



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: *God is Faithful*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Acts 3:22-26](#).

What are We to say about 'These Days'?

- What good is a promise?
- What good is a promise while you wait for it to be fulfilled?
- Why does God make promises and wait so long to fulfil them?
- How does looking back, help us to look forward?
- "To make that point Peter piles up promises. In v.22 he says that Moses predicted the coming of a prophet like himself. In v.24 he says that all the prophets from Samuel on down proclaimed these days—the days of Jesus. In v.25 he says that God made a promise to Abraham about these days. The point is that when Jesus comes, he confirms the truth of all these promises. He shows that God is trustworthy; he keeps his word." (*John Piper*)

Christmas Means that God can be Trusted

- "And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from the old." (*Acts 3:17-21*)
- "Remember this and stand firm, Recall it to mind, you transgressors, Remember the former things of old; For I am God, and there is no other; I am god, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things not yet done, Saying, my counsel shall stand, And I will accomplish all my purpose." (*Isaiah 46:8-10*)
- So Peter, in these texts goes back to the prophets, back to Samuel, back to Moses, all the way back to Abraham.
- "We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord, Emmanuel." (*O Little Town of Bethlehem*)
- But with our father Abraham, we ask the question? "How am I to know...?" (*Genesis 15:8*)
- "Fear not Abram, I am your shield and your very great reward..."
- "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless..."
- "He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.' And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. Then the Lord said to Abram, 'Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring

judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age'." (*Genesis 15:9-15*)

3 Responses to the Promise in the Darkness

- Ask your questions.
- Remember the Cross
- Repent
- Rejoice

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.