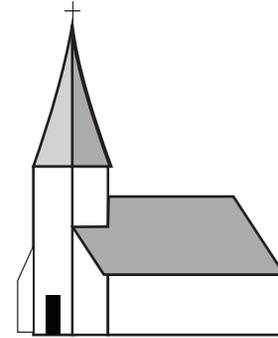


BE THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

A STUDY GUIDE TO ACCOMPANY
DR. PAUL PETERSEN'S
FAREWELL SERIES TO
WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



SEPTEMBER 2019



This series is designed for our community at WPC to grow deeper into the vision that God has for his Church.

To get the most out of this series...

- Pray for our pastors and teachers as they guide us.
- Ask God to help us grow.
- Study the passages further after hearing the passage.
- Find a small group to discuss what you're learning and share what parts are difficult.

Email groups@wpcspartanburg.org if you have questions or feedback on this study.

We are delighted that you are using this resource to guide you through the month of September's sermons and groups discussions.

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

September 8

"Life as the Body of Christ" Acts 2:42-47

FROM THE SERMON

What are the 4 chief distinguishing marks of the church?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What is the vision God is giving his people as they form this new community?

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY OR DISCUSSION

- 1) Reading through this description again, what is the most impressive attribute of this worshipping community?
- 2) What were the apostles teaching? Why is this content so relevant to this new community?
- 3) How does the phrase "gladness and sincere hearts" capture the essence of their fellowship? (v.46)
- 4) Where did the trust in one another originate? How does such mutual affection and fellowship exist in our community?
- 5) Are all churches meant to display these attributes? Why/why not?

LIVE IT OUT

- 6) The Jerusalem church was an impressive display of God's new community. How can we experience similar attributes? How can we celebrate these values event after the newness fades?
- 7) When you fellowship with, worship with, and serve others, do you do it out of obedience or "gladness and sincerity of heart"? What difference do you think this makes in your devotion to God and his community?

FROM THE SERMON

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

1. Christ became a man.
2. Christ died.
3. God exalted Christ.
4. If we will share his humility, we will share his glory

What single word or phrase stands out to you after hearing this message?

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY OR DISCUSSION

- 1) How have others treated you with the "mindset of Christ"?
- 2) To what was Jesus truly entitled? (v.6)
- 3) What is the nature that Jesus' followers can imitate?
- 4) How is humility a difficult attribute for us? For you personally?
- 5) What is so special about Jesus' name? What does this tell us about the way God emphasizes Jesus' eternal role?

LIVE IT OUT

- 6) What are the areas of life where God has given you power? What would it look like for you to yield your power to another? ...*Could God be inviting you to do so?*
- 7) In your prayer life, do you find yourself seeking what you want or what God wants? How could you bring Jesus' humility into your prayers?
- 8) Consider the relationships that you cherish. Are you demonstrating the mindset of Christ in them? If so, how could you bring more humility/servanthood into those relationships?

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:12-18

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Read Philippians 2:12-18 several times. Underline any words or phrases that you feel the Spirit nudging you to explore more deeply.

FROM THE SERMON

How does the Church display what God is doing in their midst?

1. Maturity
2. Warmth and Tenderness
3. Keep the Goal in Front

What should our unbelieving neighbors observe and experience as we shine among them?

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY OR DISCUSSION

- 1) What kind of "fear and trembling" will help us grow deeper into our understanding of salvation?
- 2) How did grumbling and complaining hurt the young nation of Israel? (*see Exodus 14:11-12, 15:24; 16:1-12*) What does their behavior teach us?
- 3) How does Paul instruct the church to behave in their community? What are some ways such behaviors affect the way we worship or treat one another?
- 4) What habits are encouraging healthy community in our church?
- 5) What habits are discouraging healthy community?

LIVE IT OUT

- 6) How can we embrace the theme of rejoicing more in our lives?
- 7) Write your own *vision* of the Church. Use this passage and your imagination to dream of how we can be the people of God.

September 29

**“Sending Out What Is Working Within”
Matthew 28:16-20 & Acts 1:8**

FROM THE SERMON

How does the mission of the Church conflict with our own earthly priorities?

What does this statement mean to you: “The Gospel is not for personal consumption”?

Following the sermon, take a moment to reflect on your “assignment” from Christ. Write down a phrase or word that describes this assignment.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY OR DISCUSSION

- 1) When Jesus had given this instruction to his followers, what had he accomplished?
- 2) What is the significance of Jesus’ authority? (Mt 28:18)
What is the connection between his authority and the power from the Spirit? (Acts 1:9)
- 3) How does this mission give a set of priorities to the Church?
- 4) Have we kept this mission? What, if anything, still needs to be done?
- 5) What is the vision that Jesus has for his people?

LIVE IT OUT

- 6) Reflect on what the future of our church holds. How will you faithfully live into the mission, where Christ himself has invited you?
- 7) How might we (as a church community) live more faithfully into this mission?

Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Acts 1:8

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Read the two passages above several times. Underline any words or phrases that you feel the Spirit nudging you to explore more deeply.