



FUEL

PHILIPPIANS

A LETTER OF
ENCOURAGEMENT



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Rootworks: Vol. 1
Philippians
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Philippians
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Getting Started

We are so excited that you have chosen to be a part of Discipleship Community! It is our prayer that God will use this study to deepen your relationship with Him. The contents of this material include core truths that we want you to learn so that you will have a firm foundation in your faith. The goal is for you to begin Discipleship Community your seventh-grade year and continue the series until you graduate from high school. This book will lead you to take time each day to read God's Word and to pray.

Plan on spending 15 — 30 minutes each day of the week with God. This spiritual discipline will help you to grow to be more and more like Jesus Christ. In this book, we have used the English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV). Please keep this version of the Bible nearby while doing this study, or refer to an online Bible, such as the one at www.biblegateway.com.

This material is written based upon our Life In Christ Essentials here at Carmel. The Essentials are the core principles and truths that we want every follower to live out in Christ.

LIFE IN CHRIST ESSENTIALS

Scripture

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Authentic Faith

2 Corinthians 5:7 states, "for we walk by faith, not by sight."

Obedient Follower

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

Disciple Maker

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."

Generous Living

Mark 9:35 "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

Transformational Community

John 15:12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

We are confident that God will amaze you as you get to know Him through these studies. It has been a great joy to write these books, knowing that you will get to know the one true God in a deeper way!

WEEK

1

Greetings and Thanksgiving

PHILIPPIANS

1:1-8

GREETING

Read Philippians 1:1-2.

Describe a present-day servant. Give some specific examples.

The Greek word “servant” has a two-fold meaning as follows:

SLAVE — A PERSON WHO COMPLETELY BELONGS TO HIS OWNER
AND HAS NO FREEDOM TO LEAVE.

SERVANT — A PERSON WHO WILLINGLY CHOOSES TO SERVE HIS MASTER.

Read Exodus 21:1, 5.

Why would a slave want to stay with his master?

Why would Paul call himself a servant or slave of Jesus Christ?

The joy of serving the Lord overflows into his writing to the church in Philippi. Paul wanted to encourage the Philippians to live out their lives as citizens of Heaven, evidenced by a growing commitment to service to God and to one another.

When Paul addresses all the Christians in Philippi he greets them using the words “grace and peace.” “Grace” was a Greek greeting and “peace” was a Hebrew greeting.

GRACE — GOD’S FAVOR IS GIVEN TO SINFUL PEOPLE WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED
OR UNDESERVED FAVOR.

PEACE — THE TOTAL WELL-BEING AND SECURITY THAT ONLY GOD CAN PROVIDE
OR QUIETNESS AND REST FOR AN INDIVIDUAL.

Why would Paul start a letter with this greeting?

THANKSGIVING

Read Philippians 1:3-6.

In verses 3-6 you can sense Paul’s love for these Christians by the way that he writes.

List three examples of Paul's love and concern for the Philippians.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Who is someone in your life that when you think of them, you break out in a prayer of thanksgiving? Why?

Paul specifically affirms the Philippians' partnership with him in his goal to spread the gospel of Christ. He recognizes them for how they have partnered with him from the very beginning.

Read the following verses and describe how the Philippians partnered with Paul to spread the gospel.

Philippians 1:7 —
Philippians 1:19 —
Philippians 1:27 —
Philippians 2:25 —
Philippians 4:3 —
Philippians 4:14-16 —

How do these same methods apply today?

What would it be like to partner with a missionary from the beginning and see the impact they make over a long-term period?

Paul points out that it is not his work, rather, it is God who has done and will complete the work when Jesus returns.

Why was Paul is so confident that God will "bring it to completion"?

If you are a follower of Jesus, what "good" work has God started in your life?

Based on these verses (1:3-6), how will you look and act as God continues to work as you walk in fellowship with Jesus?

Read Philippians 1:7-8.

Based on several references within this letter, we know that when Paul was going through some difficult times. The Christians at Philippi helped him with money, housing and sending people to encourage him. This is especially important because he was imprisoned for sharing the message of Jesus.

How do you like to be treated during difficult times?

How was their response an act of spiritual maturity?

Describe how it is easy or difficult for you to help your friends during their difficult times?

Describe your actions, or lack thereof, demonstrate the impact Jesus has made in your life.

Think of a specific friend that needs your help. List three ways you could care for them this next week.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

NOW WHAT?

Who is someone that encourages you? Have you ever told this person? Write them a note and let them know you appreciate them.

Reread Philippians 1:1-8 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

What is one area of your life that you'd like God to focus His attention on?

GOING DEEPER

What is sanctification?

How do you know God isn't done with you yet?

Christians will be made complete one day according to Philippians 1:6. What would the finished product look like in your life?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 1:6

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source or reason for the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each time prayer is mentioned.

Who is the person praying for?

ASK

How can you pray this prayer for someone in your life?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark something God reveals to you that is important in red.

Why did you find that part of passage important?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just marked?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

2

Progress in the Faith

PHILIPPIANS

1:9-18

PRAYER

After his initial greeting Paul broke out into prayer for the Christians in Philippi. Paul's prayer for the Philippians is much more than asking God for good health and wealth. Paul chooses to pray for things that have eternal value.

Read Philippians 1:9-11.

Describe why Paul's prayer is directed toward things of eternal value.

What does knowledge and discernment have to do with love?

