



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of July 30, 2017

WEPC small groups meet in homes across Richmond every week to participate in Jesus Christ's mission to Richmond, enjoy fellowship, study God's Word, pray together, and explore the fruit of the Gospel on our lives. Simply put, these groups are small enough to be the church to one another, and they serve as bridges between WEPC and the community where God has planted us. It is a place where the church can go deeper in the worship of God and further in Christ's mission.

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a "worship discussion" guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Sermon: "The Weakness of Christ"

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [II Corinthians 13:1-4](#).

- How do you treat people who sin against you?
- Paul makes clear in this passage that when he finally visits the Corinthians, he will confront their sin. The sadness, ("I may mourn over many of those who sinned earlier", [II Corinthians 12:21](#)), will not keep him from challenging the gossip and slander he has experienced.
- His confrontation with the Corinthians will manifest both the weakness of Christ and His power. Paul makes clear here that you cannot have one without the other.
- The Corinthians (and us) suppose that, where there is power, no weakness may be present. This is how the world works. One should therefore, wish to gain power and rid oneself of weakness. This seems like the way to salvation. However, God's power in us is only present and at work within weakness. It overcomes it without removing it.
- We have an addiction to power that the message of the Cross and the resurrection overcomes.
- Ask yourself: Am I concerned to get you to do what I want? Do I think of interactions in terms of leverage instead of love? Am I manipulative, either by fake flattery or sullen pouting?
- How this will manifest itself to the Corinthians in Paul's confrontation.
- "For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not in vain. But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict. For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory." ([I Thessalonians 2:1-12](#))
- We are weak. After all our lives are described as carrying a cross (2); Nevertheless, we have a boldness (2); No gimmicks (4); We work for God (4); No flattery; encouragement, yes (5); Not in this for the money (6); Gentleness like a mother (7); Exhort like a father, while not trying to make everyone angry, not trying to make everyone happy either (11-12)

Going Deeper in God's Worship

Reflect on the text together. [Hear the sermon here.](#)

- 1.) What is true about God's character, promises or work?
- 2.) What does the Scripture teach you about yourself or others?
- 3.) Are you encouraged to follow Jesus in His mission? How?

Reflect on the whole of Sunday's liturgy together. Locate this week's [Order of Worship here.](#)

- 1.) Was there an element of the worship service that you would like to share with the group?
 - *A Scripture verse that was read?*
 - *A prayer that was prayed?*
 - *A song that was sung?*
 - *A sacrament that was administered?*
 - *A way that glory was given to God?*
 - *A way that someone encouraged you?*
- 2.) Did the Holy Spirit convict, change, or encourage you in any way you wish to share with the group?
- 3.) Is Jesus leading you or the group to take a specific risk to minister the Good News to Richmond? Your neighbors? Your co-workers? Your family and friends?

Going Further in Christ's Mission

- 1.) Have the Scripture text open in front of you as a guide to your prayers.
 - Spend time thanking God and giving Him glory.
- 2.) Ask the Lord for vision, strength and faith as followers of Jesus Christ.
 - Count on the work of the Holy Spirit for change.
 - Ask for God's forgiveness and grace to repent of sin and trust Jesus.
 - Pray for the world, our country, Richmond, and the Church.
 - Pray for members of your group, family members, or co-workers, neighbors and friends.

*Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/archivedsermons*