



When coming to this study we ask that you pray first. Take the time to ask God to speak through his scripture. If you don't get to all of the questions but have spent time with God your task is accomplished.

Then before reading the questions read the word. You can use some of the notations below to track your reactions and thoughts as you go:

Inspire: write a (!) beside what stands out positively so far and write a note about why

Inquire: write a (?) beside what doesn't make sense. Ask why it's there. OR by what raises a question for you.

Irk: write a (#!?) beside what rubs you the wrong way or creates dissonance.

Require: write a () beside something that demands change within you

Underline or highlight phrases that stick out.

After you're done going through the passage. Take a few moments to review your notes.

Write one sentence off the cuff. Based on your first impression, what are you thinking? How may God be speaking?

Let these prompts below continue to guide your dialogue with God and lead you into deeper reflection on His word.

PHILIPPIANS- LIVING IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

Philippians 1:12-2:4 (Paul displays how to keep Joy in all circumstances and live all of life while looking to Jesus)

Philippians 1:12-18a

- What Factors may cause people to lose their joy in Jesus?
- Does Philippians 1:12 encourage you? How so?
- Why should Philippians 1:12 give us added incentive to speak the gospel to someone?

- In what ways can you “put the gospel first” in our relationships?
- What’s most important to Paul: motive or message? Why?
- Do you love Christ’s glory more than your own? Why or why not? Pray for God to help you treasure Christ more than the approval and applause of others.
- How could Paul “rejoice and tell others to “rejoice even though he was in prison? How should his example impact us today?
- How can all circumstances be opportunities to share the gospel? Are there some circumstances where this is easier than others?

Philippians 1:18b-26

- Paul quotes Job 13:16 in the Greek version of the old testament in 1:19 “Indeed, this will turn out for my deliverance”. What does Paul mean by deliverance? Do you think it mattered to Paul how his deliverance came?
- What is Paul living for in verse 21? What is his hope in death?

“What will you live for? What will you die for? You don’t want to live merely for money, sex, power, beauty, or entertainment. These are gifts from God, to be stewarded properly, but they aren’t our aims in life. They often turn into idols. Instead, you want to spend your life on something that not only matters now but will also matter in a billion years: Christ. If you say, ‘Living is Christ,’ then you can joyfully say, ‘dying is gain.’ Living for Christ not only takes the sting out of death but also makes death gloriously attractive.¹

- What are you living for? Why does this matter to you today?
- Do you allow your trials to cause you to pout or to pray? What trails can you take before God in prayer? How can you commit to praying for one another around the table?
- For what purpose did Paul say he would remain on the earth?
- How does this passage motivate you to serve others?

Philippians 1:27-2:4

- Did you have rules that were specific to your household when you grew up?

¹ Merida, Tony, Francis Chan, David Platt, and Daniel L. Akin. *Exalting Jesus in Philippians*. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016.

- In 1:27 Paul is saying that we should live differently because we are now part of God's household. What are some behavior changes you've seen in yourself since coming to faith in Jesus? What are some that you're still working on?
- Paul also says that we "strive together as one for the faith of the gospel". How can we help encourage one another to live in a manner worthy of the gospel we have received?
- Suffering is almost presented as a privilege in verses 29-30. What are your thoughts or experiences on suffering for Jesus?

Tony Merida and Frances Chan break it down this way:

How exactly is suffering for Christ a gift? According to the previous verse, it provides a sense of assurance that we belong to Jesus. Suffering also brings you closer to Jesus. Paul relates this idea in 3:10-11. This attitude regarding suffering appears throughout the book of Acts. At one point, after the apostles had been beaten, Luke says, "Then they went out from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name" (Acts 5:41). They did not just tolerate suffering, they rejoiced in it! They saw it as a gift. ²

- How does the command for unity in 2:2 strike you?
- Do you find it challenging to avoid rivalry and to put the needs of others ahead of your own? How would Effort Baptist be different if everyone faithfully lived out Philippians 2:3-4?
- In this passage everyone serves everyone, and in doing so everyone is cared for. Do you find it harder to serve or to receive? Is there a way you can serve someone this week? Is there something you can ask for help with this week?

² Merida, Tony, Francis Chan, David Platt, and Daniel L. Akin. *Exalting Jesus in Philippians*. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016.