



**FUEL**

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# **PHILIPPIANS**

A LETTER OF  
ENCOURAGEMENT



# PHILIPPIANS

## A LETTER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Rootworks: Vol. 1

Philippians

Written by Doug Fields

Philippians

A Double-Edged Bible Study

Think LifeChange

Written by The Navigators

Edited by Joseph McMurry, Ryan Jackson, and Kristen Fairbaugh.

Graphic Design by Ryan Jackson

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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](http://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!

# Greetings and Thanksgiving

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

WEEK

1

## Encouragement

Don't pass up the opportunity to write a personal note of encouragement to the students in your small group during this study.

The apostle Paul wrote over half of the books in the New Testament. In your reading of the NT, you will find that Paul was passionate about God. He not only wanted to live for Christ, he wanted others to know Jesus as well. Paul came from an elite Jewish background and spent several years trying to persecute and destroy the early Christian Church. If you are not aware of how Paul became a Christian, I encourage you to read about his conversion experience in the book of Acts (it's mentioned three times: Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-21; 26:12-18). Once God changed Paul's heart, he was one of God's key instruments in the rise of Christianity and the building of the early Church.

Paul wrote the book of Philippians from a Roman jail cell. The church at Philippi had a special significance for Paul, since it was the first church he founded in Europe (Acts 16:6-40). Paul himself wanted to encourage the Philippians in their faith, and his imprisonment meant he could do that only through a letter. He was eager to thank them for their continued support: imprisonment carried with it a social stigma, and it would have been easy for the Philippians to turn their back on Paul at this point. Yet, they had remained faithful to him.

*Describe the encouragement you would feel due to a letter from a spiritual leader in your life? What would it be like to be a part of a brand new church?*

Paul is above all concerned that the Philippians continue to make progress in their faith (1:25). The Philippians appear to be a healthy congregation. Can they then relax and rest? Paul's answer is an emphatic no. The world is too perilous, and the gospel too glorious, for them to be content with past achievements (3:12-16). They must follow Paul's example and "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:14). Christian maturity does not come through special mystical insights available to only a few, but rather through the patient practice of the familiar virtues of love and service to others. Spiritual progress involves effort: they are encouraged to "work out [their] own salvation with fear and trembling" (2:12). They can do so knowing that "it is God who works in [them], both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (2:13).

Paul expresses, in great detail, his love for his friends. He wants them to know that he loves Jesus, and he wants them to follow and love Jesus too. Paul is filled with the love of Christ and everything else is worthless in comparison. May you find everything in life worthless in comparison to knowing Jesus.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 1:1-11 Greeting and Prayer. Paul greets his readers, expressing his gratitude (vv. 3-6) and affection (vv. 7-8) for them, followed by a prayer that their love would abound and their holiness increase (vv. 9-11).

Phil. 1:1-2 Salutation from Paul and Timothy. Paul, along with Timothy, gives the standard early Christian greeting of grace and peace. Paul does not identify himself as an apostle but designates Timothy and himself as servants. The emphasis on service anticipates the rest of the letter, and this emphasis is seen especially in what is said of the humiliation of Christ Jesus (2:5-11). It is uncer-

## 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.

tain what level of formal church governance is implied by overseers and deacons. The former are presumably elders, who would be charged with spiritual oversight of the congregation (cf. Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; James 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:1–4), while the latter would be entrusted with matters of practical service (cf. Acts 6:1–7; 1 Tim. 3:8–13).

Phil. 1:3–11 Paul’s Thanksgiving and Prayer for the Philippians. Paul’s letters frequently begin with thanksgiving and prayer. The prayer here helps establish the major themes of the letter.

Phil. 1:3–5 Paul prays for the Philippians with joy, a word that will become a keynote theme in ch. 4.

## Point to Make

A slave could go free after six years but if the master treats him well and he wants to stay he could choose to stay under the care of his master. Describe Paul’s knowledge of the ultimate reward found in Christ would make him willingly stay under the care of his master, Jesus.

## Point to Make

Jesus bought Paul with the blood he shed on the cross. God set Paul apart to be his servant according to Romans 1:1.

## Discuss

How would a greeting of “grace and peace” serve as a great reminder the church in Philippi?

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?

## Point to Make

- 1) He is thankful to God for them.
- 2) He prays with joy for them.
- 3) Their partnership in the gospel from the beginning.

## Examples

- 1:7 – Identified with him even in his chains
- 1:19 – Prayed
- 1:27 – They were unified
- 2:25 – They sent one of their own to him
- 4:3 – They served next to him
- 4:14-16 – They sent finances to him

## Interact

Discuss Carmel's mission strategy of "Go, Pray, Give." Talk about missionaries you have partnered with and seen the long-term impact that they have made.

## Point to Make

As a follower of Jesus, the good work that has been started in you is the forgiveness of sin.

This joy springs from their partnership in the gospel, which involves not only their financial support of the apostle (4:15–16) but also their deep personal concern for his well-being.

Phil. 1:6 Paul is sure about God's commitment to the Philippians. The foundation for spiritual growth is recognizing that it is God who began a good work in you and will bring it to completion. Genuine spiritual progress is rooted in what God has done, is doing, and will do. His faithfulness ensures that he will be with believers until Jesus returns (the day of Jesus Christ; cf. 2:16; 1 Thess. 5:2–11; 2 Pet. 3:10–13; Rev. 20:11–21:8). They can have confidence that the God who has saved them will never let them go, and that they will inherit their eternal reward.

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)

## Reference

The church in Philippi was united with Paul according to verse 5. They shared a common goal with Paul.

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Phil. 1:7–8 Again Paul expresses his warm thoughts about the Philippians and the fellowship they enjoy in God's grace. Paul's imprisonment would have been a source of great shame in the ancient world, but the Philippians have nonetheless stood in solidarity with him. This was no doubt an encouragement as he shared the good news with his captors and judges.



## 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

## Prayer

This is a great opportunity for students to pray for one another.

# REAP

DAY

1

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 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

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

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 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 1:1-8

4

## 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

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

7

## 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.



# Progress in the Faith

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-18

WEEK

2

There are eight major themes throughout the book of Philippians. Each of the remaining weeks we will look at a major theme during our opening. This week, the major theme that we can observe from the book of Philippians is that a proper spiritual outlook is critical for progress in the faith. That means we have to have a correct view of our life in Christ in order to growth in our faith.

We often think spiritual growth is only a matter of behavior change. In reality, lasting growth begins within the heart. There must be a heart change within the believer that alters external behavior. Otherwise, an individual can give their best effort to change but fall woefully short on their own.

