

RIVERS CROSSING COMMUNITY CHURCH



Community Group Discussion Guide – God, Are You Listening? Week #3

How To Face Hard Times / May 3, 2020 / Pastor Paul Taylor

COMMUNITY GROUP NOTES

⇒ HOSTING GROUPS ONLINE / COVID-19 PLANS

We've put together a resource guide for hosting online groups. That guide walks through available technology platforms and provides best practices for having a successful online gathering. You can access that resource guide by clicking on the link below. If you have questions about moving your group online, or would like to start a new online group, please reach out to Matt Jewell, the Director of Groups, at mjewell@riverscrossing.com.

Resource Guide: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ULlip8MJlISxx62T1Hbc9LbR-JAV_8bm/view?usp=sharing

⇒ NEW GROUPS MINISTRY OFFERING – ONLINE GROUPS

Designed for those who aren't already in a Community Group, Online Groups provide an environment for you to experience community and care, while also engaging with the Sunday sermon on a deeper level. Groups meet online (through [Zoom](#)) on either Mondays or Wednesdays at 7pm. You can register to participate using the link below.

Online Groups Registration: <https://riverscrossing.wufoo.com/forms/m1hvymxb0ng8btj/>

⇒ HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST OR CARE NEED?

As a church, we're here for you and we are praying for you. If you have a prayer request or care need, you can submit both of those via the Rivers Crossing website (see the link below) or our church app.

Rivers Crossing Care Team: <https://riverscrossing.com/care-team/>

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Icebreaker Activity – Monitoring Your Gauges: One of the things you discovered when you began driving is to watch the gauges on your dash. Most people can't see or sense a problem in their car as quickly as these gauges can. You can practice this in your life by monitoring three gauges – spiritual, emotional, and physical. Take time to silently consider the questions below for each gauge. Then provide the group with an honest assessment for what each of your gauges read. Are they full, empty, halfway, etc?
Spiritual – How's your personal time with God (ex: reading the Bible, time in prayer, etc.)? How is your heart in worship? How is your heart toward God?
Emotional – Do your relationships with your spouse, fellow workers, or close friends create or drain energy? Do you find that you are frequently experiencing strong emotions (anger, sadness, etc.)? Have you felt emotionless recently?
Physical – Are you tired all the time? What have your recent sleep and eating patterns been? Are you getting any exercise and replenishing yourself?
2. During the COVID-19 outbreak, many individuals are spending large amounts of energy trying to find others to blame for the spread of the virus and for the economic crisis. How much have you been caught up in this pursuit? Have these efforts helped or hurt your spiritual and emotional health?
3. While Habakkuk 2 highlights the pride of the Babylonians, we all wrestle with the sin of pride. But when it comes to diagnosing our hearts, those of us who have the disease of pride often have a challenging time identifying our sickness. In his [essay on undetected pride](#), Jonathan Edwards identified seven subtle symptoms of pride – fault-finding, a harsh spirit, superficiality, defensiveness, presumption before God, desperation for attention, and neglecting others. Using Edwards' list as a guide, discuss these questions.
 - a) How did you experience or observe pride in your life prior to coming to know Jesus Christ?
 - b) Even as a Christian, the struggle with pride can still remain. How and when do you perceive pride continuing to work its way into your heart and life?

4. Jean Vanier wrote that living with others, “reveals our pride and ego, and yet it gives opportunities to be ‘for’ others and share their lives.” How have you seen God use personal relationships and community in your life to expose the presence of pride and help you grow in humility? What other ways has God used to help you discern where you may be struggling with pride?
5. Read Mark 10:35-45 and Philippians 2:1-11 together. Then discuss the following questions.
 - a) What do Jesus’ instruction to James and John and the Apostle Paul’s description of Jesus’ life teach us about the path to glory in the Kingdom of God?
 - b) Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. Pastor Paul taught that the essence of the gospel is that we seek our own honor and glory and, therefore, deserve shame, but Jesus Christ took our shame so we could have His honor. How has your understanding of the gospel and faith in Jesus affected the way you pursue success and achievement and redefined the way you view and carry out your relationships?

COMMUNITY GROUP PRAYER TIME

The Book of Psalms provides a beautiful combination of rich theology and personal worship. Psalm 139 is David’s reflection on both the sovereignty of God and the intimacy with which God knows his heart. God’s sovereignty is a truth we can rest in during this time of uncertainty and struggle with COVID-19. Meanwhile, the depth of God’s knowledge of our heart means that He is capable of giving us needed revelation as we work to overcome pride in our life, and that His grace through Jesus Christ covers every bit of who we are.

Read Psalm 139 together. After reading, encourage each group member who feels led to use David’s words as a springboard for praying to God. You’re welcome to share prayer requests during this time as well.

Global Prayer Movement – #Unite714 / Find more information on Unite714 by clicking [HERE](#).

¹You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. ²You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. ⁵You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

⁷Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. ¹¹If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,’ ¹²even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

¹³For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. ¹⁷How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.

¹⁹If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty! ²⁰They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name. ²¹Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you? ²²I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies. ²³Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” – Psalm 139 (NIV)