



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of April 16, 2017

WEPC small groups meet 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.

II Corinthians 4:13-18 "Raised"

¹³ Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

- Chapter 4 begins and ends with the words "we do not lose heart" (vv. 1 & 16). Talk about a time you lost heart. What happened? How did you "find heart" again?
- Read II Corinthians 4:13. In this passage, Paul declares what strengthens him for the hardships of following Christ. He quotes [Psalm 116](#), a great song of praise to God. Read it together as a group. Why would Paul identify with the Psalmist and be encouraged by this Psalm?
- Read II Corinthians 4:14. Paul sees that Psalm 116 ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. What powerful connection does he see between Jesus and those who know Jesus as Lord?
- Read II Corinthians 4:15. Paul is encouraged to persevere in ministry because he believes it has a two-fold effect. What two things are on Paul's heart as he continues his labors?
- Read II Corinthians 4:16-18. Paul sets up a number of contrasts in light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What are these contrasts?
- Seeing things as they really are requires more than eyes—it requires faith. In these verses, what is Paul saying we have to *believe* in order to persevere in life, discipleship and ministry?
- Re-read today's Scripture passage aloud and use it as a guide to prayer for your group:
 - Ask God for eyes of faith to see Jesus as the Risen Lord & power to live in light of His resurrection.
 - Pray for the grace of God to "extend to more and more people" and "increase thanksgiving to the glory of God".

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/archivedsermons

Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on II Corinthians 4:13-18

- No one came to church today, of all days, to sing some songs, to greet friends and loved ones with the words “He is risen”, to hear a sermon and to pray, so that we would lose heart. No one wants to lose heart, even in the middle of circumstances that would tempt us to do just that. Renewal waxes and wanes.
- What might cause you to lose heart? The world. Your situation. Your own body. Your own sin
- You might even be tempted to lose heart when you hear the Scriptures say that your affliction and trouble are light and momentary.
- We do not lose heart precisely because the Resurrection is planted in the world of, in the land of the dying and decaying.
 - 1.) Paul knows he lives in a world of decay, he has just said in verse 12 that death is at work in him.

Psalm 116

I love the Lord, because he has heard
my voice and my pleas for mercy.
Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.

Then I called on the name of the Lord:
“O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!”

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
The Lord preserves the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
Return, O my soul, to your rest;
for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling;
I will walk before the Lord
in the land of the living.

I believed, even when I spoke:
“I am greatly afflicted”;
I said in my alarm,
“All mankind are liars.”

What shall I render to the Lord
for all his benefits to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord,
I will pay my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his saints.
O Lord, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your maidservant.
You have loosed my bonds.
I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the Lord.
I will pay my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all his people,
in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
Praise the Lord!

- 2.) The glory of God is manifest in our suffering and we have a ministry to one another precisely as we are suffering. Not one bit of our suffering is wasted, just as none of Jesus’ suffering was wasted.
 - 3.) In comparison to what awaits in terms of intensity and duration, what the resurrection of Jesus guarantees for us, outweighs the pain.
 - 4.) What is seen versus what is unseen. The things seen are those of the present, fallen world. The things unseen are God’s promises coming to fruition and finding their “Yes” in Jesus.
 - 5.) My union with Christ. The glorious “with” of verse 14
- “Why was Christ chosen out of the people? Speak, my heart, for heart-thoughts are best. Was it not that he might be able to be our brother, in the blest tie of kindred blood? Oh, what relationship there is between Christ and the believer! The believer can say, ‘I have a Brother in heaven; I may be poor, but I have a Brother who is rich, and is a King, and will he suffer me to want while he is on his throne? Oh, no! He loves me; he is my Brother.’ Believer, wear this blessed thought, like a necklace of diamonds, around the neck of thy memory; put it, as a golden ring, on the finger of recollection, and use it as the King’s own seal, stamping the petitions of thy faith with confidence of success. He is a brother born for adversity, treat him as such. Christ was also chosen out of the people that he might know our wants and sympathize with us. ‘He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.’ In all our sorrows we have his sympathy. Temptation, pain, disappointment, weakness, weariness, poverty-he knows them all, for he has felt all. Remember this, Christian, and let it comfort thee. However difficult and painful thy road, it is marked by the footsteps of thy Saviour; and even when thou reachest the dark valley of the shadow of death, and the deep waters of the swelling Jordan, thou wilt find his footprints there. In all places whithersoever we go, he has been our forerunner; each burden we have to carry, has once been laid on the shoulders of Immanuel. ‘His way was much rougher and darker than mine; Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?’ Take courage! Royal feet have left a blood-red track upon the road, and consecrated the thorny path for ever.” (*Charles Spurgeon*)