

There Is A River

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Based on the sermon by Pastor Mirek Hufton | John 7:37-38

1. SERMON RECAP

Pastor Mirek Hufton preached from John 7:37-38, calling the congregation to understand that God designed every believer to be a river, not a lake -- a life where the living water of Christ flows outward to others rather than being dammed up inside. He challenged the group to shift focus away from self-absorption and toward serving, encouraging, and reaching people around them. He reminded the congregation that the great paradox of the kingdom is that you gain your life by giving it away, a truth Jesus himself declared in Mark 8:34-35.

2. KEY SCRIPTURE

John 7:37-38 (NKJV)

"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

3. ICE BREAKER

Think of a time someone did something small for you -- a kind word, a smile, an unexpected act of help -- that genuinely lifted your day. What happened, and why did it stick with you?

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Question 1 -- Opening the Text

Pastor Mirek drew a distinction between a river and a lake. A river flows outward; a lake holds water in. In what areas of your spiritual life do you sense God's blessing tends to stop with you rather than flow through you to others? What do you think causes that to happen?

Question 2 -- The Cost of Denying Self

In Mark 8:34, Jesus told his followers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. Pastor Mirek noted that the word "cleave" in the Amplified version means to hold on tightly to Jesus. Why do you think self-denial and holding tightly to Jesus go together? What does denying yourself look like in a practical, everyday situation rather than a dramatic one?

Question 3 -- The Paradox of Gain Through Giving

Pastor Mirek pointed to the kingdom paradox: the more you give your life away for others, the more life you actually experience. He shared examples ranging from a mission trip to simply encouraging a stranger. Has there been a moment in your life when giving something away -- time, energy, money, or attention -- left you feeling more full rather than more empty? What did that teach you?

Question 4 -- The River and the Body

Ephesians 4:16 says that every joint supplies something, and when each part does its work, the body grows. Pastor Mirek stressed that you cannot grow spiritually when you are wrapped up in yourself -- growth happens through giving out. How does this challenge the common idea that spiritual growth is primarily a private, internal journey? What does it look like for a small group like this one to function as a river rather than a series of separate lakes?

Question 5 -- Life as a Test, a Trust, and a Temporary Assignment

Pastor Mirek outlined three frameworks for understanding life: it is a test of faithfulness, a trust of gifts and resources given by God, and a temporary assignment with an eternal destination in view. Which of those three ways of seeing life feels most foreign to how you actually live day to day? What would change in your decisions this week if that framework were more real to you?

Question 6 -- The Pull of Passivity

Pastor Mirek made a pointed observation: if you do not schedule your giving, serving, and reaching out, it is not truly real in your life. He also noted that 1 Peter 2:11 calls believers to live as sojourners and pilgrims, not people who settle into comfort. Where in your life has comfort or busyness quietly replaced intentional outward focus? What would it take to make a specific change?

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

Before the group meets again next week, each member should choose one specific person outside their immediate family -- a neighbor, coworker, acquaintance, or someone they regularly pass by -- and do one deliberate act of encouragement or practical help for that person. It does not need to be large. It might be a phone call, a handwritten note, offering to help with a task, or simply stopping to have a genuine conversation and asking open-ended questions that let the other person be heard. Come back next week ready to share what happened and how it felt.

6. PRAYER POINTS

1. Pray that each group member would develop a genuine habit of outward focus -- that the Holy Spirit would

make them aware each day of the people around them who need encouragement, practical help, or an introduction to Jesus.

2. Pray for the courage to step out of comfort zones when it comes to serving and mission. Pastor Mirek challenged the congregation to schedule mission involvement rather than leaving it as a vague intention. Ask God to give each person clarity about one specific step toward that kind of commitment.

3. Pray for the church as a whole to function as a river in its community -- that World Harvest Church would be known as a place where the life of God genuinely flows outward to the broken, the lonely, and those who have not yet heard the gospel.

7. MEMORY VERSE

Mark 8:35 (NKJV)

"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."

Spend time this week reflecting on where the river in your life is flowing -- and where it may have slowed to a stop.