



## A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of September 23, 2018

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.

### Luke 15:1-32 *Dead & Alive*

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Luke 15:1-32](#).

- Context: These three parables are told to answer the grumbling of the Pharisees and scribes, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”
- Is Jesus, looking for the lost by waiting for them to come to Him?
- The word “receive” is used by Luke
  - In Luke 2:25, Simeon was “eagerly awaiting” the consolation of Israel.
  - In Luke 2:38, Anna the prophetess spoke to those in the temple who were “eagerly awaiting” the redemption of Israel.
- Some things of note:
  - “Reckless living” feels free just as jumping out of an airplane feels free
  - A “Famine”
  - “He hired himself to a...” To whom or what ill you attach (hire) yourself to live?
- “When we break our attachment with God, you will end up attached to another, and that attachment will be slavery, not sonship. It may be drugs or alcohol or illicit sex or an employer or a spouse or a sport or a hobby or a television or a lake cabin or a computer or books. The attachment may be crude or it may be refined. If we break loose from God, we will be attached to another. And in the end (whether crude or refined) this alien attachment will send us to the swine troughs — either in this life or the one to come.” (*John Piper*)
- The God who longs, looks, and loves
  - “Served” and “command” versus “entreated”
  - “Child” versus “son”
  - “With”; Being with the father was not perhaps his joy.
  - The father is tender with both
- Go and do likewise?
- “The pain over a wayward child is real, and ought to be present in a life driven by the Spirit. Jesus wept over Jerusalem... this pain shouldn’t be confused, though with our carnal desire to display to the world around us what ‘blessed’ and ‘successful’ families we have. In many cases, the real tragedy in a family with rebellious children isn’t that their parents hurt for them, but their parents are embarrassed of them. The same is true in the opposite situation. If we think something is deficient or shameful about a family with prodigals, then we must conclude something is deficient about the family of God.” (*Russell Moore*)

## 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.

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