



Worship Study Guide for the week of October 25, 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: *Holy*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [1 Peter 1:13-25](#).

Hopeful People are Holy People

- Peter has called on the elect exiles to set their hope fully on the grace that will be fully brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Now he calls on us to make a decisive break with our past and to reflect the holiness that belongs to God.
- What does the Bible mean when it calls on us to be holy?
- We tend to nibble around the edges of holiness when we confine it to a set of behaviors. What movies we watch. What books we read. What we eat and drink and smoke (or don't). What we wear.
- We almost never think of holiness as: Caring for the poor. Having a concern for justice, Brotherly love. Humility.
- "He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" ([Micah 6:8](#))

So What Does it Mean to be Holy?

- The Bible gives us two primary meanings for the word "holy" or "holiness". The most basic meaning of the word is to be 'set apart' or 'dedicated' to God. In other words, it means to belong to God.
- When we come to God in faith, He changes our identity by changing to Whom we belong
- "And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people" ([Leviticus 26:12](#))
- "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." ([Hebrews 8:10](#))
- This holiness describes a particular kind of relationship, first and foremost.
- Those who have responded in faith to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ have been united with and to Christ. To be a Christian means far more than just believing in God, it means to be united to Him.
- "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." ([Galatians 2:20](#))
- "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God: ([Colossians 3:3](#))
- "By virtue of our relationship with Christ, we participate in the life of God: He dwells in us, and among us. We dwell in Him. As such, we can say that in Christ, God's holiness is our holiness. In Christ we are already holy." ([Joel Scandrett](#))
- We are His elect exiles. Holiness is our identity.

Conduct: What is it?

- Peter goes on to say, this holiness must be made manifest in time and space by holiness "in all our conduct" ([1 Peter 1:15](#))

- “Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold” ([1 Peter 1:18](#))
- “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” ([1 Peter 2:12](#))
- “For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it” ([Galatians 1:13](#))
- “To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires” ([Ephesians 4:22](#))
- Conduct is an unfortunate translation. It means lifestyle, way of life, how you live.
- This makes perfect sense if our identity is bound up in Christ.
- At bottom, God’s call to be holy is a radical, all-consuming claim on our lives, our loves, our hates, our bodies, our money, our time.....
- It means death to our previous way of life. I no longer belong to myself but to someone else. I live now knowing that I have been ransomed by the blood of Christ from futility.
- Seeing that we are the portion of one who is holy, let us do all the deeds of sanctification
- “Since, therefore, we are a portion of the Holy One, let us do all such things as pertain unto holiness, avoiding evil-speaking, foul and impure embraces, drunkenness, disorderliness, abominable desires, detestable adultery, execrable pride; for God, he saith, resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Let us cleave, therefore, to them to whom grace has been given from God. Let us clothe ourselves with concord, being humble, temperate, keeping ourselves far from all whispering and evil speaking, justified by our deeds, and not by our words. For he saith, He who saith many things shall, in return, hear many things. Doth he that is eloquent think himself to be just? -- doth he that is born of woman and liveth but for a short time think himself to be blessed? Be not abundant in speech. Let our praise be in God, and not for ourselves, for God hateth the self-praisers. Let the testimony of right actions be given us from others, even as it was given to our fathers who were just. Audacity, self-will, and boldness belong to them who are accused of God; but moderation, humility, and meekness, to them that are blessed of God.” ([Clement of Rome, First Letter 30:1-8](#))

So Holiness is what Pleases my Father, Who is my Judge

- How do I know how I am doing? How do I get this in my life?
- I am loved and I am united to God in Christ.
- I have a new family and as such I am to look like that family, that Father.
- What would my Father think of this?
- Could I eat, drink, look at say, spend, etc., in the presence of my Father and my older brother?

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