



Worship Study Guide for the week of July 17, 2016

PSALMS

WEPC Small Group Network

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, 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: *Goodness & Mercy*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Psalm 23](#).

How do we experience pursuit?

After the blue and red police lights flashed behind his car, Louizandre Dauphin figured he may have added another "prohibited" item to the list of things you can't do while black: Reading.

Dauphin, 33, a former high school English teacher, had decided to relax last week with a few books at Stonehaven Wharf, a parking lot for fishing boats that's frequented by tourists to the Canadian province of New Brunswick. He sat inside his Volkswagen Golf hatchback watching the waves and poring over "Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis and another book by theologian Timothy Keller.

As he drove home afterward, Dauphin recounted on Instagram, an officer with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police pulled him over, saying someone nearby had called authorities "because ... a suspicious black man in a white car was parked at the Wharf for a couple hours. My response, Really? I was just reading a book."

He snapped two photos that he'd later use for the Instagram post, which says Canada experiences some of the same racial tension that has made headlines in the United States.

In the post, he tells his countrymen "not to get too comfortable on their high horses." He hashtagged the post #DangerousNegro.

Dauphin, the director of the department of parks, recreation and tourism in the small New Brunswick town of Bathurst, told The Washington Post that he didn't feel threatened by the officer, who seemed bemused about the situation before letting Dauphin go without incident. Still, he said, the encounter and a handful of previous ones show "we're not immune to situations like this."

The movement of this Psalm is from green pastures and still waters to and through the valley of the shadow of death, in the paths of righteousness to a great party in an even better house with the best host ever.

In all of this, really all of our lives, God is leading us, as this Psalm says, he leads, but he also 'follows' which means not lagging behind but pursuing hard.

God's love in this Psalm is so manifest, but it is manifest in front of us, behind us and therefore always with us.

Love is leading. Love is pursuing. It is present. It is with.

He does this for my enjoyment certainly, but he does it because his honor is at stake in how he cares for me.

Because I am happiest when God is most glorified but also because there is a witness to my and his enemies. Is he as good as advertised? Am I his? How should this shape the way I pray?

“God the host spreads a banquet for his guest, anoints his head with festive oil (cf. Luke 7:46), and keeps his cup filled to the brim. The reference to enemies may mean either that they are held at a distance and can't interfere with the guests' security, or it may mean that David has just had some victory and the prisoners must now look on in regret while David and his men celebrate.” (*John Piper*)

Verse 6 is a faith statement about what God will do, based on the past, based on the present and resting solidly not just on love, but on glory. His glory.

The glory of God is at stake in how he does all of this in my life.

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.

Kevin Greene, 2016