



A Worship Discussion Guide for Individuals, Groups & Families for the week of March 3, 2024

Read the Bible passage aloud in your group meeting. This is a worship discussion guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for your meeting, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Warm Up

- If you had to explain Jesus and the significance of His life to an interested friend, what would you say?

1 Corinthians 15:1-20

In Fact Christ Has Been Raised

¹Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

- **Paul reminds the Corinthians of “the gospel” he preached to them (1). What does each of the following verses teach us about Paul’s gospel?**

“Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures” (3)

“He was buried... he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (4)

“He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.” (5-8)

- **What importance does the resurrection of Christ play in the gospel?**
- **Paul says, “by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain” (10). What is one way you can boast in what God’s grace has done in you?**

¹²Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

- If there was no resurrection of the dead, what would be the consequences?
- Why does Paul use the phrase “fallen asleep” to describe Christians who have died? (18, 20)
- What does it mean that Christ is “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep”? (15)

- Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you believe that Jesus is alive? What did God use to bring you to that point?
- Reflect on this week’s passage together, and use it as a guide for a time of prayer.

To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/resources/sermons-media-study-guide

Questions? Contact Pastor Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org



Stories from the Church: *Turning to Jesus*

Each Sunday in Lent we will hear testimonies of how Jesus is leading us to repent to trust Him, becoming like Him in His death, and attaining His resurrection (Philippians 3:10-11).



Bob Lawrence
February 25, 2024

FROM THE BIBLE BELT TO A BLACK HOLE

This is a story of the love, grace and faithfulness of our God.

He was leading me throughout, even when I did not realize it.

The year was 1984. Joyce and I were members of a wonderful PCA church in Knoxville, TN and participating in our first small group Bible study with good friends. Our kids, ages 8 and 6, were attending a Christian school. We had started serving as foster parents for newborns through a Christian agency. Sounds ideal, right?

The problem was that the project I was working on had been cancelled and I needed a new job. Clearly an opportunity to rely on God’s provision through our prayers and those of family and friends. Eventually an opportunity arose, really as a last ditch, that I felt compelled to accept. It seemed to be a step down, but it was a job. Another issue was the job site was 30 miles south of Buffalo, New York! All we had heard about Buffalo was snow and few evangelical Christians. Still. It was a job.

Our Bible study had been studying Acts, so we adopted Acts 1:8 as our guide. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth. And we did feel we were going to the remotest part of the earth! And so, I left Joyce and the kids to sell our house, and I went off to Buffalo.

Upon reporting to the new job site, I was dismayed to learn that the position I had accepted had been withdrawn and replaced with one I didn’t particularly understand and that seemed unimportant. Like the Israelites after passing through the Red Sea, I couldn’t turn around and go back – there wasn’t a Plan B there.

This presented another opportunity to turn to Jesus for an answer. The one He gave me comes from the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, where the master says to the slave who turned five talents into ten through hard work, Well done, good and faithful slave, you were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master. And so, I started looking for “small things” to work on that I could improve.

At the same time, we as a family were getting settled in as New York residents. Our ever-faithful Lord led us through an unexpected connection to a strong and growing Bible-believing church family. We were blessed with opportunities to serve and grow. It was a wonderful place for our kids to grow in their faith in Jesus as they interacted with their youth leaders. Joyce also found a wonderful adoption agency that allowed us to continue as foster parents for newborns. We were truly blessed.

I went to New York with the idea of staying 4 or 5 years, and then moving on, both for job advancement as well as timing moves in relation to the kids' high school years. But within the next years, the "few small things" that I worked on led to a succession of positions of varied and increased responsibility, culminating in becoming the project manager for the centerpiece of the project.

I can look back now and say without a doubt that this was the best job I had in 30 years with the company...and we were in New York, not 4 or 5 years and through high school, but 17 and through college! Only Jesus could have orchestrated this! I don't know how much I realized Jesus' involvement in all of this as it was happening, but in retrospect it is crystal clear. Jesus was faithfully leading and molding us along the way. I can see Him in so many instances, but time doesn't allow for sharing more. Let me ask you this, how do need to be trusting and loving Jesus in your home, work and neighborhood every day? He is faithful! You can count on it.