How does abounding in love with knowledge and discernment relate to you being pure, blameless, bearing fruit and glorifying God?

Read Galatians 5:22-25.

Paul understood that an individual could not do these things on his or her own. Moral discipline without the Holy Spirit will lead to failure. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that produces these virtues.

Using verses 9-11 as an example of a prayer, spend a few minutes pray for the person to your left. An example is provided below:

Father, I pray that your love will continue to grow in (insert name here) each day. I also pray that (insert name here) would follow through with wise actions that would truly benefit others and glorify God. Give (insert name here) wisdom to determine what is excellent. May (insert name here) live out joyful obedience and be found by you to be pure and blameless. I pray that fruit of the Spirit will evident in (insert name here)'s life. Ultimately, may You be glorified because of (insert name here).

THE ADVANCE OF THE GOSPEL

Read Philippians 1:12-14.

Describe three things that happened as a result of Paul's imprisonment?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Read Isaiah 55:8-9.

What does Paul's experience say about how God can work through difficult circumstances?

Read Romans 8:28.

How does Paul's experience relate to Romans 8:28?

Paul realized that the Philippians were grieved over his imprisonment, so he encouraged them by pointing out that his circumstances furthered the proclamation of the gospel. His imprisonment led others to be confident in the Lord. That confidence produced boldness to no longer fear man. Paul's joy in difficult circumstances is meant to be an example to the Philippians to likewise rejoice even in difficult times.

Read Genesis 50:15-21.

Sometimes it is really hard to see how God is working through our difficult circumstances. Joseph experienced some significant highs and lows throughout his life. However, he remained faithful to God. God ended up using him save nations of people from starvation.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-11.

Most likely you have experienced disappointment, heartache, pain, loss, and other afflictions. God uses those circumstances in your life so that you can extend his grace to others in their times of need. Sharing one another's burdens is a part of being the body of Christ.

How might God use your personal difficult circumstances or past trials to care for others and glorify God? Be specific.

Read Philippians 1:15-18.

Paul is talking about two types of preaching being conducted while he's in jail. One group has sincere motives while the other group has greedy motives. These other preachers are not to be viewed as being heretical. Their message of Jesus crucified and raised was true. The objectivity of the gospel message is true apart from those who proclaim it. Paul recognizes the mixed motives but he's thrilled the message of Christ is getting out regardless of motives.

How do we see evidence of this today?

Repetition in writing was an important method to prove a point or a key idea for Paul. In verse 9 Paul prays for their love to abound more and more with knowledge and discernment. In verse 16 Paul sites the reasoning others preach from a good will is because of love. This is further proof that the Christians in Philippi need to grow in their love with knowledge and discernment.

Why does it require love and discernment to know those who preach out of a good will vs. envy and rivalry?

What can an individual do when he/she recognizes impure motives?

What is an area of your life where you find yourself with impure motives on a regular basis?

How difficult is to rejoice and be glad when a task you were working hard on got accomplished by someone else and they got the credit?

Did their work benefit you in any way?

Paul had a great spiritual outlook even in his bad situation. He trusted God was still good and the goal of the gospel being advanced would happen anyway. That kind of trust is a true mark of progress in faith.

NOW WHAT?

Read 1 Corinthians 13.

Describe an area of love that you need to grow.

What is something that Paul writes from the passage today that excites you, inspires you, confuses you or convicts you?

Reread Philippians 1:9-18 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

Do you know any Christians who could be described as pure? What is it about that person that is attractive to you?

How do their actions spur you on toward love and good deeds?

How does your dependence on God change in difficult circumstances? Why?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 1:18

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each sin or bad example and summarize it below.

Do you need to ask forgiveness for this kind of sin or bad example?

ASK

What will it take for you to forsake this sin or example in your future?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each time prayer is mentioned.

Who is the person praying for?

ASK

How can you pray this prayer for someone in your life?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

3

Serve as Role Models

PHILIPPIANS

1:19-30

TO LIVE IS CHRIST

Read Philippians 1:19-26.

The conditions of imprisonment, with all its associated anguish and persecution, form a real temptation for Paul to abandon the gospel and his firm service for Christ. However, Jesus was the source of Paul's continual joy and meaning for his life. Paul knew that either he would be set free or he was going to be sentenced to death, and that would free him to be with Jesus. Paul's generous attitude toward others who made life hard for him also functions as a model for all Christians.

Why do you think Paul had such a great attitude while he was in jail?

What would it take for you to get to the point in your spiritual maturity where you would say, "everything God wants to do in and through me will be done?"

How is Paul's attitude a reflection of his statement in verse six?

How will Jesus be honored if Paul lives?

How will Jesus be honored if Paul dies?

Paul's imprisonment became his platform because he preached while he was there. Paul understood Jesus' command of as you go...make disciples.

What platform has God given you? What message are you "preaching?"

Read Romans 10:14-15.

Does sharing your faith require words? Yes, it does and it is a privilege! Paul's attitude in Philippians is pretty amazing! He's saying, "If I'm alive I can preach . . . if I'm dead I get to be with God. I can't lose!" This passage clearly teaches that when believers die they are with Jesus.

Why do you think it was such a hard choice for Paul to decide between life in heaven or on earth?

How do you think someone gets to the point in his/her life where all they think about is being with Jesus?

How does a person get courage like Paul's?

Read Daniel 3:18.

