



## Worship Study Guide for the week of August 14, 2016

# PSALMS

### WEPC Small Group Network

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto:kevin@wepc.org)

WEPC's Small Group Network meets 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: *Except the LORD Build the House*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Psalm 127](#).

#### Anxious

- "Wherever there are people whose hearts are not fretful or anxious or in a resentful frenzy, but instead have a tranquility of heart and a kind of peaceful abandon in which they take thought for other's concerns instead of being all wound up in their own—wherever there are people like that, the world sits up and takes notice. And rightly so because in all likelihood something out of this world is at work there, something that people everywhere are hungry for—even if they are not sure what it is. The world is full of anxious people: students anxious about whether people will laugh at their new shoes, about getting good grades, about giving a book report in front of the class; adults anxious about impressing the boss, losing a client, finishing a report on time, getting out of a foolish investment, a strange pain in the chest. From time to time there settles over everyone that dark, grey, heavy blanket of depressing anxiety that in the moment makes everything look dark and seems impossible to throw off. The experience is so common, that those who live in peace and freedom and joy shine like stars in the darkness. Those who have found the way to obey Jesus' command, 'Be anxious for nothing' . . . these are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They bring savor and sunshine to places where the creeping grey fog of anxiety has made everything tasteless and dark." (*John Piper*)
- What keeps you up at night?
- What are you building and preserving?
- Will it even be worth it in the end?
- Where is God in all our building?

#### In Vain

- What does "in vain" mean? The word used here for vain points back to [Genesis 3:16-19](#).
- After all there will be "bread" to show for it, but was it all worth it to begin with?
- Ok, then I will just work harder? Why sleep is a key image in our lives.

#### Why Sleep?

- What is happening when you sleep?
- The word play between "builders" and "children".
- "Thus says, the LORD, Would you build me a house?... And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you..." ([II Samuel 7:5, 11ff](#))
- The kinds of building that God does versus the kind of building we are tempted to do.
- "Come let us make bricks.... Come let us build ourselves a city and tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves...When Terah had lived 70 years he fathered Abram... Now the LORD said to Abram,

'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land I will show you. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing'." ([Genesis 11](#))

- Quiet
- Unpretentious
- The world is not even watching.
- And you will probably die before you see the "building" done.
- Before they are a quiver full they are likely to be a handful.

So, What Gives us Energy (Appropriately) for the Work?

- The realization that it is to God and for God.
- "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is your victory? O death where is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the lord your labor is not in vain." ([1 Corinthians 15:54-58](#))

## 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.

