

Discussion Guide

The Distraction Inside (Building Lives #5)

Week of May 22, 2022

While this Discussion Guide is intended for use in a Riverwood Growth Group, it can be used personally as well. To get the most from these questions, we suggest you take 10-15 minutes to read, think, and pray through this Guide before participating in your Group. The point of this guide is not to “get through the questions” (there’s no quiz at the end!) but to pursue Jesus and grow spiritually.

Icebreaker (Optional)

Share about your childhood best friend (even if he/she was imaginary!). What were your favorite activities? What did you hold in common?

Discussion

Open to Romans 12

In Nehemiah 5, we learn how some of the wealthy were taking advantage of a food shortage, putting the poor among them in deep debt and even slavery. Nehemiah angrily rebuked the wealthy, leading the rich to forgive all loans and return everything back to the original owners. This humbling act allowed the Jews to become unified in their efforts to repair the walls around the city.

For today’s discussion, let’s talk about **unity**. To begin the conversation, let’s look at a passage from Romans 12. In Romans 1–11, the Apostle Paul talks about the gospel. Then in chapter 12, he shifts the focus to the implications of the gospel.

Read Romans 12:9-21 (Feel free to split among two readers)

1. According to this passage, what should be the actions and heart-posture of a Jesus-follower changed by the gospel?

2. Where do you see this passage intersecting with the topic of *unity*?
3. Let’s play “devil’s advocate” for a moment. If you wanted to use the phrases from this passage to “teach” a church how to NOT have unity, how would you change the statements? (Examples: “Let love be *fake*” or “Let love be *surface*.”)
4. How is Romans 12:9-21 perfectly fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

Making it Personal

5. How do churches and Jesus-followers intentionally or unintentionally do the opposite of Romans 12:1-9? (In other words, how do they fulfill the “reversed statements” you came up with in question 3?)
6. Using Romans 12:9-21, what advice would you give to someone who is struggling with a relationship with a fellow Christian?
7. Is there anyone you need to forgive or a relationship that needs repaired? What steps might you need to take to begin reconciliation?

Memory Verse

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.” (Romans 12:16 ESV)

Prayer

As you close in prayer, if you follow Jesus, ask God to help you be reconciled with your fellow Christ-followers. Also, pray for the unity of Riverwood.