It required great trust to respond to King Nebuchadnezzar like that. Their courage, like Paul's, came from a faithful relationship with God. Being scared or depressed in bad circumstances is normal. However, through the Holy Spirit and others lifting us up prayer we too can have an courage like Paul. God simply asks us to be faithful. He will bring the success.

WORTHY CITIZENS

Read Philippians 1:27-30.

MANNER — GREEK WORD "POLIS" WHICH MEANS TO LIVE AS A CITIZEN OR CITY-STATE.

The English word politics comes from polis. The war veterans in Philippi were proud of their city, and even prouder that they were citizens of the most important "polis" (city-state) in their world: Rome. Paul wants his readers to think of themselves not just as citizens of Philippi or Rome, but above all as citizens of God's kingdom. He wants their manner of life to be worthy of their citizenship in God's kingdom.

What is the measurement used to evaluate behavior?

What does it require of you so that what others say about you is the same if they see you in person or only hear about you?

Paul wants his readers to work together by fearlessly standing firm in one spirit to spread the truth about Jesus. What reasons does he give for doing this?

How can standing firm through suffering without fear be a clear sign of your salvation to others?

Why do you think it is important for a church to stay united and all be following the same purposes?

When Paul refers to “the same conflict” he is writing about persecution that some Christians in Philippi were going through. This persecution was a result of their faith.

WHEREVER CHRISTIANS WILL LIVE AS THEY OUGHT TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD,
WHERE THEY WILL LIVE RIGHTEOUS LIVES AND AGGRESSIVELY SEEK TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL,
IN THAT PLACE THERE WILL BE PERSECUTION. THIS IS TRUE FOR ALL CHRISTIANS.
IF YOU BEAR A PROPER WITNESS FOR JESUS CHRIST, AS GOD INTENDS YOU TO DO,
THERE WILL BE PERSECUTION FOR YOU.
—DOUG FIELDS

What is your response to that quote?

Throughout chapter one Paul has been talking about the way he’s dealing with his condition, and he is encouraging his friends in Philippi to deal with their difficulties the same way. He is essentially saying four things:

- I’m finding the courage to deal with opposition; be courageous.
- I don’t let petty stuff with other Christians get to me; please don’t let it get to you either.
- I’m not wrapped up in myself; my focus is the glory of God.
- I treat you as partners; stand firm together as one.

In fact, he doesn’t just want them to be like him; he wants them to be like Jesus.

NOW WHAT?

How could a current situation you are facing honor Jesus and spread the gospel?

If you were given an opportunity to speak about it what would you say?

Reread Philippians 1:19-30 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

Read Philippians 1:12-26.

Describe the reasons why Paul is not depressed about his circumstance.

Have you ever known someone who looked at death like Paul? Describe what they were like.

How does Paul order the importance of himself, God and others?

How do your priorities stack up against Paul's?

Answer the following question: "For me to live in such a way that I promote the message of Jesus I would need to . . ."

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 1:21

REAP

DAY

1

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

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3

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each time prayer is mentioned.

Who is the person praying for?

ASK

How can you pray this prayer for someone in your life?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

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5

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

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Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

4

Exalted as Lord and Christ

PHILIPPIANS

2:1-13

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

Read Philippians 2:1-4.

Paul asks his readers to follow through with eight actions. List these eight actions and circle the three that need the most work in your life.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)

What is the basis for doing these actions?

In Paul's teaching, encouragement, comfort, fellowship with one another through the Holy Spirit, affection and sympathy are basic realities of salvation in Jesus. These benefits and fruits of salvation flow out of a personal relationship with Christ.

Read John 17:21.

Jesus asks the Father that all Christians will be one. Our unity is a reflection of the unity that has existed eternally between the Father and the Son. The purpose of unity is so the world may believe the gospel message. Paul asked his readers to have the same mind and purpose to fulfill Jesus' desire for unity.

Paul goes on to share how believers can accomplish this task. He warns them to not do things out of envy and selfishness. He also emphasizes humility is required to achieve unity.

HUMILITY — A MODEST OR LOW VIEW OF ONE'S OWN IMPORTANCE.

Why do you think humility is a marker of spiritual maturity?

In Scripture, humility is an inside-out virtue produced by comparing ourselves to the Lord rather than to others. This keeps one from being self-exalting. For the believer, humility means living in complete dependence on the Lord, without any reliance on yourself (the flesh).

When do you struggle the most at laying down your own desires?

Humility is not feeling worthless. Jesus didn't feel worthless. In fact, he knew that his life mattered for our eternity. Jesus was humble in deciding not to obsess about himself or insist on his rights. There was no reason for him to be hung on a cross to die. He chose to lay his life down so that we could have eternal life.

Read Philippians 2:5-8.

How is Jesus a model of humility?

Read John 1:14.

Why would Paul make such big deal about God becoming human?

What rights did Jesus put aside when he became human? What rights did he put aside when he let people kill him?

As a follower of Jesus according to verse five, why are you capable of living in humility like Jesus?

List three things that Jesus did that you could also do according to verses 5-8.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Read Matthew 6:25-34.

Based on the Philippians 2:5-8 and Matthew 6: 25-34, do you believe God can relate to and understand your human needs? Why or why not?

Read Philippians 2:9-11.

How did God reward Jesus' obedience?

Why will all created beings bow in worship before Jesus?

LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

Read Philippians 2:12-13.

