

LIFE GROUP notes

10 December

Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Joy in Christ – week 4



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member how God used a difficult situation or season in your life to advance the Gospel?
2. What does God do in and through a believer according to v.13? (**For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**)
3. What is Paul's encouragement in v.14–15? (**Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God...**)
4. How does Paul honour Timothy v.20? (**For I have no one like him, "Timothy" who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.**)



Let's go deeper

5. How does Paul honour Epaphroditus in v.25? (**...my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need.**)
6. What happened to Epaphroditus in v.27? (**He was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also...**)
7. How should the church receive Epaphroditus in v.29? (**Receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honour such men, for he nearly died.**)
8. Why should the church honour Epaphroditus? (**v.30; For he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.**)



Let's apply this

9. Philippians 2:29 – 30; So, receive him in the Lord with all joy, and **honour such men**, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

How can you honour godly men and women who have served and helped you to grow in your relationship and revelation of God?

- Take some time this week, and make a list of names, and then thank everyone who has impacted your life over the past years.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you, to honour them?

SUMMARY:

Joy in Christ: Week 4

Read: Philippians 2:12 – 30

v.12 – 14; Paul's imprisonment has not hindered the gospel in any way. Paul here answered a concern of the Philippians. He wanted them to know that God's blessing and power were still with him, even though he was in prison. He was not out of the will of God, and God's work continued. Paul's imprisonment gave the Christians around him – who were not imprisoned – greater confidence and boldness.

v.15 – 18; Paul considers the motives of others in their preaching. Paul was not so critical or cynical to believe that every other preacher had bad motives. He knew that some also preached from good will. Some were motivated in a good way and some were motivated in a bad way; yet nonetheless, they were motivated and Paul could rejoice in that.

v.19 – 20; Paul's confidence in his present circumstances. Paul knew that the Lord was in control of all events, even though his imprisonment and impending trial before Caesar Nero made the situation look dark. Paul lived his life not to preserve and promote himself, but to glorify Jesus Christ.

v.21 – 26; Paul's lack of fear regarding death and how it affected his outlook on ministry. Paul's death at the time would be a gain in two ways. First, his death for the cause of Christ would glorify Jesus, and that was gain. Second, to be in the immediate presence of the Lord was gain for Paul.

Paul understood that others still needed him; that his work was not yet done. So, while allowing for the possibility of his martyrdom, he told the Philippians that he expects to be spared at this time, as we read in v.24; **"and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will also come."**

v.27; How the Philippians should act in Paul's absence. Paul wanted the Philippians to work together for the cause of the gospel. Paul wanted their unity to be put to a productive purpose, so that an increasing trust and belief in the good news of Jesus Christ would be promoted among those who already believed and among those who had yet to believe.

v.28; Paul wants the Philippians to be bold before their adversaries. In the face of this kind of opposition, Paul wanted the Philippian believers to have the same kind of boldness he had.

v.29 – 30; The Philippians did not need to fear that their present trial (and Paul's present trial) meant that God abandoned them. Their present difficulty was granted to them, not as a punishment, but as a tool in God's hand.