***How is your spiritual outlook impacted by your circumstances?  
How have you taken steps of faith this past year?***

Don't be fooled into believing that there is something that you can do to make God love you more or less. Your righteousness, as a Christian, comes directly from Jesus. That righteousness does it's work to make an impact in your life. What does spiritual progress look like? Paul gives us a glimpse throughout the letter to church in Philippi (See *Philippians 1:5-11; 2:1-11; 3:7, 15; 4:7-9*).

- Fruit of righteousness only comes through Jesus.
- Christians should abound in love.
- Knowledge and discernment will lead you to what is excellent.
- One should overflow with humility and have an attitude like that of Jesus.
- Anything good comes from the Father in the first place.
- Your life should be about God's glory.
- Christ was a servant. Do likewise.
- Whatever we gain we must count as loss for the sake of knowing Christ.
- Continue to press forward to the goal of knowing Jesus.
- Put into practice the things that you have learned.
- The fruit of the Spirit should be evident in your life.

This theme illustrates the point; "he who began a good work in you, will also carry it on to completion." Spiritual progress will take place in the life of a faithful follower of Jesus.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 1:9-11 The first petition in Paul's prayer is that God would cause the cardinal Christian virtue of love to abound more and more, and that it would be accompanied by knowledge and all discernment, so that the Philippians' love would find expression in wise actions that would truly benefit others and glorify God. As Christians grow in their understanding of what it means to follow Jesus, they will increasingly be able to affirm and practice what is excellent. Such joyful obedience to God will give them the confidence of being found pure and blameless when Jesus returns. This does not imply instantaneous spiritual perfection but rather an increasing likeness to Christ. But fruit of righteousness is not produced in the believer's own power. Because that fruit comes through Jesus

## 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)

### Point to Make

Good health and wealth pass away. Fruit of the Holy Spirit and God being praised has eternal value.

### Point to Make

Biblical knowledge is not merely the possession of facts. Rather, knowledge and wisdom in the Bible are practical, having to do with godly living. Knowledge, wisdom and understanding result in a life worthy of the Lord.

### Point to Make

- 1) The gospel was advanced.
- 2) The entire palace guard knows he is for Jesus.
- 3) Brothers were encouraged to speak the word of God without fear.

Christ, it will result in the glory and praise of God.

Phil. 1:12–18 Paul's Reflections on His Imprisonment. Paul assures the Philippians that, though he is imprisoned, the gospel is still advancing (vv. 12–18).

Phil. 1:12 The word Paul uses for the advance of the gospel (Gk. *prokopēn*) is the same word he will use in v. 25 for the Philippians' "progress" in faith. He thus underscores the need to push God's kingdom forward rather than dwelling on past or present problems.

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?**

## Get Involved

Prisoner Alert at [prisoneralert.com](http://prisoneralert.com) is a ministry of The Voice of the Martyrs that equips believers to write letters of encouragement to Christians around the world that are imprisoned for their faith.

## Reference

Familiarize yourself with the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50.

## Reference

See commentary below for potential greedy motives.

## Point to Make

Be cautious and do not let students tear other pastors or churches down. The point here is to recognize that Christians still do the same thing today.

Phil. 1:13 The gospel has advanced because Paul has let the whole imperial guard (Gk. *praitōrion*) know that he is imprisoned only because of his testimony that Jesus is Lord. The Latin word *praetorium* could refer to a governor's residence and by extension those living in the residence. Those who believe that Paul wrote from Caesarea would understand the word in that sense here (see Acts 23:35). However, the word could also refer to the special guard of the emperor in Rome, as the translation above suggests.

Phil. 1:14 When the Christians in Rome, where Paul was imprisoned, saw his boldness even as his life was in danger, his example inspired them to be more courageous as well, so that they were much

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.

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more bold in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

Phil. 1:15–18 The identity of those here who preach Christ from envy and rivalry is difficult to determine. They are clearly antagonistic to Paul, and thus one could imagine they are the same “Judaizing” people mentioned in ch. 3. But it is hard to see how Paul could rejoice in the proclamation of something (namely, a return to the old covenant) which he saw as a betrayal of the good news. It seems more likely that these were other Christians who preached a generally sound gospel but were personally at odds with Paul. They may have dismissed him because of his poor speaking abilities (see 1 Corinthians 1–2) or his constant suffering and weakness (see 2 Corinthians 10-12); whatever

## **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

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their rationale, they were not motivated by love but only by a desire to harm Paul in some way. But Paul, like Jesus, is not concerned for his own interests (cf. Phil. 2:4), and he will "rejoice" as long as the gospel is progressing.

# REAP

DAY

1

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 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

6

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 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.

# Role Models

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-30

WEEK

3

There are eight major themes throughout the book of Philippians. This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is that Jesus is the supreme example of loving and faithful service to God. However, Christians can serve as role models in this regard as well.

***Who do you look up to as a role model?  
Have you ever considered yourself a role model?***

Don't be fooled into believing no one is watching you as his or her role model. How can you serve faithfully as a Christian role model? Paul gives us a glimpse throughout the letter to church in Philippi (See *Philippians 1:12-26; 2:5-11, 19-30; 3:3-17; 4:9*).

- Positive attitude despite difficult conditions.
- Make great use of their time wherever God leads them.
- Actions overflow from an attitude of love.
- Celebrate and rejoice in team victories.
- Positive expectations.
- Put others interests ahead of their own.
- Joyful in the progress of others.
- Serve others in humility.
- Sacrifice.
- Bring others along and disciple them.
- Confidence comes from God, not their abilities.
- Know that the things of this world pail in comparison to knowing Jesus.
- Work hard toward the goal of being more like Jesus.
- Follow through with the example set before them.

Role models are not just those who triumph. Great role models often are those who face very difficult circumstances. Any condition can exalt Jesus if you approach it with courage and creativity. Remember that God is the one who brings success, he asks us to be faithful and follow through with his commands. We don't know how many of Paul's guards came to faith in Jesus. We only know that some did because Paul did his part to preach the gospel. Pray for the students to have courage and creativity.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 1:19 Paul, who has prayed for the Philippians, now solicits their prayers for deliverance. The tension between temporal deliverance and eternal salvation is, in fact, evident throughout this passage (vv. 19–26). Although Paul seems to have alluded to his temporal deliverance, clearly his longing for eternal salvation is “far better” (v. 23). In this regard, Paul alludes to Job 13:13–18 in this passage, where Job clearly speaks of his final destiny; and Paul speaks of his hope of not being ashamed, which is elsewhere related to the final judgment (cf. Rom. 5:4–5). Either way, Paul wants the Philippians to know that even if his expected deliverance from prison fails to materialize, and he is executed, he will still be “saved” to eternal life by God.