After reminding his readers how Jesus lived, Paul encourages the Philippians to live in obedience now that he was away from them. We have the same call to action as followers of Jesus today.

Do you need encouragement to live in obedience to Christ's teachings? How are you getting that encouragement?

Who is someone in your life that can encourage you on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis? Have you told this person of your need for accountability? Why? Why not?

How would you describe salvation?

Why should you be enthusiastic about your salvation?

Paul says God works in you to will what is good (2:13). That means he influences your desires, goals, and even choices. Have you ever been aware of God doing that?

- A) I'm aware of it and you can provide an example.
- B) God does it and you just don't notice.
- C) God tries to do it but you don't cooperate.
- D) God doesn't do it.

How do you know that God is working in your life?

Bottom line, kingdom citizens look at life the way Jesus lived and choose to imitate him. When we choose to live like him we are living out our salvation for the world to see.

NOW WHAT?

What part of the mind-set of a kingdom citizen would you most like to grow? For instance, unity, unselfishness, humility, getting over yourself, not being afraid share your faith, etc.

What practical step can you take to build that mind-set?

Ask God to help you notice what other people need and how you can serve them.

Reread Philippians 2:1-13 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

Who is someone you know that fits that description of humility? Write a note of encouragement to them.

Philippians 2:13 states that God works in you. Describe your responsibility in working out what God works in. What are some ways you can do that?

Why is it important to share with others how God is working in your life?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 2:3

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each sin or bad example and summarize it below.

Do you need to ask forgiveness for this kind of sin or bad example?

ASK

What will it take for you to forsake this sin or example in your future?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

5

Promoting the Gospel

PHILIPPIANS

2:14-30

LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

Scripture clearly communicates that works cannot earn salvation. Salvation is a gift through Christ Jesus. However, an individual's salvation does express spiritual growth and development as the believer pursues his or her relationship with Jesus. It is an ongoing process to be done in fear and trembling. Not because of doubt or anxiety, rather, an active reverence and focus in response to God's grace. To this point, Paul goes on to list some things involved in working out our salvation.

Read Philippians 2:14-16.

Why would Paul ask Christians to do everything without complaining or arguing?

What reasoning does Paul give for not grumbling or disputing?

What is the result when people mutter and quarrel within the church?

How can you provide your family and friends with a glimpse of God by following Paul's command?

Read Matthew 5:14-16.

What does it mean to shine as lights in the world? What does it require of you?

How does light dispel the darkness?

What is the ultimate purpose for you to be a light in the world?

Paul doesn't expect sinless perfection in this life. He is talking about wholehearted commitment to living according to God's good purpose. Thankfully Paul gives us a method of how can we shine in a dark world? He commands us to hold onto the word of life.

Read Psalm 119:9-11.

Based on what you have read and learned in Philippians, is Paul being prideful about his reputation in his concern of laboring in vain or showing his depth of concern for the Philippians?

Read Philippians 2:17-18.

Paul is probably referring to his present imprisonment as a drink offering, which may end in a martyr's death. When animal sacrifices were offered in Jewish or Roman temples, wine was poured over the animal before it was burned (Exodus 29:38-41). For Paul, Jesus is the main sacrifice and Paul is just the wine that is added. Even facing death Paul rejoiced and encouraged the Philippians to do the same.

REJOICE — FEEL OR SHOW GREAT JOY OR DELIGHT.

What does it require to rejoice?

Why can Paul rejoice in jail while facing possible execution?

How is Paul's joy an example for you?

TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS

Read Philippians 2:19-24.

Paul trusts the Lord for the opportunity to send Timothy. The purpose for sending Timothy is so he may be encouraged when he hears reports of their lives in Christ.

Why do you think a pastor wants to see his people grow?

Paul introduces his friend Timothy and comments on his genuine love for God. List a few terms that Paul uses to describe Timothy.

What similarities do you see between how Paul describes Timothy in Philippians 2:20-22 and Philippians 2:2-4?

How would someone that knows you well describe your relationship with God?

Read Philippians 2:25-30.

Since Paul couldn't send Timothy right away he sent Epaphroditus. List three things Epaphroditus did for Paul.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What types of qualities or attitudes does each of Epaphroditus actions require?

Why do you think Timothy and Epaphroditus are so important to Paul's work?

Are you a "Timothy" or "Epaphroditus" to anyone's work?

If not, is there any ministry or minister that you can help? What's an action plan to help you get started?

Sometimes people think of working out their salvation in simplistic terms, like, "seeking other people's interests/ Sure, no problem. I'll start doing that now. Next question." However, often it's not so easy. Our ingrained self-focus can make it hard to be aware of what others think and feel and need. Even when we're aware, sacrificing our own needs is painful, and something inside us makes excuses.

On the other hand, some of us are so routinely self-sacrificing that we are hardly have a self at all. Being invisible or playing the martyr isn't what Paul has in mind. He doesn't play the martyr; he lets Timothy and Epaphroditus serve him. However, he doesn't let Epaphroditus just keep on serving even when he's sick.

We need each other, just as the Philippians needed each other, and just as Paul needed Timothy and his friends from Philippi. We called and chosen to be partners in the in proclaiming the gospel.

NOW WHAT?

What opportunities for humble sacrifice, looking to others' interests, or giving up grumbling and arguing do you have in your current situations?

Reread Philippians 2:14-30 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

What quality of Timothy or Epaphroditus do you especially admire?

