



Worship Study Guide for the week of November 22, 2015



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: *Stumbling Stone*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [1 Peter 2:4-8](#).

Last Week...

- Coming to Jesus, the living and precious and chosen chief Cornerstone causes us to be living stones that are being built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood full of life and joy. As the spiritual house and priesthood we offer sacrifices of praise and service that are acceptable to God in by and through Christ.
- As we are connected to the Living Stone, we become little living stones and this house is bursting with the resurrection life that our chief Cornerstone gives us.

Then, in [1 Peter 2:6-8](#), Peter weaves together 3 Old Testament passages:

- "Behold I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: Whoever believes will not be in haste" ([Isaiah 28:16](#))
- "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" ([Psalm 118:22](#))
- "And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" ([Isaiah 8:14](#))
 - Two huge ideas emerge from these texts.
 1. If you trust Christ the chief Cornerstone you will never be disappointed or ashamed that you trusted Him. It will not prove itself as faulty. You can build your life on this Stone. You hide in this Stone. You can stand on the truth and trustworthiness of this Stone.
 2. Human unbelief cannot thwart the purpose of God.

Why bring up this business about stumbling and offense?

- If you are weak, struggling and suffering it feels like you are losing, and maybe by implication the people or circumstances arrayed against you appear to be winning. If I reject the Cornerstone, am I more powerful than God?
- All thoughts about human self-determination and self-reliance are destroyed by what Peter says in this passage.
- I do not have the ultimate say in my life. I can boast to God that my rejection of the stone is my decision, but Peter says, no. Look at Judas and the enemies of Christ. Their rejection, their crucifixion of Jesus only furthered and accomplished the purpose of God. God always in every single circumstance gets the last word.
- "As they were destined to do"

Some practical implications:

- God's purpose to do this stands and even incorporates the rejection of the stone into the accomplishment of His plan. Sooner or later we all must encounter the Stone. Either we are built upon it or we fall over it. The Stone is the determiner.
- The persecuted church: pray 'with' as much as 'for'
- "For you will certainly carry out God's purpose, however you act, but it makes a difference to you whether you serve like Judas or like John." (C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*)

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, 2015