## 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?**

## Point to Make

Paul had a great spiritual outlook. He knew that he was in communion with God wherever he was. Paul also believed that the proclamation of the gospel and the prayers of the Philippians would benefit him by him being released from prison.

## Reference

To be absent from the body is to be united with Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:6, 8-9

## Point to Make

Talk about the fruitful labor that Paul experienced versus experiencing the full presence of God. Paul thought it was necessary to remain in the flesh to disciple others.

## Discuss

How is Paul's viewpoint different from the kind of escape some people seek in suicide?

Phil. 1:20-21 The crucial thing for Paul is not life or death. It is maintaining his faithful witness to Christ. Or by death indicates that Paul hopes to honor Christ even in the way he eventually dies. Paul's life is not a matter of seeking his own comfort or advancement. It is all about seeking the advancement of Christ's kingdom: to live is tantamount to serving Christ. In fact, to die should be seen as gain, because it would mean that Paul would be freed from his trouble-filled life on earth to rejoice in Christ's presence.

Phil. 1:22-26 In light of v. 21, Paul is hard pressed as to which outcome he should desire. Being with Christ now would be more attractive for him, while remaining alive (in the flesh) would enable him to

**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?**

## **Reference**

Familiarize yourself with the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3.

## **Point to Make**

Paul's sacrifice will be futile, however, if the Philippians do not continue to live in a way that is "worthy of the gospel of Christ."

## **Point to Make**

Students must realize that our standard is not determined on other Christian's behavior. Our standard is Jesus.

## **Interact**

Talk about compartmentalization and being a person of integrity.

help the Philippians further on their own spiritual journey. Since Paul knows that the way of Jesus is the way of service (cf. 2:5–11), he is convinced that his own preferences will be put aside so that he can remain and continue with the Philippians for their progress and joy in the faith. Paul is not merely musing on his own crisis; he is giving the Philippians a model of the service-driven life. My desire is to depart and be with Christ indicates that when Christians die they are immediately with Christ, long before their bodies are raised from the dead.

Phil. 1:27–30 Paul's sacrifice will be futile, however, if the Philippians do not continue to live in a way that is "worthy of the gospel of Christ." The Greek for Only let your manner of life be worthy of the

**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.

**Interact**

See if students can say Carmel’s Mission Statement. Carmel is committed to making disciples of those nearest, our neighbors and the nations. Nearest Strategy: Go Home First  
Neighbors Strategy: Love and Serve Your Neighbor  
Nations Strategy: Go, Pray, Give

gospel can also be translated “only behave as citizens [Gk. politeuesthe] worthy [of the gospel],” a phrasing that nicely captures Paul’s play on words here and in 3:20, “our citizenship [Gk. politeuma] is in heaven.” Philippi prided itself on being a Roman colony, offering the honor and privilege of Roman citizenship. Paul reminds the congregation that they should look to Christ, not Caesar, for their model of behavior, since their primary allegiance is to God and his kingdom. They need to stand together with one another and with Paul in striving for the gospel.

Phil. 1:28 As the Philippians maintain courage in the face of their opponents, these opponents will realize that such remarkable strength could come only from God, and thus anyone who continues to



## 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

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oppose God's people will be marked for destruction. "Destruction" (Gk. *apōleia*) here means eternal destruction. But God's sustaining grace amid trouble will assure the believers of their own final salvation. Paul follows the teaching of Jesus here (Matt. 5:10–12), reminding them that persecution is a sign that they belong to Christ.

Phil. 1:29–30 Troubles will come, because the reality is that believers in Christ will suffer for his sake. Paul teaches that both suffering and faith are gifts of God; for both, Paul says, have been granted to you. Suffering for the sake of Jesus is a great privilege (see Matt. 5:10–12; Acts 5:41). Paul again holds himself out as an example of one who has maintained his joy while experiencing troubles.

# 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 you 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

DAY

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.

# REAP

DAY

5

## 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 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.



# Exalted as Lord and Christ

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-13

WEEK

4

This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is the doctrine of the Incarnation—that Jesus is fully God and fully man, yet one person, forever. The relevance of the following truths to us should go without saying. Knowing these truths will greatly affect the way you view Jesus and will make the gospel accounts of His life come more alive.

## Because Jesus is God:

- He is all-powerful and He cannot be defeated.
- He is the only adequate Savior.
- Believers are safe and can never perish; we have security.
- We can have confidence that He will empower us for the task that He commands us for.
- All people will be accountable to Him when He returns to judge the world.

## Because Jesus is Man:

- He has experienced the same things that we do.
- He can identify with us more intimately.
- He can come to our aid as our sympathetic High Priest.
- We can relate to Him—He is not far off and uninvolved.
- We can't complain that God doesn't know what we are going through. He experienced it first-hand.

The early church considered the Incarnation to be one of the most important truths of our faith. They formulated what has come to be called the Chalcedonian Creed, a statement of what we are to believe and what we are not to believe about the Incarnation.

## 5 Main Truths:

- 1) Jesus has two natures — He is God and man.
- 2) Each nature is full and complete — He is fully God and fully man.
- 3) Each nature remains distinct.
- 4) Christ is only one Person.
- 5) Things that are true of only one nature are also true of the Person of Christ.

Having this richer understanding of the Incarnation of God the Son should greatly enhance our worship. Our faith in Him will be strengthened by having this deeper understanding of who He is. The union of Jesus' deity and humanity in one Person makes it such that we have all that we need in the same Savior.

## Reference

Excerpt of "How Can Jesus be God and Man." by Matt Perman from [desiring-god.org](http://desiring-god.org)

## Reference

Place these points on the screen for students see.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 2:1–4 The Philippians are encouraged to live out their life in Christ and in the Spirit by living in unity.

Phil. 2:1–2 Paul is not doubting that encouragement, participation in the Spirit, affection, and sympathy are realities in Christ and are present in the congregation at Philippi. He uses a conditional sentence (if) to provoke the Philippians so that they will reflect on whether these qualities are evident in their lives. The Philippian believers must make sure they continue to progress in the absolutely critical area of love for one another. As Paul emphasizes, they must be of the same mind. This does not

## 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?

## Point to Make

Direct students to verse one. These actions all stem from the relationship that the Christian has with God because of what Jesus did on the cross and the work of the Holy Spirit in their life.

## Reference

Unity of the Father-Son relationship was revealed by Jesus' own ministry: Common mind and purpose, an absolute mutual love, and a sustained comprehensive togetherness in mission.