Is this a quality you would like to have more of? Why or why not?

Read Galatians 6:1-5, Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:24-25 and James 5:16, 19-20.

How do these passages illustrate how a group of Christians can help each other work out their salvation?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 2:14

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each sin or bad example and summarize it below.

Do you need to ask forgiveness for this kind of sin or bad example?

ASK

What will it take for you to forsake this sin or example in your future?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

6

Saved by Faith Alone

PHILIPPIANS

3:1-11

RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST

The topics taken up in the start of this chapter are most likely something that Paul dealt with verbally when he was in Philippi or perhaps in an earlier letter. Paul is purposeful in repeating himself because he knows that there is safety in repetition for his readers.

Read Philippians 3:1-6.

Paul uses some severe language to describe the false teachers who were trying to steer the Christians away from Paul's original teaching. Paul's use of harsh words shows the seriousness of the errors and how destructive this false teaching they were hearing could be if they accept it.

What is a present-day example of a false teacher who is leading Christ-followers away from the truth?

How can you protect yourself from false teachers?

It may seem strange to read the words "circumcise or circumcision" in the Bible, but there was a significant spiritual meaning attached to circumcised Jews in the Old Testament. To be Jewish, a male has to have his foreskin cut away. This procedure is called circumcision, and it's usually done when the baby is eight days old.

For Jewish people, circumcision has a symbolic, spiritual meaning demonstrating that the man's whole life, even the most personal part, is set apart for God. Today lots of male babies are circumcised for various reasons, but in Paul's day only Jews did it. It's a painful procedure for an adult, and it was very much contrary to the culture of non-Jewish people in Philippi. Therefore, it would seriously limit evangelism if men thought they had to be circumcised in order to be real followers of Jesus.

Paul goes as far as to say these false teachers mutilate the flesh. Again a strong, painfully vivid term to illustrate that the false teachers had so distorted the meaning of circumcision that it had become nothing more than a useless cutting of the body.

When Paul says, "We are the circumcision," he means that true followers of Jesus have had their hearts circumcised (set apart), and that signifies faith in God for Gentiles (non-Jews) who normally weren't circumcised.

Are there things that have come to you naturally—from the body you were born with, from your family or culture, or from your natural talents—that you tend to look to for confidence or to boast about? If so, what are they?

Paul tries to show, by his own example, that if godliness had to do with impressive credentials or following the rules he has more reason to brag that anyone. Below is the list that Paul gives. Next to each credential write a present day “rule” that someone might try to keep to “earn” their way to God.

Paul's Credentials

- Legitimate Jewish birth.
- Circumcised on the eighth day.
- From an elite tribe.
- A strict and devout follower of the Law.
- A strong defender of purity.

What Looks Good for Christians Today

Paul's confidence completely changes from his perfect legalistic approach to the law as his righteousness to his complete confidence in Jesus alone for his salvation and righteousness.

Read Philippians 3:7-11.

Paul's Jewish heritage isn't bad. In fact, it gives him an understanding of the Old Testament that helps him teach so well about Jesus. The same is true if you have grown up in a Christian home or if you were dedicated to the Lord as a child. These things are gifts and they are good.

Why does he consider what he has gained to be “loss” or “rubbish?” What does he value more?

Before becoming a Christian, what are a few things you thought were significant that are no longer essential?

Knowing Jesus is not just a mere knowledge of facts, but also knowledge gained through experiencing God and his surpassing greatness. This is what transforms the individual. Paul doesn't view his life now as a Christian simply preferable or a better alternative than any other way of life; in contrast, his former way of life was worthless and despicable to him now. He recognized that being united with Jesus was not merely something that happened in the past, it is a present, continuing relationship.

RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE QUALITY OF BEING MORALLY RIGHT WITH GOD.

The temptation for the Philippians was to seek righteousness by obeying Old Testament laws according to the customs of Jewish subculture.

Why do you think Paul was opposed to making a religion out of rules?

Read Matthew 23.

How is Paul's response similar to Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees?

What are some wrong ways of seeking relationship with God you might be tempted by?

Look at the things Paul says he wants in Philippians 3:10-11. Which of them do you want?

Are there any you don't want or you're not sure about? Why do you suppose Paul wants those things?

Paul wanted to know Christ personally. He didn't want to focus on following rules and rituals. He wanted to embrace Jesus and be embraced by Him. There is a real cost to what Paul is asking here, and we shouldn't pretend otherwise.

What would it look like for you to "embrace Christ and be embraced by Him?" Where does this embracing take place?

Complete the following sentence: "Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Lord, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is . . . "

NOW WHAT?

What are some things that are too important (and should be gone) that keep you from growing in Christ?

What's your plan to get rid of these? Who is going to hold you accountable to this plan?

Reread Philippians 3:1-11 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

PRAYER:

Ask God to stir up in you a desire to know Jesus that is stronger than every other desire.

How would that make your life better?

Are there ways it might make your life more challenging?

Read Luke 9:22-26; John 12:23-26; Romans 6:5-10; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18.

Why can't Paul experience Jesus' resurrection without sharing in his suffering and death? Is it the same for you?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 3:8

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

1

READ

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EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

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EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

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REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

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EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

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REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

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REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

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EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

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REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each sin or bad example and summarize it below.

Do you need to ask forgiveness for this kind of sin or bad example?

