



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of November 4, 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.

Matthew 20:1-16 Choose

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Matthew 20:1-16](#).

- This parable is told with the background of Peter’s question to Jesus: “See, we have left everything and followed you. What, then will we have?” ([Matthew 19:27](#))
- Jesus reassures Peter-- and us-- that we will be more than blessed and ends with saying, “Many who are first will be last, and the last first” ([Matthew 20:16](#)).
- Jesus then tells this parable, so the last will be first and the first last.
- A vineyard owner goes into the marketplace 5 times throughout the course of the day to seek workers.
- “Standing” (3,6)
- “Whatever is right (just) I will pay you” (4)
- Why does the owner (who we know has a foreman) continue to go into the marketplace?
- “What is justice for an unemployed man, eager to work, who does everything in his power to find a job? What about those who are willing to stand in a public place all day long and endure the humiliating and maybe pitying glances of those who are more secure?” (*Kenneth Bailey*)
- Note also that the vineyard owner does not rob the men of dignity but gives them gainful employment.
- At the end of the day, the owner uses the handing out of pay to teach those who were hired first. He wants them to see what grace is in all of its scandal.
- It is not that there is a problem with underpayment, but rather a problem with evil eyes and overpayment.
- Like the parable of The Prodigal Son ([Luke 15:11-32](#)) the ending is left open. Do the outraged workers keep shouting at the owner, or do they take their pay?
- Comparison is always bad. (see Peter and John)
- Grace is the Lord’s to give. It belongs to Him.
- In the end, every one of the workers is blessed.

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
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/archivedsermons