

Gospel Living in Difficult Times

Philippians 1:12-30

PREPARE

Quiet your thoughts and welcome the presence of the Holy Spirit in your midst.

Begin with prayer. What do you most want to receive from the Lord this day? Perhaps it's the warmth of His loving presence; or you are waiting to hear specific guidance or direction. Take a few moments to release the anxieties and worries you have and receive His good, pleasing, and perfect plan for you today. This time of prayer will be different for everyone.

Read/Pray/Memorize Galatians 2:20

²⁰I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

REFLECT

In your core group, briefly discuss one of these three questions. Break into triads if necessary.

1. How have you experienced the blessing of God in these past few weeks?
2. What burdens, worries, or anxieties have you been carrying and would appreciate prayer for?
3. What's a next step looking forward that you are excited about, fearful about, or uncertain about and want to step out in faith and need prayer support for?

STUDY

Read Philippians 1:12-18

- Describe Paul's situation in prison:
- How might his situation encourage others to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly?
- What is most important to Paul?

Read Philippians 1:19-26

- What is Paul trusting through these difficult days?
- Describe the tension Paul experiences between living and dying?

- What does the statement “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” mean to you personally?
- Go back and circle the places Paul uses the words, “joy” and “rejoice” ... How does Paul find joy in such a difficult situation?

Read Philippians 1:27-29

- What do you think Paul means by, “... conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.”?
- Paul gives the Philippians three encouragements:
 - Stand Firm
 - Be United
 - Don’t be afraid

How do these encouragements speak to our day?

- In what ways does suffering for Jesus produce a positive outcome in our lives?

RESPONSE

1. What does it mean for you to have “big picture faith”? What in your life can cause your view to be limited?
2. How do you find yourself responding to hardships, especially in this difficult season? Where do you find Jesus shaping you most during this shelter-in-place?
3. How can you practically live out “For to me, to live is Christ...”
4. How do you experience joy in the midst of suffering?

Remember your assignments!

- Read the whole Book of Philippians this week
- Begin to memorize Paul’s prayer in Philippians 1:9-11
- Take time before the Lord and ask what needs to be crucified in your life...

Close in Prayer: List prayer requests here.