

Home Group Leader's Notes  
Week of September 8, 2019

Welcome back Home Group leaders,

It's so good to team up with you. I am praying that God will again work through you to shepherd people in your circle.

Our Theme for the Year is "Living as God's family." This was the focus of our Fall retreat. Throughout the coming weeks, I will share with you some of what we discussed and learned together.

For the start up of this season, I want to encourage you to consider discussing together the essentials of growing in Christ as we do life together. Consider the following points:

- Life-change. We pursue spiritual growth and life-change in community.
- Building trust. We value one another by being real, confidential, and listening to each other.
- Being reliable. Relationships don't happen without time together.
- