

STUDYING THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 1 - Thanksgiving and Prayer - Philippians 1:1-11

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.

PHP 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers* and deacons:

PHP 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

PHP 1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you. [4] In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy [5] because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, [6] being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

PHP 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. [8] God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

PHP 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, [10] so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, [11] filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 1 - Thanksgiving and Prayer - Philippians 1:1-11

1. Who was the author of the letter to the Philippians? (1:1)
2. How did Paul identify himself and his coworker? (1:1)
3. To whom did Paul address this letter? (1:1)
4. How did Paul greet the Philippians? (1:2)
5. When Paul thought about the Philippians, what did he do? (1:3)
6. How were the Philippians in partnership with Paul? (1:4-5)

7. What was Paul confident about? (1:6)
8. How did Paul feel about the Philippian church? (1:7-8)
9. What did Paul report that he prayed for? (1:9)
10. What two results did Paul seek? (1:10-11)

Lesson 2 - Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel - Philippians 1:12-30

PHP 1:12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. [13] As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard* and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. [14] Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

PHP 1:15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. [16] The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. [17] The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.* [18] But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, [19] for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.* [20] I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted 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 go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! [23] I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; [24] but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. [25] Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, [26] so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

PHP 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel [28] without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved--and that by God. [29] For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, [30] since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 2 - Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel - Philippians 1:12-30

11. How was Paul's ministry affected by his bondage? (1:12-14)
12. Why was Paul being talked about? (1:13)
13. How did Paul's incarceration affect the testimony of others? (1:14)
14. Why did some people preach Christ out of envy and rivalry? (1:15-17)
15. Why did some people preach Christ in love? (1:15-16)
16. What made Paul rejoice? (1:18)
17. Why did Paul expect to be delivered from his predicament? (1:19)
18. How did Paul expect to be delivered? (1:19-20)
19. What was Paul's main purpose in living? (1:21)
20. What were Paul's convictions about living and dying? (1:22-24)
21. Why did Paul think he would remain alive? (1:24-26)
22. What did Paul want the believers to do? (1:27-30)
23. How did Paul tell the Philippians to face opposition? (1:27-30)
24. How did Paul encourage the Christians at Philippi? (1:29)