## Point to Make

We can look to our own interests. However, we are to equally consider others as our own. This is following through with loving your neighbor as yourself.

imply a drab intellectual uniformity; rather, the Philippians are to use their diverse gifts (cf. 1 Corinthians 12) in an agreeable, cooperative spirit, with a focus on the glory of God.

Phil. 2:3-4 There is always a temptation to be like Paul's opponents in 1:17 and operate in a spirit of selfish ambition, looking to advance one's own agenda. Such conceit (lit., "vainglory") is countered by counting others more significant than yourselves. Paul realizes that everyone naturally looks out for his or her own interests. The key is to take that same level of concern and apply it also to the interests of others. Such radical love is rare, so Paul proceeds to show its supreme reality in the life of Christ (2:5-11).

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?**

## **Point to Make**

This is the most amazing event in all of history: the eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, infinitely holy Son of God took on a human nature and lived among humanity as one who was both God and man at the same time, in one person.

## **Discuss**

Jesus remained fully God while he was on earth (Col. 1:19; 2:9; Heb. 1:3). So what did he give up in becoming fully human too? Look at John 4:4-7. How was that different from his life before he became human? Look at Hebrews 2:14-18. What would it have been like for someone who had always been God to suddenly start suffering? How would that have tempted Him to sin?

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Phil. 2:5–11 This passage is often referred to as the “hymn of Christ.” Paul depicts Christ’s example of service in a stirring poem that traces his preexistence, incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of God. Paul wrote this magnificent theology to encourage the Philippians to consider other people’s interests first (see v. 4). Jesus is the paradigm of genuine spiritual progress: not a self-aggrandizing struggle for supremacy, but a deep love for God and neighbor shown in deeds of service. In view of the myriad theological questions that arise in these verses, it is critical to keep two things in mind: (1) these verses were written not to spur Christians to theological debate but to encourage greater humility and love; and (2) the summary of Christ’s life and ministry found here is not unique: the same themes are evident throughout the NT.

## 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.

### Interact

What kind of encouragement works best for you?

### Interact

Having students explain salvation may give you a clue about their relationship with Jesus. Be sure to listen well help students understand salvation.

### Gospel Prayer

In Christ, there is nothing I can do that would make you love me more, and nothing I have done that makes you love me less. Your presence and approval are all I need for everlasting joy. As you have been to me, so I will be to others. As I pray, I'll measure your compassion by the cross, and your power by the resurrection.

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Phil. 2:12–13 The Philippians have obeyed (cf. Christ's obedience, v. 8) in the past and should continue to do so as they work out their salvation with fear and trembling. They cannot be content with past glories but need to demonstrate their faith day by day as they nurture their relationship with God. But while God's justice is a cause for sober living ("fear and trembling"), it is not as though Paul wants the Philippians to be anxious that they can never be good enough to merit God's favor. Rather, it is God's love and enabling grace that will see them through: it is God who works in you. They can rejoice in God's empowering presence even as they work hard at living responsible Christian lives. While v. 12 may seem to suggest salvation by works, it is clear that Paul rejects any such teaching (cf. 3:2–11). In 2:12 Paul means "salvation" in terms of progressively coming to experience

## 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

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all of the aspects and blessings of salvation. The Philippians' continued obedience is an inherent part of "working out" their salvation in this sense. But as v. 13 demonstrates, these works are the result of God's work within his people. both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Even the desire ("to will") to do what is good comes from God; but he also works in the believer to generate actual choices of the good, so that the desires result in actions. (On fear of God, see notes on Acts 5:5; 9:31.)

# REAP

DAY

1

## 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 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 you 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.

# Promoting the Gospel

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-30

WEEK

5

This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is the gospel is not individualistic: Christians are to share in rich fellowship with one another and be united together in service to promote the gospel.

***How can having a partner help when sharing the gospel?  
Have you ever described fellowship as something deeper than a social gathering?***

If you were to look up the definition of fellowship you would find two key concepts. 1) Fellowship means being a part of a group or a body of people. That seems like a given. It is opposed to isolation, loneliness, and our present-day independent kind of individualism. Of course, it does not stop there because we can be in a crowd of people and even share certain things in common, but still not have fellowship. 2) Fellowship means having common goals, beliefs, labor, responsibilities, and concerns. These things lead to a partnership that involves working together and caring for one another, like a company of soldiers or members of a family.

As Christians, we are partners working together to spread the gospel. What does being united together to promote the gospel look like? Paul gives us a glimpse of this understanding throughout the letter to church in Philippi (See *Philippians 1:4, 7, 24-27; 2:1-4, 19-30; 3:2-4, 14*).

- Praying with joy for each other.
- Having a deep connection with one another.
- We disciple one another.
- Help each other progress in faith.
- Stand firm together in unity.
- Strive side-by-side.
- Encouraged by good news of others.
- Genuine concern for the welfare of others.
- Minister to each other's needs as your own.
- Long to be with one another.
- Put no confidence in the flesh.
- Press on toward the goal.

Paul clearly understands that fellowship is much deeper than a social gathering. This advice is just as relevant today to believers today. We would do well to live out these truths.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 2:14–15 Paul continues the theme of “working out” one’s salvation (vv. 12–13). The Philippians should shine as lights amid a crooked and twisted generation. Paul’s choice of words recalls the wilderness generation of Israel, who in Deut. 32:5 are described by these very words (“crooked and twisted generation”) and whose spiritual progress was thwarted by grumbling and disputing (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1–12). Shining “as lights” probably alludes to Dan. 12:2–3. Those who express their faith by living in this way will be raised to eternal life (see Dan. 12:2), to Paul’s great joy.

Phil. 2:16 The Philippians’ obedience to the word of life is not merely a matter of private concern.

## 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.

## Reference

John 3:16. John 14:6. Romans 6:23. Ephesians 2:8-9.

## Point to Make

Paul makes describes a clear distinction between a crooked and twisted generation and those that shine as lights in the world.

## Point to Make

Unfortunately, many people cause disputes in the church. They grumble or argue about the way they think things should be done. They take their good intentions of being fully invested and turn them into something that is bad by causing dissension within the body of Christ. Describe why this is a poor reflection of Jesus.

## Interact

Respond to the following statement: You may be the only representative of Jesus that someone will ever see.

As an apostle and fellow sharer in the gospel, Paul's own labor would be in vain if they failed to hold fast until the day of Christ (cf. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:2-11; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:11-21:8) and thus proved not to be genuine believers. Holding fast means both believing God's Word and following it. Since the Greek *epechō* can mean either "hold fast" or "hold out to, offer," some think that Paul may have in mind "holding forth," i.e., proclaiming, the word of life.

