

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide – Good News? Week #2

Dealing With Doubt / March 14, 2021 / Pastor Paul Taylor



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Winter Quarter Reflection and Looking Ahead | As you look back on the Winter Quarter and the start of 2021, what is something in your own life and your Community Group experience you are thankful for? *It can be a specific way God encouraged you, time spent together in your group, how group has helped you to continue living your life for Jesus, something new you learned, time serving together, a spiritual breakthrough, growth, challenge, etc.*

The Spring Quarter begins on April 11th. Does your group plan to continue meeting? If yes, are there any changes you'd like to implement? For example – logistical changes (day, time, frequency, childcare plans), format changes (online, in-person, hybrid), welcoming new group members, sharing group leadership, new approaches to your discussion or prayer time, etc.

2. Recall a time when God used you to share the good news of Jesus Christ with another person. What was that experience like for you? What was the response from the person with whom you shared?
3. There's a famous saying circulated among the Christian church: "Preach the gospel at all times and use words if necessary." While there is good sentiment in this statement, it was not actually spoken by who it is attributed to ([Source – TGC article](#)) and it seems to downplay verbally sharing the good news.

Why are words of vital importance when it comes to sharing the good news?

Romans 10:13-15 (NLT) – ¹³For 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' ¹⁴But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? ¹⁵And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

DIVING DEEPER

4. When it comes to sharing the good news, many people wrestle with doubt. We doubt that God desires to use us to share the good news with those around us, that sharing the good news will work and that someone will respond positively, that our past or current struggles disqualify us from being used by God, or that God truly loves that person in our 8 to 15 enough to pursue them. Eventually, if this doubt isn't acknowledged and surrendered, it leads to "evangelism paralysis" and even unbelief.
 - a) Can you relate with any of these doubts? If yes, where do you believe this doubt originated? For example, a past evangelism attempt that you see as a failure, a lack of experience talking about God with others, a personal insecurity, or a fear of being disliked or criticized for what you believe.

b) What would it look like to engage and ask God for his help to overcome your doubt?

5. Jesus' command to his followers to be his witnesses came with a promise of empowerment from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). When sharing the good news, God wants us not only to recognize and rely on the Holy Spirit's power, but to trust that He is already working in the life of the other person (John 6:44). Read Acts 8:26-40 together and discuss the corresponding questions.

Acts 8:26-40 (ESV) – ²⁶Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. ²⁷And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁰So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

a) What observations about the Holy Spirit's working and empowering do you see in this encounter between Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch?

b) During times you've shared about Jesus, how have you experienced the Holy Spirit's power?

c) Read Luke 12:11-12. In addition to prompting us to talk with others, what does this passage reveal about how the Holy Spirit empowers us to share the good news?

Luke 12:11-12 (ESV) – ¹¹And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, ¹²for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

TAKING IT HOME

6. In an article published by Christianity Today, Duane Litfin made the following remark:

“The gospel's inherent power does not fluctuate with the strengths or weaknesses of its messengers. This truth is humbling, but also immensely liberating. In the end, my inability to answer objections, my lack of training or experience, even failures in my own faithfulness in living it out do not nullify the gospel's power. Its potency is due to the working of God's Spirit. Even when we are at our best, the gospel is powerful in spite of us, not because of us. Thanks be to God.”

Quote taken from <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/may/litfin-gospel-deeds.html>

Pastor Paul shared at the conclusion of his sermon that when we share the good news, the results are in God's hands. Is this something you previously believed about evangelism? How can this truth impact your desire and boldness to share the good news?

Romans 1:15-16 (NIV) – ¹⁵That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. ¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 (NIV) – ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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RIVERS CROSSING – THINGS TO KNOW

1. Group Connect | Looking to find Christian community in 2021? Join us for Group Connect on April 8th at 7:00pm at our Mason campus. There you'll learn about our heart and design for Community Groups, be connected with a group, and have fun connecting with others. Register at bit.ly/RCgroupconnect.
2. Easter at Rivers Crossing | Easter services are taking place in-person and online on both Saturday April 3rd and Sunday April 4th. Learn more and reserve your tickets by visiting <https://riverscrossing.com/easter/>.
3. 2021 Men's Conference | There is a desire in all men to be better and do more, but an extraordinary life isn't found sitting on the sidelines. Men, hang out with us on Saturday June 12th at Men's Conference for a day of spiritual renewal, motivating messages from Mark Driscoll and yes, some manly fun. Lunch and dinner are provided with your ticket purchase. To learn more and purchase a ticket, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-mens-conference-tickets-143828790785?aff=ebsoporgprofile>.