

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide – **From Stressed to Blessed, Week #3**

February 17, 2019



Engage One Another – Connection

1. “Ten Things In Common” Exercise: Divide your group members into two separate groups by having them count off. Have your newly formed groups find ten things they all have in common and write them down. Body parts like legs and arms don’t count, nor do clothing items – be creative! This will help the group explore shared interests. After eight to ten minutes, have one person from each group volunteer to read the list out loud. Get ready for some laughs (and perhaps some inquisitive looks from the other group) as you discover new things about each other!

Engage One Another – Introduction

2. At the conclusion of the service, there was an intentional time of prayer and ministry for those who desired to give God their first and best or who sought forgiveness for any disobedience in their life related to financial stewardship. If there are individuals from your group who came forward during that time, ask if they would be willing to share about their experience and what God put on their heart. If needed, gather around and continue to pray for this individual.
3. Pastor Paul shared about the principle of first – when God is first in our life, everything comes in order; when God is not first in our life, everything is out of order. Is this a principle you have found to be true in your own life? Share about an experience that relates to your provided answer.

Engage One Another – Diving Deeper

4. Pastor Paul discussed how the sacrificing and redemption of the firstborn (see Exodus 13) points ultimately to God giving his firstborn and only Son – Jesus – as the sacrifice for our redemption. Why do you think this discussion point was included in a sermon series on generosity and tithing?
5. Read Proverbs 3:9-10, Exodus 23:19, and Genesis 4:3-5 together. Split the reading of these verses up among several group members. After reading, discuss the following:
 - a. What does it mean to honor God with our firstfruits?
 - b. What is the difference between giving and bringing (see Exodus 23:19) our firstfruits to God? [Hint – What do these words imply about ownership of our fruitfruits and finances?]
 - c. What does the story of Cain and Abel have to teach us about the seriousness with which God takes the bringing of our firstfruits to honor Him?
 - d. What is your biggest challenge when it comes bringing your firstfruits to God? Do you have a plan for how to overcome this challenge and become obedient to God’s principle of first?
6. Pastor Paul shared that the tithe is holy and set apart to the Lord (see Leviticus 27:30) and is to be brought to God first as opposed to as a secondary offering or even a final leftover. How does this picture of tithing to God compare with your own personal budget, spending patterns, and tithing?

→ 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

“There are many blessings that go along with tithing, but it is the principle of faith and putting God first that initiates these blessings. The first portion, the tithe, is the portion that redeems the rest. God does not desire a legalistic begrudging response; He desires our hearts to be submitted to Him in joy and faith that His principles are true.” – Quoted from Pastor Robert Morris and Gateway Church

This week, take time to really think about and honestly reflect upon these three areas of your life as they relate to the principle of first: treasure, time, and talent. Pray that God would communicate with you on each of these areas as you continue to align your life with His. *“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.”* – Romans 12:1 (NLT)

Engage One Another + Engage God = *Extraordinary Together*