Phil. 2:17 Paul compares himself to a drink offering (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6). This type of offering, familiar in both the OT and Greco-Roman culture, involved pouring out wine, either onto the ground or, as here, on an altar along with an animal or grain sacrifice (see Num. 28:7). It was a vivid illustration of a

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?**

### **Pronunciation**

EE - p ae - f r oh - d  
AY - t uh s

### **Discuss**

How can sharing your growth in Christ encourage your pastors/leaders?

How can you creatively share with your pastors/leaders that you are growing in the Lord?

### **Discuss**

How does it encourage you to see someone live up to standards within Scripture the way Timothy did?

---

life "poured out" for God's service. The Philippians, too, are a sacrificial offering; they are to emulate Paul's joyful service to God.

Phil. 2:19–24 Timothy as an Example of a Service-centered Life. Paul's desire to send his protégé Timothy highlights the very personal nature of early church life. Timothy emulates Christ in that he is concerned for the Philippians' welfare; he does not look out for his own interests, but for those of Christ.

Phil. 2:25–30 Epaphroditus as Another Example of Service. Epaphroditus, who is himself from Philip-

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.

## Discuss

How did Epaphroditus demonstrate Philippians 2:2-4?

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pi, is another example of genuine Christian love. He has been longing for the Philippians just as Paul longs for them (1:8; 4:1), and has been eager to let them know that God has spared him from his severe illness.

Phil. 2:27 To die and be with Christ is far better (1:21), and yet God shows mercy to Epaphroditus in sparing his life. Christians can be assured that a fellow Christian truly is in Christ's presence upon his or her death (see note on 1:23); even so, it is proper on such occasions to feel sorrow upon sorrow.

Phil. 2:30 The Christlikeness of Epaphroditus is highlighted by Paul's careful use of words. Having



## 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 passage illustrate how a group of Christians can help each other work out their salvation?

## MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 2:14

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said that Christ was obedient "to the point of death" (v. 8, Gk. mechri thanatou), Paul now says that Epaphroditus was "near to death" (v. 27) and that he nearly died (v. 30, also with Gk. mechri thanatou). Epaphroditus had faced this peril on behalf of the Philippians, who had desired to send gifts to support Paul but had not been able to do so (what was lacking in your service to me) until Epaphroditus made it possible (see 4:10, 18).

# REAP

DAY

1

## 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 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 you 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.



# Saved by Faith Alone

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

WEEK

6

This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is the old covenant and observance of the law cannot provide the necessary right standing with God. Believers can be saved only through faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Everybody grows up with a subculture with certain rules, beliefs, and practices. Even if you have pale skin and your family has lived in the United States for generations, you have an ethnicity. It doesn't matter where you grow up, you have a subculture. Everybody does.

As you become more and more serious about being a follower of Jesus, you have to ask yourself, "which parts of my subculture are consistent with being a follower of Jesus here and now, and which parts will get in the way of my being faithful to Jesus in the situation where He's placed me?" If you want to help someone else follow Jesus, you have to ask, "which parts of my Christian subculture are things all Christians everywhere should follow, and which are optional? How does Jesus want this other person, from his or her culture, to live?"

***What are some good things about the culture you've grown up with?  
What is something that others say you have to do to be saved apart from faith in Jesus?***

The Philippians are having trouble with these questions. Some Jewish Christians have come to town and they say the non-Jewish Christians of Philippi have to adopt the practices of Jewish subculture—basically become Jewish—in order to be real Christians. After all, Jesus was Jewish and lived as a Jew. All of the original disciples were Jewish. So they concluded a person needs to convert to Judaism and live that way in order to be a real follower of Jesus.

It makes Paul crazy to hear that the Philippians are being fed this nonsense. Yes, Paul is Jewish, and yes, being Jewish is wonderful. However, to tell believers from other ethnic groups that they have to follow the rules of Jewish subculture is just wrong. So now Paul tackles this question: does a person have to live like a Jew in order to be true follower of Jesus? This theme is relevant for us today because we often fight over styles of music, where to gather for small group, and the list goes on. We must be careful to not add to Jesus' simple command of "follow me."

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 3:2 Dogs was not only a general term of derision in the ancient world, it was particularly a word used by some Jews in reference to Gentiles, who were considered ritually unclean. With biting irony, Paul says that the Judaizers, not the Gentiles, deserve that label. Paul's irony continues as he labels those who extol good works of the law as evildoers and those who mutilate the flesh. This last phrase (Gk. *tēn katatomēn*) is a play on words with circumcision (Gk. *peritomē*). The Judaizers' supposed badge of pride turns out to be the sign of their destruction. On Jewish views of circumcision, see note on Acts 15:1.

## 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?**

## Reference

For further study about circumcision: Genesis 17:1-14; Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4; Romans 2:28-29, 4:6-12; Galatians 3:7, 29; Colossians 2:11-14.

## Interact

These could be good things like intelligence or a particular skill. Students may place their confidence in money or the way they look. What do you think about the idea of treating those things as less important than knowing Christ?

Phil. 3:3 In contrast to those promoting physical circumcision (v. 2), the true people of God (the circumcision) are those who worship by the Spirit of God (cf. John 4:23-24). They glory in Christ Jesus (cf. Phil. 1:26) and put no confidence in the flesh (that is, as Calvin put it, in "everything that is outside of Christ"). This verse mentions all three members of the Trinity: "God" (the Father), "Christ Jesus" (the Son), and "the Spirit of God" (the Holy Spirit).

Phil. 3:4-6 Paul's opposition to the Judaizers was not because he himself in any way lacked a Jewish "pedigree." When it came to the things of the flesh—the whole system of life that held sway before the coming of Christ and the giving of the Spirit—Paul had perfect credentials. He was circumcised

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 than 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.

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.

## **Examples**

Growing up in a Christian home  
Parent/Child dedication  
Upper financial class  
Shows up to church/follows the rules  
Calls out sinners/virgin

## **Interact**

Students probably don't picture Jesus speaking with this kind of language or authority. Talk about how this passage changes their view of Jesus.

on the eighth day in accord with OT law (Lev. 12:3). He was an ethnic Israelite and knew the tribe from which he came. Hebrew of Hebrews probably indicates his descent from Jewish ancestors, and many think it also means that he spoke Aramaic (the national language of Israel in his day), even though he came from Greek-speaking Tarsus. He was from the strictest religious sect—the Pharisees (Acts 26:5). His zeal was such that he had even been a persecutor of the church. He probably had thought of himself as following in the footsteps of Phinehas (Num. 25:11) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:10, 14) in his zeal. If anyone could be said to be blameless in following the law, it was Paul. But before God it was no righteousness at all, for though Paul thought he was pleasing God, in persecuting the church he had shown himself to be the "foremost" of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

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 . . ."

