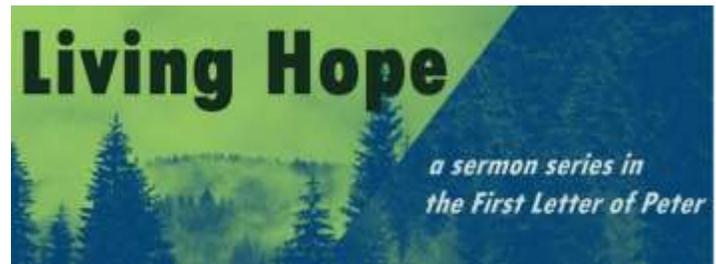




## Worship Study Guide for the week of January 17, 2016



### WEPC Small Group Network

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto: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: *Subject for the Lord's Sake*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [1 Peter 2:13-17](#).

- "You have not the making of your own cross, although unbelief is a master carpenter at cross-making; neither are you permitted to choose your own cross, although self-will would fain be lord and master; but your cross is prepared and appointed for you by divine love, and you are cheerfully to accept it; you are to take up the cross as your chosen badge and burden, and not to stand cavilling at it. This night Jesus bids you submit your shoulder to his easy yoke. Do not kick at it in petulance, or trample on it in vain-glory, or fall under it in despair, or run away from it in fear, but take it up like a true follower of Jesus. Jesus was a cross-bearer; he leads the way in the path of sorrow. Surely you could not desire a better guide! And if he carried a cross, what nobler burden would you desire? The Via Crucis is the way of safety; fear not to tread its thorny paths. Beloved, the cross is not made of feathers, or lined with velvet, it is heavy and galling to disobedient shoulders; but it is not an iron cross, though your fears have painted it with iron colours, it is a wooden cross, and a man can carry it, for the Man of sorrows tried the load. Take up your cross, and by the power of the Spirit of God you will soon be so in love with it, that like Moses, you would not exchange the reproach of Christ for all the treasures of Egypt. Remember that Jesus carried it, and it will smell sweetly; remember that it will soon be followed by the crown, and the thought of the coming weight of glory will greatly lighten the present heaviness of trouble. The Lord help you to bow your spirit in submission to the divine will ere you fall asleep this night, that waking with to-morrow's sun, you may go forth to the day's cross with the holy and submissive spirit which becomes a follower of the Crucified." (*Charles Spurgeon*)
- "We submit ourselves for the Lord's sake and for the sake of the world, so that our good deeds may be a witness to them and a testimony. We submit ourselves for our fellow Christians' sake out of sacrificial love for them. We submit ourselves for God's sake because we honor his image in our fellow-creatures, and because we respect his ordering of our lives, but especially because we gratefully seek to take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ." (*Edmund Clowney*)
- Because God tells us to submit to someone or something does not necessarily mean that that someone or something is approved by Him.
- We believe that God sees, and we can entrust ourselves to Him because he judges justly and in time.
- We do not take a lowly position toward others because we are low. We do so because God has exalted us. We are a kingdom of priests, saints, children of God and His own possession.
- Because of this, I entrust my dignity into His care.
- Every human being draws his or her dignity and value from God, from the fact that we bear His image. Therefore, our dignity is always derived, not something we produce. If it is derived from God, then He is the only one who can take it away from me.
- God takes it very seriously when we do not treat our fellow creatures with dignity, honor and respect.
- We are particularly bound to people in the Church, we love them, we honor everyone else and we fear no human being.
- All of this is empowered by a clear understanding of our status. A status we have been given by God.

- “When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, ‘Does your teacher not pay the tax?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, ‘What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?’ And when he said, ‘From others,’ Jesus said to him, ‘Then the sons are free. However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself’.” (Matthew 17:24-27)
- We have the full rights as and of sons, therefore, we are careful not to give offense.
- But also, our God is good to provide what we need to live as sons who serve and submit.

## 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.