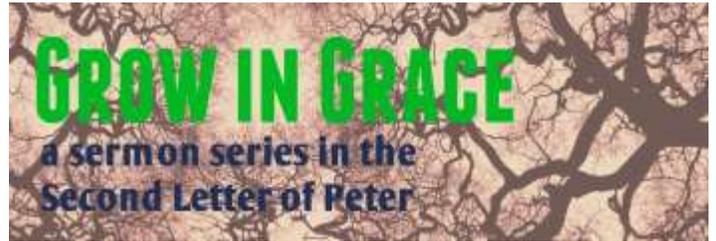




Worship Study Guide for the week of April 24, 2016



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: *Power & Promises*

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

First things first in this passage;

- "The world is little, people are little, human life is little. There is only one big thing — desire." (*Willa Cather*)
- "Simeon" Peter
- The passive nature of what is being talked about: "who have obtained"; "Grace be multiplied"; "has granted"(2)
- Through knowledge of Him we have power and everything necessary for life and godliness.
- "We need to pause and stress this. The Christian faith is not merely a set of doctrines to be accepted. It is a power to be experienced. It is a tragic thing to ask people if they know the Lord and have them start listing the things they believe about the Lord. Brothers and sisters, believing things about Jesus Christ will save no one. The devils are the most orthodox believers under heaven. It is divine power that saves. If the power of God does not flow into your life and make you godly, you are not Christ's. "All who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The mark of sonship is divine power. And the mark of power is godliness; which means a love for the things of God and a walk in the ways of God." (*John Piper*)
- He begins with very meaty things.
- The ESV mistranslates the last word. The word "sinful" or "evil" does not appear in the passage.

What does it mean to become partakers of the divine nature?

- If II Peter were written today, many orthodox believers would certainly reject him as 'new age'
- In what way do we become like God?
- To get at this, we must see the rest of the context.
- "Having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of intense desire"
- Corruption, change, rot, break down are all a part of our existence and they are in the world because of desire. (see the forbidden Fruit).
- The divine nature is unchanging in its perfection and will to save and bless a people for Himself.
- God does not change in his essential character. In fact he is eternal in His characteristics.
- He is eternally powerful, good, just, merciful. Always
- We see this most clearly and have the sense of participating in this through his promises.
- He does not tell us exactly which promises he has in mind.....
- Promises are about the future, the future for the believer is about hope.
- Hope is the guiding issue here. It is what shapes my understanding of my desires.

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.