## Prayer

No matter where each person is in the process of making Jesus more important in their lives than other things, pray for each other about this.

## Point to Make

We embrace Jesus during quiet times, at church, in worship, while alone, with our choices, etc.

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Phil. 3:7–9 Paul's accounting, however, has now changed completely: what formerly went into the gain column—his power, prestige, and "obedience"—now goes into the loss column. Likewise, the crucified Messiah, whom he had assumed must be a "loss," is now seen as the ultimate "gain." The language of loss and gain probably alludes to Jesus' teaching (see Matt. 16:25–26). Found in him means being spiritually united to Christ and therefore found not guilty before God as divine judge. Paul had trusted in a righteousness of my own based on obedience to the law rather than the right standing before God that comes through faith in Christ. God "imputes" Christ's lifelong record of perfect obedience to the person who trusts in him for salvation; that is, he thinks of Christ's obedience as belonging to that person, and therefore that person stands before God not as "guilty" but

## 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

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as "righteous." This is the basis on which justification by faith alone is considered "fair" in God's sight. As explained in Rom. 10:1-8, righteousness cannot come by the law because all human beings sin, and therefore right standing before God as the divine judge is possible only through faith in Jesus Christ, who is the believer's righteousness before God.

Phil. 3:10-11 The goal of trusting in Christ is to know him in a personal relationship, and also to know the power of his resurrection—namely, the power Christ exerts now from the right hand of God. But this power is made known as the believer shares the same kind of sufferings Jesus faced. The good news is that those who suffer with and for Christ will attain the resurrection from the dead.

# REAP

DAY

1

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 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

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 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 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 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

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 3:1-11

## 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 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 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

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.

# One Day at a Time

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-19

WEEK

7

This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is Christians need to keep making progress in their walk with Jesus one day at a time. Growth requires us to continue to learn what it means to be a disciple and live out what we learn.

Deuteronomy 6:5-6 states, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart."

As a church, we believe that there are seven key essentials that answer the questions, "What do we learn", and How do we live?" At Carmel, Life in Christ is composed of seven key principles taught by Jesus throughout His ministry on earth.

The Life In Christ Essentials are: Scripture, Prayer, Authentic Faith, Obedient Follower, Disciple Maker, Generous Living, and Transformational Community. These seven themes reoccur numerous times throughout the gospels. None of these principles can ever be perfected and each allows for life-long growth. This journey is completed only when a believer steps from this world into eternity with Christ.

Once you are a believer in Jesus you begin living Life in Christ. Only then will you be able to fulfill the mission that God has for you. Remember John 15:5, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit. Apart from Me you can do nothing."

***Looking back at your life how have you seen steady growth in Jesus?  
What does it require to rest in knowing Jesus?***

All that we go through in life serves as a method to advance the gospel or for us to progress in our faith. It also, helps produce joy in the faith. Being a disciple is simple. Keep learning and live out what you have learned. This happens one day at a time.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 3:1–21 Paul begins this section by calling the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord (v. 1) but then warns them about the Judaizing opponents of the gospel (vv. 2–3). In contrast, Paul has renounced his spiritual and ethnic privileges for the sake of knowing Christ (vv. 4–11); his righteousness comes through Christ, not the law (vv. 12–16). He then calls the Philippians to follow his example of commitment to Jesus as Lord (vv. 17–21). Paul's conflicts with the Judaizers can be seen in greater detail in Acts and Galatians (e.g., Acts 15:1–19; Gal. 2:15–21; 3:6–4:31), as well as in the rest of his letters. Their teaching that Gentiles must first become Jews and obey all the OT laws in order to be saved was abhorrent to Paul. Not only did it show a lack of welcome (in complete contrast to God's own

## 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.                        |

## Point to Make

See verses 2:10-11.

- 1) Know him.
- 2) Know the power of his resurrection.
- 3) Share his sufferings.
- 4) Become like him in his death.
- 5) Attain the resurrection from the dead.

## Reference

The Getting Started section of this book show how the Life in Christ essentials are tied to Scripture.

## Reference

Paul often uses imagery of a race to describe the journey of life in Christ. 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; Matt. 24:13; Heb. 12:1

## Point to Make

Winners of Greek races received a wreath of leaves and/or cash. Christians receive an award of everlasting glory. Paul's ultimate aspirations are found in heaven, not in this life, because Christ is there (Col. 3:1-2).

attitude) but it also sought in effect to divert Gentiles away from Christ into a covenant that could never save them. While the law might be "holy and righteous and good" (Rom. 7:12), the old covenant pertained to the age before the giving of the Spirit, and thus inevitably brought curse rather than blessing since human beings were unable to keep it. The "righteousness" it offered could only be an incomplete, superficial righteousness, in contrast to the perfect righteousness given as a gift to believers by virtue of the life and death of Christ. The fury of Paul's response in these verses was fueled by his thankfulness for his own deliverance from this system.

Phil. 3:12-16 Paul's Progress in the Gospel: Through Christ, Not the Law. Paul emphasizes the need

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.

## **Point to Make**

Paul does not lose all memory of his sinful past, rather he is leaving it behind him as done with, settled and forgiven.

## **Interact**

This will require transparency Encourage students to share something beyond the "safe Christian confessions."

## **Prayer**

Don't miss this opportunity to pray with your students.

## **Discuss**

Sometimes Christians who have reached some level of maturity act like they've arrived at the top. What do you suppose leads someone to think like this? Why is this a problem?

## **Reference**

Look to the interest of others. Philippians 2:4

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for progress in Christian living, presenting himself as one who continually reaches ahead to see God's kingdom expanded.

Phil. 3:12 Paul stresses that he is not already perfect—he is still involved in the struggles of life in a fallen world and hence he still sins; the full glory of the resurrection remains in the future. I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. There is a balance of faith and works, of God's call and the believer's response.

Phil. 3:14-15 Goal (Gk. *skopos*) could also refer to the finish line in a race or an archery target. Paul's

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

## Reference

Paul warns us of these people in Romans 16:17-18.

life is purposeful, for he constantly aims toward a heavenly goal. The prize is the fullness of blessings and rewards in the age to come, most especially being in perfect fellowship with Christ forever. "Mature" (Gk. teleios) is the same adjective translated "perfect" in v. 12 ("not ... perfect"). Thus, Paul is saying, in effect, "If you are really perfect/mature, you will realize you are not yet perfect/mature!"

