

# PHILIPPIANS

Four week study.

# WEEK ONE

Teaching Notes:

# SMALL GROUPS

## **SECTION 1 - Philippians 1: 1-11 (15-20min)**

In this section we'll get the groundwork and introduction to both the author of this letter and its recipients.

*Read verse 1 - choose some way/color to mark Paul, the author, and the recipients "all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi"*

*Now go through the rest of this section and using your same markings highlight every instance/reference to Paul - don't forget the "I"s - and the Philippians - don't forget the "yous"*

**How does Paul feel about the church at Philippi? (give some examples from this section) Why?**  
(vv. 3-4, 7-8)

**What more did you learn about this church and their relationship with Paul?**

*Let's zero in on verses 9-11 - Paul's prayer for this church.*

**What does Paul pray for this church?**

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*Let's break down this prayer*

Verse 9:

*“That your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment”*

*Discernment is a word we may hear in church language, but might not have a complete grasp on its definition.*

**In your own words how would you define discernment?**

*Let's look at some other resources to help too! (this is a great way to add to our comprehension as we study God's word and gather meaning and application from it)*

**Dictionary definition:** “(in Christian contexts) perception in the absence of judgment with a view to obtaining spiritual guidance and understanding”

**Other translations:**

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Philippians 1:9-11 English Standard V...	Philippians 1:9-11 New International V...	Philippians 1:9-11 New Living Translat...	Philippians 1:9-11 Christian Standard ...
<p>⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that</p>	<p>⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you</p>	<p>⁹ I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>⁹ And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that</p>

*We can gain better understanding from these other translations in how to understand what discernment is. Paired with knowledge - we see Paul's desire for these believers to grow in both intellect and knowledge, but also discernment - this kind of moral sensitivity or understanding.*

**Let's move on to the last part of the prayer:**

Verse 10:

*"So that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ," (vv.10)*

One thing that is helpful as we study God's word is to look at the transition words. We see one at the beginning of verse 10 starts with one - *"So that"*

**According to the "so that", why does Paul pray for their love to abound in knowledge and discernment? (vv.10)**

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Paul uses this descriptor of "pure and blameless" - we'll see this again later in Chapter 2, but for now let's look at how we can be looked at as pure and blameless by looking at the last verse of Paul's prayer.

Verse 11:

*"filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God"*

**What are believers filled with? Where does this come through? How?**

**Head to Galatians 5:22 and write down what some of these fruits are:**

**What else could the fruits of righteousness look like in your life? Be curious.**

**Don't miss this - What is the result of approving of what is excellent, being found pure and blameless, and being filled with the fruit of righteousness? (vv. 11)**

## APPLICATION - Section 1

- We see Paul's love for this church really clearly in this section - who has been a partner to you in your faith? What has their partnership looked like? How have they encouraged/helped you?
  
- Paul's prayer for the Philippians in vv.9-11 has his desires for them, what parts of this prayer do you need to pray specifically for?
  - Your love to abound
  - Knowledge and discernment
  - Approve of what is excellent
  - Be filled with the fruit of righteousness
  
- What area of your life do you need godly knowledge and discernment right now?

## **SECTION 2 - Philippians 1: 12-20 (15-20min)**

Alright, we've laid some groundwork and received a good introduction to the church at Philippi and their relationship to Paul. In this next section, we'll find out a little bit more about Paul and what has been happening to him.

### **Read Philippians 1:12-20**

Now let's break it down.

Verse 12 - Paul references "*what has happened to me*"

**What has happened to Paul?** (vv. 7, 13-14, 16)

He then goes on to say this "*has really served to advance the gospel*"

**How has Paul's imprisonment helped to advance the gospel? What 2 things does he point to in verse 13&14?**

In verse 15 we're introduced to a new group of people

**Who are they and what seems to be happening with them? (vv. 15-17)**

**What is Paul's reaction to this group of preachers? (vv.18)**

*Paul clearly had an "anti-fan club", and though we don't know all of the specifics, apparently they were motivated to preach the gospel, thinking that it could impact Paul's imprisonment/trial unfavorably and bolster up support in their own camp. However, Paul is still rejoicing that Christ is being preached - this could be a warning for us that even doctrinally "correct" believers can behave wrongly.*

## **What was the Philippians response to this? (vv.19)**

Finally for this section, let's look at verse 20.

### **What is Paul's eager expectation?**

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## **A P P L I C A T I O N - Section 2**

- Other believers were spurred on to preach the gospel because of Paul's imprisonment. What or who has been an encouragement or emboldened you in your faith and in telling others about Jesus?
  
- We see in v20 that how we live/our choices can honor Christ. How does this inform your view of your goals? Self? Living life in general? Are there things you may need to re-prioritize?
  
- The Philippians prayed for Paul during his imprisonment - is there someone you know who you can be praying for and interceding on their behalf? Encourage them and let them know you are praying for them.

### **SECTION 3 - Philippians 1: 21-30 (15-20min)**

**Read verses 21-23 --- In your own words, what is Paul saying here?**

*Compare answers with your group*

Read verses 24-26

**Ultimately what does Paul decide in regards to life and death? Why?**

**What does this say about Paul's character and motivations?**

*In the last part of this section, and the chapter, we get to the first time Paul is telling the Philippians to do something. As we study we want to pay attention to when a specific action or direction is given - these are almost always points of application for us too!*

**Read verses 27-28** - Let's break them down further

**What does Paul tell the Philippians to do in verse 27?**

**What does this kind of life look like among the believers?**

- Standing \_\_\_\_\_ in one \_\_\_\_\_
- with one \_\_\_\_\_
- Striving \_\_\_\_\_ for the faith of the gospel
- Not \_\_\_\_\_ by your opponents

**Think back to “those preaching from rivalry” that Paul had witnessed. How does this description compare to them? What are they proclaiming Christ out of?**

*They are marked by selfish ambition - but the Philippians should be marked by their unity, confidence, and “togetherness” in spirit, mind, and body.*

To help further grasp the meaning: **Rewrite verses 27-28 in your own words**

**Read verses 29-30.**

**What has been granted to the Philippians?**

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**Why?**

## APPLICATION - Section 3

- Look again at what Paul instructs the Philippians to do in vv. 27-28.
  - Does this come naturally to you?
  
  - Where do you struggle most with this kind of unity/fear?
  
  - What are some steps/ what could it look like to pursue this kind of unity in your life? Family? Connection group? Wellspring?
  
- Look at verse 29 - how does it make you feel/what do you think about this reality, *that we for the sake of Christ not only believe in him, but also suffer for his sake*”
  
- What roadblocks would keep you from suffering for the sake of Christ or making a choice like Paul did - to suffer and continue to live, but for the sake/encouragement of the Philippians?

## Philippians 1

**1** Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

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

**3** I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,

**4** always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy,

**5** because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

**6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**7** It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

**8** For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

**9** And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,

**10** so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

**11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

**12** I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,

**13** so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

**14** And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

**15** Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.

**16** The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

**17** The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.

**18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice,

**19** for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance,

**20** as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

**22** If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.

**23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

**24** But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

**25** Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,

**26** so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

**27** Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

**28** and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

**29** For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,

**30** engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.