

# Weekly Study Guide

January 15, 2017

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Desire to ask Pastor Steve a question about today's message? Contact him at 651.429.5349 x215 or [sturnbull@flcwb.org](mailto:sturnbull@flcwb.org).

## Daily Readings

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### **Monday**

Psalms 73-74

### **Thursday**

Psalms 79-83

### **Tuesday**

Psalms 75-77

### **Friday**

Psalms 84-87

### **Wednesday**

Psalms 78

### **Saturday**

Psalms 88-89

*Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.*

# Group Discussion Guide

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## CONNECT

Each person choose one to answer:

- What's a mistake you've made you've learned from (big or little is okay!)?
- What's a quirky or unique habit of yours?

## LEARN AND APPLY

If you had to make a short list of the things that matter most in life, what things would be at or near the the top of that list? Why do these things matter so much?

The ancient Israelites reflected their belief about the purpose of human life in the creation story in Genesis 1. **Read Genesis 1:26-31.**

- According to v. 26, what is humanity's first relationship and why does that matter?
- In that same verse, what is humanity's job, even before "be fruitful and multiply?"
- The next chapters describe the sin of humanity as a failure to worship and serve God; a choice to serve other priorities before him. How do you think a person could tell when something has become too important in life, when it threatens to become a kind of god for us?
- What things may have become too important in your life? What is the practical danger of allowing this to happen?

It is possible for our relationships to become an idol for us, but the Bible sees them as an environment where we can serve and love God. **Read Ephesians 5:18-22, 25.** You may notice that wives and husbands are given different kinds of instructions in this passage; reflecting language that was common in the 1st century. Our focus in this study is on the central instructions given to both.

- The overriding instruction in this passage is found in v. 18. Everything else is a subheading under this (even though that's hard to see in most English translations). What are we supposed to do?
- The command to both husbands and wives is summed up in 5:21. What is the work of the Spirit according to this verse?
- This kind of thing will play out in particular ways in marriages, but self-sacrifice for others is a Christian way of life in general. (And this same principle is applied to other callings in Ephesians 6:1-9.) In your relationships, where have you seen anyone do this well?
- What makes it hard to put the needs and blessings of others ahead of ourselves?
- Where do you feel challenged to submit or sacrifice your personal agenda for the good of someone else in your relationships right now?

Like Jesus, the apostle Paul was probably never married. In some passages he extols the benefits of marriage. In others he describes the goodness of singleness. Each passage must be read in light of the others. **Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-35.**

- What does Paul say is good about singleness?
- What do you think about this? Do you have any experience with this in your group?
- Just as single people can learn from the principles applied to marriage in Ephesians 5, so married people can also learn from this passage addressed to singles. How might people also be concerned about the affairs of the Lord in their marriages?

## PRAY

Pray for one another in your group to know that each is loved by God and to learn to offer the love of God to others in your relationships.