



Week 3  
Discipleship Study  
Questions



# Philippians

We live in a country that is divided by social and political issues. All around us is the evidence of division – in our families, our country, our culture, and even the church. How are God’s people supposed to live in these tension-filled times? The letter of Paul to the church in Philippi provides answers and gives direction. The Philippian church existed in its own hotbed of cultural and political tension. Paul encouraged them to lean into the tension with a specific mindset of Jesus, who humbled himself by consider the needs of others before his own. If we adopt this same mindset of humility as God’s people, we can ease the tension and fight for unity in the midst of division. Whose thinking and way of life should we follow? Paul makes the case for it to be Jesus – and we need Him now more than ever.

## **Read the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Read the passage from two or three different translations.

*Group:* Have two different group members read the passage using different Bible translations.

## **Speak the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Recite the story aloud from memory (as best you can) or tell it to a friend or family member. The goal here is to get the essence of the passage in your heart.

*Group:* Have someone volunteer to recite the passage aloud in their own words, as best they can.

## **Understand the Scripture:**

*Individual or Group:* Use the Discovery Questions to help ensure you understand the passage.

## **Dig Deeper into the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member if you choose.

*Group:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person’s life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

# Small Group Guidelines

## **This is a Safe Group**

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

## **No Crosstalk**

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

## **Listen**

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

## **No Rescuing or Fixing**

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

## **Use "I" Statements**

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

## **Don't Over-Talk**

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

## **Fight for Relationship**

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

## Week 3

**Background:** Paul is under house arrest in Rome. Scholars suggest that he is chained 24/7 to a member of the Roman guard. While Paul may be in chains as a prisoner, the guard is captive to Paul's constant preaching of the gospel. Paul used his less-than-ideal circumstances to make Christ known. He also encourages the Philippian church to rejoice in the sharing of the gospel, no matter who is sharing it.

**Read:** *Philippians 1:12-18*

### **Discovery Questions:**

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What do we learn about what it means to be a follower of Christ in this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit might be teaching you personally through this passage?

Is there anything God is leading you to do after reading this passage?

### **Digging Deeper:**

How can we know that the gospel is stronger than chains and those who preach it? How have you seen the gospel overcome the circumstances of where it is preached?

What "chains" are in your life right now that God might actually be using to advance the gospel?

Paul rejoiced in any circumstance where Christ was preached, no matter who was doing the preaching. What does that mean for the church as a whole? How should churches relate to one another?

What could your "go time" look like this week? Where is your mission field?

### **End this time with a prayer.**

*Heavenly Father, You are sovereign over all things and you work all things together for Your glory. Give us a gospel-forward mindset that takes our eyes off of our chains and places them back on You. Give us the eyes to see where Your gospel needs to be preached and the faith to declare it boldly as we should. And give us a heart to support others who share the gospel, even if they come from a different church or group. Help us to seek unity amongst our brothers and sisters in Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.*