Phil. 3:17-21 A Call to Follow Paul's Example of Commitment to Jesus as Lord. Paul calls the Philippians to imitate him, a common theme in his letters (cf. 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:7-9). Paul's intent is not for the Philippians to focus on him per se but rather for them to join him in humble, radical dependence on Christ.



## 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

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Phil. 3:17 While Paul is not yet perfected, he is confident enough in his Christian walk to ask the Philippians to join in imitating me and other mature Christians. Much Christian growth comes through imitation of other Christians (4:9; 1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:8-9; 1 Tim. 4:12, 15-16; 2 Tim. 3:10-11; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:3).

Phil. 3:18-19 The enemies of the cross could be the Judaizers of v. 2 or "worldly" people in general. Their destiny is final judgment (destruction), they worship themselves (their belly), and they are consumed with earthly things.

# REAP

DAY

1

## 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 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

3

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 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.



# Maintaining

## Joy

PHILIPPIANS 3:20-4:9

WEEK

8

This week, the major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is that prayer is crucial for maintaining a joyful Christian life. This theme is evident in all of Paul's writings in the New Testament. Based on his writings, joy would well up inside of him when he prayed. It didn't just come when he prayed for himself. It happened when he prayed for others as they were growing in their faith. He had an eager expectation of their growth in Jesus. Knowing God was at work brought him great joy. Paul knew that the peace of God would encourage him. This is how he could encourage others to rejoice.

Typically, we take advice from someone who appears to know what they are talking about or have experienced circumstances that seem beyond us. Paul seems to know the secret of having joy no matter what happens. It is important to note that we are getting advice on joy from someone who spends his days chained to a guard, because if someone like that can have joy, any follower of Jesus can have it.

Joy is something we all long for but often seems difficult to grab hold of. Experiencing joy should be a part of every Christian's life. After all, joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, produced only by God's work in us. It is necessary to realize that joy is not the same as happiness. Happiness is circumstantial and fleeting. Joy is a heart posture. Joy is both a gift of God as well as a response to the gifts of God. Joy comes when we are aware of God's grace and His favor.

***What is the difference between happiness and joy?  
How can your obedience lead to joy?***

Jesus also gave some instructions regarding joy. Read John 15:9-11. One of the necessities to joy is living in obedience to God.

With this in mind, it becomes evident that one way to experience joy is to focus on God. Rather than dwelling on our difficulties or those things robbing our contentment, we can dwell on God. This is not to say we should deny our discontent or stuff negative emotions. As many of the psalmists patterned, we can pour out our hearts to God. We can tell Him bluntly all the things that ail us. Then we must submit those things to Him and remember who He is.

### 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 3:21 Transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body echoes 2:5–11. Those who follow Christ's example of service will share in his vindication and glory as well. Perfection will come only at the resurrection (cf. 3:11–12; 1 Cor. 15:12–28). To subject all things to himself is messianic language drawn from the OT (e.g., Ps. 8:6; 110:1).

Phil. 4:1 The Philippians' spiritual success would be Paul's "crowning achievement" (cf. 1 Thess. 2:19–20), and their perseverance and final salvation will bring him great joy (cf. Phil. 2:17).

## 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.

## Reference

For further study on our citizenship, see John 17:14-16; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 1 Peter 2:11.

## Point to Make

We are fully involved in this world but we are not of it. The world is where Christians are to do their work of proclaiming Jesus. Jesus did not even wish that we would be taken from it until our work is done (John 17:15). We await something much greater than this world can offer.

## Reference

There is a correlation between this passage and Philippians 1:27-30. Paul is writing about their behavior being same whether he is there or absent in chapter 1. In chapter 3, the mind-set challenge is because they are awaiting Jesus' return.

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Phil. 4:2 Paul does not reveal the source of tension between Euodia and Syntyche. He exhorts them to apply the principle stated in 2:2; agree (4:2) and "being of the same mind" (2:2) are the same Greek phrase (to auto phronein/phronēte).

Phil. 4:3 Reconciliation often requires third-party intervention, in this case a true companion. This person is unnamed in the esv, although the word could be read as a proper name. Paul is especially eager to see Euodia and Syntyche reconciled because they have labored side by side with him in the gospel. Cf. 1:27, where Paul also encourages unity among those who are "striving side by side" (Gk. synathleō, the same verb used here) for the gospel. Paul did not isolate himself and minister alone;

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?**

## **Pronunciation**

Euodia - ee - OO - d  
aa

Syntyche - SIHN-tih-  
tshee

Syzygus - Sy-Zy-gus

## **Reference**

Matthew 18:15-20.

Progression is you go, you go with someone, you go before the church.

The purpose is to reconcile through the first step.

## **Point to Make**

- A) Through suffering Christ is proclaimed.
- B) Unity.
- C) A loved one coming home.
- D) Friends
- E) Their concern for him.

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he deliberately worked with many others. In view of first-century culture, Euodia and Syntyche probably ministered mainly among women.

Phil. 4:4-9 Paul calls the Philippians to attitudes of joy and reason, so that they replace anxiety with expectant, grateful prayer. He also calls them to think upon and practice Christian virtues.

Phil. 4:4 The joy that Paul calls for is not a happiness that depends on circumstances but a deep contentment that is in the Lord, based on trust in the sovereign, living God, and that therefore is available always, even in difficult times.

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?

## Discuss

How does prayer help you when you worry?

## Prayer

Spend a few minutes and ask God to help you replace the worries you listed earlier with things worthy of praise.

## Point to Make

This is a practical way to cultivate the attitude Paul speaks of by simply choosing what we think about. That is why Philippians 4:8 is such an important verse to memorize.

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Phil. 4:5 Reasonableness is crucial for maintaining community; it is the disposition that seeks what is best for everyone and not just for oneself. The Lord is at hand emphasizes the fact that Jesus will surely return as judge and will hold people responsible for their deeds (cf. James 5:9). Paul does not specify when this will happen (cf. Matt. 24:36–44; 2 Pet. 3:1–13).

Phil. 4:6–7 Paul echoes Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 6:25–34) that believers are not to be anxious but are to entrust themselves into the hands of their loving heavenly Father, whose peace will guard them in Christ Jesus. Paul's use of "guard" may reflect his own imprisonment or the status of Philippi as a Roman colony with a military garrison. In either case, it is not Roman

## 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

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soldiers who guard believers—it is the peace of God Almighty. Because God is sovereign and in control, Christians can entrust all their difficulties to him, who rules over all creation and who is wise and loving in all his ways (Rom. 8:31–39). An attitude of thanksgiving contributes directly to this inward peace.

