



## A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of April 23, 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.

### II Corinthians 5:1-10 "Good Courage"

<sup>1</sup> For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup> For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup> if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. <sup>4</sup> For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

<sup>6</sup> So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

- Paul addresses the painful reality that we will suffer light and momentary troubles in this life, and each of us will also suffer death. In this passage, he uses a series of images to contrast and connect the Christian's current life with life to come.
- Read II Corinthians 5:1. What contrast does Paul set up in this verse? What does this teach us about our present and our future in Christ? Read [Acts 18:1-3](#) for further insight as to why Paul would use this image with the Corinthians.
- Read II Corinthians 5:2-4. When do you "groan"? What does Paul teach us about human groaning and what each of us is really groaning for?
- Read II Corinthians 5:5. How has God demonstrated to us that our groaning will not be in vain? Read [Romans 8:22-26](#) to hear more about why Paul connects our groaning to God's indwelling Spirit.
- Read II Corinthians 5:6-8. What does Paul mean by "good courage"? What is our reason to be of good courage?
- Paul recognizes that every follower of Christ carries around an intense longing for our true home. Why do you personally long to be "at home with the Lord"?
- Read II Corinthians 5:9-10. Paul's final image is one of appearing before the "judgment seat of Christ". Since his destiny is to live in God's heavenly dwelling, Paul spends his life in daily anticipation of that longed for home-going. Who does Paul say will be required to make this appearance before the Judge? What is the purpose of this event? Read [I Corinthians 3:11-16](#) for more insight on this teaching.
- Re-read today's Scripture passage aloud and use it as a guide to prayer for your group:
  - Ask God for faith to long and live for our glorious home.
  - Pray for those in our church, community and around the world that have lost those they love or are facing death.
  - How does following Jesus require courage in your life today? Ask the Lord for the courage you & your brothers & sisters need.

## Sermon Notes

*This week, Steve Shelby preached on II Corinthians 5:1-10*

- Paul wants us to not lose heart. There is so much to make us lose heart and to be of no courage.
- Paul says “we”. Who are the “we”?
- “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”  
*(II Corinthians 4:16-18)*
- Verse 6 and verse 8 echo this thought.
- “so, we are always of good courage” (6)
- “yes, we are of good courage” (8)
- Even as we are outwardly wasting away, and even if our earthly home (our bodies) is destroyed. Even as we shall see, that we all must not only face the deterioration of our bodies, but also be judged.
- Do not lose heart because of unrealistic expectations. Right now, we groan. And we have a down payment that is the Spirit, not the full balance paid of blessing.
- A few words about judgment. The great and final litigation. And let’s remember that there has already been a courtroom scene where God is the real Judge and in a beautifully Trinitarian way has judged himself.
- First of all the Bible welcomes judgment. It is a demonstration of the glory of God. It is a demonstration of the justice of God. It is a demonstration of the love of God.
- Who is the Judge? Christ.
- On what basis are we judged? “What has been done in the body”
- In any courtroom there is evidence presented. The evidence presented is not the basis of our salvation, but the evidence for it. No one makes God a debtor.