ASK

What will it take for you to forsake this sin or example in your future?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

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WEEK

7

One Day at a Time

PHILIPPIANS

3:12-19

STRAINING TOWARD THE GOAL

Read Philippians 3:12-16.

For the convenience of studying Scripture, we chop a book of the Bible into manageable pieces, but the writer didn't write verses or chapters. He wrote a whole letter, and it's important to keep checking in with what the current passage has to do with what went before.

What are the five things that Paul referring to "obtaining this?"

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

How does it make you feel to know that the apostle Paul doesn't have it all together when it comes to following Christ?

At Carmel we say that life in Christ is a journey. What are we trying to communicate?

The Life in Christ essentials are a list of priorities and characteristics that are evident in the life a believer. We see each of these lived out in the life of Jesus. They answer two questions: 1) What do we learn? 2) How do we live?

LIFE IN CHRIST ESSENTIALS

- Scripture
- Prayer
- Authentic Faith
- Obedient Follower
- Disciple Maker
- Generous Living
- Transformational Community

What does Paul consider the goal when he says he is pressing on toward the goal?

Circle where you consider yourself along this journey?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| A) At the beginning. | D) Somewhere in the middle. |
| B) Off the path. | E) Running strong with my eye on the goal. |
| C) Moving slowly but moving. | F) Near perfection. |

Paul's goal reflects Jesus' goal and he knows that God is the one who works in him to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Why does Paul choose to forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead?

What are the past failures or troubles that you keep looking back at even though you've been forgiven?

What can you do to move forward?

Paul encourages Christians to keep focused on the goal and to stay on the right path. We must be careful to not become complacent with where we are in our walk with Jesus. Paul is clear in his statements that he and his readers haven't reached such spiritual perfection that they have no room to grow, and those who are mature—who have a somewhat perfected character—should remember this about themselves.

Read Proverbs 1:5-7.

What will it take in your life to respond this way?

It's easy to think that pressing on toward the goal is something you do on your own. The point isn't to get yourself across the finish line and forget about others. Part of pressing ahead is helping others move forward as well.

How can we, as fellow Christians, stick to the path and run together in this journey?

How does it encourage you that God doesn't just reveal himself to the brilliant mature Christian?

How does the following quote relate to Philippians 3:16?

WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE TO LIVE OUT THE TRUTH WE KNOW.
—DOUG FIELDS

Read Philippians 3:17-19.

Paul encourages his readers to imitate him and others that are living according to God's word. It should be inspiring to us that there are faithful examples of Christ-followers to encourage us.

According to verse 18, how would you describe today's "enemies of the cross of Christ"?

Think of some friends who have chosen other goals and try to get you to "run" with them. What do you do when this happens?

Warning Against Three Kinds of People:

1) Those who their god is their belly — The belly or stomach is used as an illustration of where their desires or deep self-centeredness come from.

What beliefs and messages in your world encourage people to do this?

How do people act when their desires are their god?

2) Those who their glory is their shame — These were the people who determined their righteousness through strict observance of the law. They would often boast about it.

3) Those who have their minds on earthly things — These are the people who have set their minds on the things of this life. They are opposite of those that follow the law perfectly. They choose to live for whatever pleasures this world has to offer.

What is the final result of living life as "enemies of the cross of Christ"?

According to Paul, we can drift into being the kind of people whose god is their desires, or we can aim passionately at being citizens of God's kingdom, of heaven. Heaven isn't just about what will happen after we die. It's also about who we're being and becoming right now.

NOW ALL I HAVE, I COUNT IT ALL AS LOSS,
KNOWING I'M FOUND IN THE LIGHT OF THE AFTERMATH
—HILLSONG

NOW WHAT?

PRAYER:

Talk with God about your desires. Some may be good, others okay, others not so good, but they are your desires, so you need to deal with them. Figure out what they are and write them in the space below.

Ask God what he wants you to do with each of your desires. Some of them might be good things you should ask, and keep on asking, Him to fulfill. They may be things God has put into your heart to pursue. Others he may be asking you to let them go for your own benefit.

Who do you look up to as someone who is running toward the prize in Jesus? Write a note of encouragement to them.

Reread Philippians 3:12-19 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

How does Philippians 1:6 relate to Philippians 3:16?

A lot of the time, choices come to us in shades of gray. It's not always clear if a choice is good or bad. We may have to choose the best (or even the least bad) of several imperfect options. And in the moment, it's often hard to discern what will eventually turn out to be the best choice.

Describe how you can prepare yourself for these difficult circumstances.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 3:14

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each sin or bad example and summarize it below.

Do you need to ask forgiveness for this kind of sin or bad example?

ASK

What will it take for you to forsake this sin or example in your future?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

3

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark something God reveals to you that is important in red.

Why did you find that part of passage important?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just marked?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

8

Maintaining Joy

PHILIPPIANS

3:20-4:9

STRAINING TOWARD THE GOAL

Read Philippians 3:20-21.

For the convenience of studying Scripture, we chop a book of the Bible into manageable pieces, but the writer didn't write verses or chapters. He wrote a whole letter, and it's important to keep checking in with what the current passage has to do with what went before. Paul offers an alternative to living for something much more than one's own desires, rules or earthly pleasures.

Paul says that Christians have a different citizenship. Why is this important?

How does knowing you are a citizen of heaven impact your outlook on life?

How should heavenly citizenship affect your behavior, priorities, attitude, relationships, and goals?

What will happen when Jesus returns?

