



Week 9
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 9

Background: In the first part of chapter 3, Paul told the Philippians about one enemy to the gospel: self-righteousness. In the second part, Paul tackles a second obstacle. There were those in the church who taught that grace meant freedom, so they could do whatever they wanted – and that included sin. Paul calls the Philippians to look to Christ as their model for behavior and the only true source of their identity.

Read: *Philippians 3:12-21*

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 do you introduce yourself to people? What are the characteristics that mark your identity? How does a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven introduce themselves?

How do we “forget what is behind”? What are we forgetting and why is that important?

How do we strain forward to what is ahead and press on towards the goal? What does that look like for us?

What brings Paul to the point of tears (v. 18)? What is the present and future like for those who live apart from Christ?

What is the future for those who are citizens of heaven?

End this time with a prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank you that you have made us your own. As we fix our minds on you, help us to forget what is behind and press on toward what is ahead, because what is ahead is more glorious than we could possibly imagine. We eagerly await seeing Christ revealed in all His glory, and to join with Him in His new kingdom here on earth. In Jesus' name, Amen.