Phil. 4:8-9 The Philippians are to fill their minds with things that will inspire worship of God and service to others. Beyond having a proper spiritual outlook (v. 8), the Philippians are to practice what they have seen Paul doing. As they make progress in this way, they will find that it is not simply the peace of God but the God of peace himself who will be with them.

# REAP

DAY

1

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 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

3

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 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

6

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 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.

# Suffering Met With Joy

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

WEEK

9

The final major theme that we will observe during our opening from the book of Philippians is suffering will come, but through faith it can be met with joy. Is that really possible? Can suffering be met with joy? It seems like those two things do not go together.

As we learned from our last study, joy is a heart posture. Joy is both a gift of God as well as a response to the gifts of God. Joy comes when we are aware of God's grace and His favor. How can we be aware of his grace and favor when we are facing trials and difficulties? One would think that grace and favor would mean that we would not face trials or difficulties. This is the problem with not having a full understanding of the gospel. God's grace and favor required suffering for Jesus on the cross. On that cross Jesus took the eternal wrath that we deserve. What happens here on this earth is only temporary. When Jesus took the eternal wrath of God upon his shoulders we were given eternal life through Jesus when we believe. It is because of eternal life that we can face suffering in this life with joy.

"I would be really happy if only I..." Most of us have probably finished this statement before with had electronics, clothes, toys, house, acceptance to a particular college, boyfriend/girlfriend, boat, etc. Most of us have probably not finished this statement with if only I could suffer like Jesus.

Paul speaks of this desire in Philippians 3:10. He wanted to share in Jesus sufferings because of the eternal joy of the resurrection in Christ. As Christians, we are promised that suffering will come, but through faith it can be met with joy (1 Peter 4:12-19). What does meeting suffering with joy look like? Paul gives us a glimpse of this understanding throughout the letter to church in Philippi (See *Philippians* 1:12-26; 2:14-15; 4:4, 11-13, 19).

***How would you describe your typical attitude when you face difficulty?  
It is actually possible to maintain joy even in bad circumstances?***

Look at some of the deep convictions that helped Paul be joyful even when he was short of money and facing possible death. See Romans 8:18-30 and 2 Corinthians 4:13-18. Think and ask yourself, "Do I really believe this?" If you do, you can meet suffering with much joy.

## 5-Minute Commentary

Phil. 4:10–20 Paul thanks the Philippians for their gift to him and assures them that God will in turn supply all of their needs.

Phil. 4:12–13 The secret of living amid life's difficulties is simple: trusting God in such a way that one can say, I can do all things through him who strengthens me. This does not mean God will bless whatever a person does; it must be read within the context of the letter, with its emphasis on obedience to God and service to God and others.

## 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.

## Examples

Stoned and left for dead.

Beaten with rods three times.

Whipped with 39 lashes five times.

Attacked by an angry mob.

Many death threats.

Shipwrecked three times and floated for 24 hours.

Criticized by other Christians.

Under arrest for two years without a trial.

Bitten by a viper.

## Reference

Inform students that Paul also wrote 2 Corinthians and 1 Timothy.

Phil. 4:14–16 The Philippians share in Paul's ministry, not just at the spiritual level but at the practical level of financial support (cf. note on 1:3–5). They contributed to his work after he had left Macedonia (4:15) as well as when he was just down the road in Thessalonica, which was also in Macedonia (v. 16; cf. Acts 17:1).

Phil. 4:17 Lest they imagine he has moved away from the service-centered perspective of the earlier chapters, Paul reminds the Philippians that even his reception of their gifts is ultimately for their benefit. Likely using a business metaphor, he is seeking the fruit that increases to your credit. God sees their sacrifice and is pleased.

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?

## Point to Make

Union with the living, exalted Christ and the source of abiding strength.

## Reference

Encourage students to visit <http://carmel-baptist.org/connect/missions-outreach/> for a list of ministry partners, missionaries and trips that they can be a part of.

## Reference

A fragrant offering was not atonement for sin. See ESV note in 5-Minute Commentary.

Phil. 4:18 Paul is well supplied by the Philippians' gift, and because it has been offered to him for the service of the gospel, he can return to images drawn from Israel's worship. The gift is a fragrant offering (the Gk. *osmēn euōdias* occurs often in the Septuagint in connection with the "pleasing aroma" of sacrifices to God; see Gen. 8:21; Ex. 29:18; Lev. 4:31) and a sacrifice acceptable to God. While the literal offerings of the OT system have been done away with in Christ, the principle behind them of costly devotion to God remains.

Phil. 4:19 Those who are generous toward God will find that he is generous toward them and will supply their every need ... in Christ Jesus.

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.*

## Reference

Point students to the Looking Back section of this book to be reminded of key truths that they have learned.

## Prayer

Have each person pray for the person to their right.

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Phil. 4:20 Just as the "hymn of Christ" (2:5–11) ended with "to the glory of God the Father," so Paul concludes the body of his letter with a doxology: To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Phil. 4:21–22 Greetings. The exhortation to greet every saint 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. Caesar's household could refer not only to the "royal family" but to anyone connected with the emperor's service, including soldiers, slaves, or freedmen. It is likely that some of the latter group had responded positively to Paul's message; there is no evidence that the emperor's actual family



## **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

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were believers at this point. The fact that some within Caesar's circles had believed would have had particular resonance in Roman Philippi.

Phil. 4:23 Paul ends his letter with a reminder that true progress in life is a gift of God through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

# REAP

DAY

1

## 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 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 you 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

6

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 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

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

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Thanksgiving and Prayer

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

## The Advance of the Gospel

<sup>12</sup> I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

<sup>15</sup> Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. <sup>16</sup> The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. <sup>17</sup> The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. <sup>18</sup> 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, <sup>19</sup> for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. <sup>24</sup> But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. <sup>25</sup> Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

<sup>27</sup> 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, <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> 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, <sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

# PHILIPPIANS 2

## Christ's Example of Humility

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

## Lights in the World

<sup>12</sup> 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, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> 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, <sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

## Timothy and Epaphroditus

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

<sup>25</sup> 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, <sup>26</sup> for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. <sup>29</sup> So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, <sup>30</sup> 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

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

<sup>2</sup> Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> 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:<sup>5</sup> 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; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> 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 <sup>9</sup> 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— <sup>10</sup> that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

## Straining Toward the Goal

<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

<sup>17</sup> Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup> For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> 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.

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

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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

<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and

again. <sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.



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