Paul thinks our bodies are important. Being spiritual for him doesn't mean living just from the neck up. He's not looking forward to a heaven where we leave bodies behind and just float around as souls. He's looking forward to a heaven where we have glorious bodies like the one Jesus has had ever since He rose from the dead.

Investigate what your body might be like when it's transformed. Read the following Scriptures that describe Jesus' appearances after He was raised from the dead.

Read Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-27 and 1 Corinthians 15:35-49.

EXHORTATION, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND PRAYER

Read Philippians 4:1-3.

How does Paul suggest that we stand firm in the Lord?

Paul gets specific when he chooses to address two women in the church who seem to be in conflict. We do not know why they are in conflict. However, it is obviously serious enough to be mentioned by Paul, especially since this letter would be read publically.

It is critical to notice that Paul does not take a side but encourages others closer to the situation to help promote reconciliation. He has full expectancy that the situation can be reconciled.

Why doesn't God want Christians holding grudges?

How does Philippians 2:2 relate to 4:2?

When you're in conflict with another Christian, whose responsibility is it to reconcile the conflict?

Paul encourages a "true companion" (a guy actually named Syzygus) to help them resolve conflict. When is it appropriate to ask for help in resolving conflict?

Read Philippians 4:4-9.

Look up the following Scriptures in and describe what gives Paul joy?

- A) Philippians 1:18-19 —
- B) Philippians 2:2 —
- C) Philippians 2:28-29 —
- D) Philippians 4:1 —
- E) Philippians 4:10 —

What messages do you get from the world around you about what supposedly gives people joy?

How are these things like or unlike the things that give Paul joy?

A reasonable person looks at things from the other person's point of view and keeps the other person's needs in mind. Reasonable people stand firm on moral principles but don't demand to have their own way in other areas. They don't strike back when provoked, not because they're weak or afraid, but because they're not wrapped up in looking like their reputation.

How would reasonableness help a person have joy?

How does Paul suggest we deal with our wants and needs?

How would his suggestion make it easier to have joy?

Anxiety could be defined by self-centered counterproductive worry. Anxiety and prayer are opposing forces in the Christian experience.

List some things you've been worrying about lately.

What formula does Paul give when we are anxious?

What qualities of God can you think about when you begin to worry?

Paul's prayer in Philippians 1:9-11 is now reflected as a command in 4:8-9 to encourage us to be aware of filling our minds with good things.

According to Philippians 4:8, what are we to fill our minds with?

**How does verses 8-9 provide a filter for the things you watch, listen to, speak and read about?
How does it help filter your actions?**

Again Paul encourages them to imitate him. From what you have read and learned is Paul conceited or worthy of imitating?

NOW WHAT?

If you could live more like a citizen of heaven in one way this week what would it be?

What are some practical things you can do to pursue joy?

Reread Philippians 3:20-4:9 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

When it comes to standing "firm in the Lord," are you more on track this year than you were last year? Why or why not?

List ten things about God that are worthy of your praise:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)

List three specific ways you can celebrate God every day:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 4:8

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each command/teaching and summarize it below.

Is this command for only back then or also for you today?

ASK

How will your future be different if you obey this command/teaching?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

3

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each time prayer is mentioned.

Who is the person praying for?

ASK

How can you pray this prayer for someone in your life?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

9

Met With Joy

PHILIPPIANS

4:10-23

GOD'S PROVISION

Read Philippians 4:10-14.

Paul concludes this letter by thanking the Philippians for their support. Paul genuinely appreciated the financial gift. He goes on to express he has learned to be content. Ultimately, he was not dependent on them; his trust was in the Lord even in horrible conditions.

CONTENT—SUFFICIENT, COMPLETE, SATISFIED WITH WHAT YOU HAVE.

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-33.

List at least 8 ways Paul was persecuted or endured hardships.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)

How do you think Paul's use of his own advice in Philippians 4:8 impacts his attitude in 12-13?

How do you think Paul goes about staying connected to Jesus so that he can receive this strength?

Paul knows he's not able to have this outlook on life just by trying. Jesus gives him the strength to find joy in the right things and to have contentment and peace.

Read 1 Timothy 6:6-12, 17-19.

How can Paul's attitude of joy and contentment challenge your wants?

Explain why it is possible to be discontent even in prosperity.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.

What is the secret to being content?

Do you think there is an issue with contentment in our society?

Describe some ways that Christians can set an example for the world about contentment.

Read Philippians 4:15-23.

Paul says that the church of Philippi was the only church to support his missionary work. With today's missionaries it might not be that much different—only having the support of one church.

Based on what you have read and learned about Paul, was he really after, the financial gift, or the fruit of saving lost souls?

Why do you think Christians love to send missionaries out to the mission field but so many missionaries have a tough time raising money?

Do you have any opportunities where you can financially help some missionaries? If yes, how?

What about helping with the needs of local Christians in need? Who are they? How do you find out their needs?

FRAGRANT OFFERING—AN OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-10.

How does this passage help you understand how to give beyond your tithe for missions?

Paul tells the Christians that their generosity will be rewarded. How do you think this will happen?

The exhortation to greet every saint at the end of Paul's letter reinforces the personal nature of Paul's communication and shows that the truths of the letter were to be lived out by real people in the real world. Since this is the last lesson in this study. Spend time together talking about how this study has encouraged you in your walk with Jesus.

