



Worship Study Guide for the week of February 14, 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: *Beauty & Honor*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [1 Peter 3:1-7](#).

- "If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you." (A.A. Milne)
- "'They're married people.' Lila had no particular notion of what the word 'married' meant, except that there was an endless, pleasant joke between them that excluded everybody else and that all the rest of them were welcome to admire." (Marilynne Robinson, *Lila*)
- "He stammered: 'Then – you love me?' She answered with a voice so low that it was scarcely to be heard: 'Of course! You know I do.' And she hid her russet head against the breast of the triumphant and marveling young man. He fell back on to the bench with her at his side. Neither could speak. The stars were beginning to show. How did it happen that their lips came together? How does it happen that birds sing, that snow melts, that the rose unfolds, that the dawn whitens behind the stark shapes of trees on the quivering summit of the hill? A kiss, and all was said. Both were trembling. They looked at each other with eyes shining in the dusk, unconscious of the cool of the night, the chill of the stone bench, the dampness of the earth, the dew on the grass; they looked at each other, their hearts filled with their thoughts. Without knowing it, they had clasped hands." (Victor Hugo)
- "It wasn't love at first sight, it took a full five minutes." (Lucille Ball)

Beauty

- Last week we talked about what submission is and what it is not, putting it in the particular social and spiritual context of 1st century life.
- What is beauty? Who decides who is beautiful?
- "Women have often internalized the male tendency to view them as sexual objects or as possessions whose appearance displays the wealth and power of the male. This comes out in dressing to attract the notice of men or in competing with other women in the richness of their physical appearance. Peter, like the New Testament in general will have none of this." (Peter Davids)
- Peter says women adorn themselves first by putting their hope in God.
- She does not put her hope in her husband or getting a husband. She does not put her hope in her reputation. She does not put her hope in her children or getting children. She does not put her hope in her looks.
- "Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come." (Proverbs 31:25)
- She looks away from the troubles and miseries and obstacles of life that seem to make the future bleak, and she focuses her attention on the sovereign power and love of Jesus Christ who rules in heaven. She knows the Good News, and she knows the goodness of God, and she knows his promise that he will be with her and help her strengthen her no matter what.
- This is why Peter says the real problem in beauty is not aging or bad fashion sense or sagging or...
- It is fear.

- Mature Christian women know that following Christ will mean suffering. But they believe the promises like “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,” (*1 Peter 3:14*) and “Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.” (*1 Peter 4:19*)
- “That is what Christian women do: They entrust their souls to a faithful Creator. They hope in God. And they triumph over fear.” (*John Piper*)
- Fear is real in particular if you are married to a man who does not honor you.

Honor

- In this culture this is revolutionary.
- In an understanding way; *gnosis*, which means personal insight that leads to loving considerate care.
- Men do this by honoring their wives as the weaker vessel.
- Honor is more than respect. Jesus is pleased to honor those who are weaker or less honored by the world. It means a kind of deference. Submission in a way.
- What are two reasons given for honor?
- What does ‘weaker’ mean?
- It can’t mean spiritually or emotionally, given what he has just commanded women to do.
- In this culture, I believe he means vulnerability.
- What does “heirs together with you” mean?
- Honor is due because Jesus honors.
- I think these two pictures are what God intended in the Garden.

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.