available for an additional cost. For more information, or to register, click on the link: <https://riverscrossing.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1928128>
2. Stuck Together Podcast | If you're enjoying our Stuck Together sermon series on families and want to dive deeper, we encourage you to check out the companion podcast. The first episode - titled "The Elephant In The Room" - deals with conflict. Watch the podcast using this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ISkkui38ao>
3. 2024 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 apply for the Discipleship School, click on the link: <https://riverscrossing.com/discipleship-school/>
4. Serve at Rivers Crossing | One of the marks of a fully engaged follower is their willingness to invest into God's kingdom with their time, talents, and resources. We have opportunities to serve all throughout the week! Find the team that's the right fit for you and partner with us to create an environment for people to become fully engaged followers of Jesus. Learn more at <https://riverscrossing.com/serve-here/>



# 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*