Look back at your whole study of Philippians. If someone asked you how a citizen of God's kingdom lives, what are some things you would say?

Describe two specific ways you have been encouraged?

Has your small group changed in any ways?

How are you doing with treating each other as partners in the gospel?

How can this group help you as you move forward in following Jesus?

Take some time to pray for each other in the group, one at a time. *Example: Tell God something about this person you're grateful for, and ask him to work in this person to strengthen such things as contentment, peace, discernment and joy.*

NOW WHAT?

When do you struggle with contentment in your life?

How can lack of contentment become a monstrous sin if you don't do something about it now?

Reread Philippians 4:9-23 and summarize the passage in one sentence.

What is one truth you've learned from this lesson? How can you apply this truth to your life?

GOING DEEPER

Take a look at how God was the source of his abiding strength from the following Scripture.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, John 15:5, Ephesians 3:16-17, and Colossians 1:11.

Based on these Scriptures how can God be a source of abiding strength for you?

Do you still have unanswered questions this study raised? If so, what are they? Who can help you answer your questions?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 4:11

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned and summarize why.

Describe the source of the joy.

ASK

How can you face a current circumstance with more joy?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each promise and summarize the promise below.

Is this promise for back then, today or the future?

ASK

If this promise applies to you, how would your future be different if you claim this promise?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark each truth about God and summarize the truth below.

What have you learned about God based on this truth?

ASK

How can you live differently knowing this truth?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As your read, mark each positive example to follow and note whom the example is set by.

Summarize the example and describe what it would take for you to follow this example.

ASK

Ask the Father to grant you the strength to follow this example in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark interactions or attitudes between Christians.

Summarize the attitude or interaction.

ASK

How is God asking you to reflect this attitude or interaction with other believers?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark wherever suffering or hardship is mentioned.

Who is causing the hardship, suffering or persecution?

ASK

How can you apply how the person faced the hardship in one of your present circumstances?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

As you read, mark something God reveals to you that is important in red.

Why did you find that part of passage important?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just marked?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

LOOKING BACK

You have done a great job this semester as you have studied Philippians. It is such a privilege and joy to study Scripture. Take some time to reflect on all that you have learned during this study.

How do you feel now that you have completed this study?

Describe how your future will be impacted because of this study.

So now you are thinking, okay, now that I've completed this study, I know everything I need to know now, right?

Psalm 119:55 says, "In the night I remember your name, O LORD, and I will keep your law." Discipleship isn't about completing a study. It is about a lifestyle of learning and living as you follow Jesus throughout your lifetime. What you have learned throughout this study will become more important to your Christian life in the months, even years, to come. Think about some of the major concepts that you have learned and can live out.

- Practical way to study Scripture.
- The joy of being a servant of Jesus.
- Learned how to pray for others.
- You can approach every situation with joy.
- How to partner with others with the gospel.
- How to care for missionaries.
- Discovered how to discern good and bad through the filter of Scripture.
- Developed community with others that are walking with Jesus.
- Learned the importance of seeing other's needs as your own.
- Discovered that living for Jesus is much better than anything this world could offer.
- Examined your life in order to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.
- Discussed how to live a life of humility that glorifies God.
- Discovered what it means to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.
- Learned how to encourage others in their difficult circumstances.
- Examined the characteristics of false teachers.
- Learned a practical method to laying down your anxiety and worry before God.
- God will provide for your needs and teach you how to be content with plenty or in need.

Wow! That's a lot! Now it's time to continue to live out what you have learned in this study.

APPENDIX 1

BIBLE MARKING PLAN

Seriously, who doesn't love to color? The following categories and Bible marking plan is meant to be a tool for you help understand Scripture as you study. As you study the book of Philippians be on the lookout for the following themes. Use the categories below and colors to mark up the scripture as you study.

Truth About God (purple): Everything you learn about God.

- What is he like? What has he done? What is he doing? What will he do? What pleases him? What displeases him?

Promises (orange): What God is going to do or what is in store for the believer.

- This will often overlap with purple because it answers the question about God "What will he do?" for Christians.

Commands/Teachings (light green): Things TO do.

- Strong or direct instruction or encouragement that is good.

Sins (black): Things NOT to do.

- Specific sins, bad examples or what sin will lead to.

Examples (dark green): Positive examples of loving and faithful service to God.

- Note whose example you are to follow, such as, Paul or Jesus.

Suffering/Hardship (dark blue): Wherever suffering or persecution is mentioned.

Joy (yellow): Wherever joy or rejoicing is mentioned or referenced.

Prayer (light blue): Where prayer or terms/phrases for addressing God are mentioned.

- "I thank my God", "supplication", etc.

Interactions/Attitudes between Christians (brown): When fellowship, partnership, affection for one another, unity, doing something for another is mentioned/encouraged.

PHILIPPIANS 1

Greeting

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

The Advance of the Gospel

¹² I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. ¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

To Live Is Christ

Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

PHILIPPIANS 2

Christ's Example of Humility

¹ So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Lights in the World

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷ Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. ²⁰ For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. ²¹ For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. ²³ I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, ²⁴ and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

²⁵ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹ So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰ for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

PHILIPPIANS 3

Righteousness Through Faith in Christ

¹ Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

² Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. ³ For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴ though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Straining Toward the Goal

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

PHILIPPIANS 4

¹ Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Exhortation, Encouragement, and Prayer

² I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

God's Provision

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and

again. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.



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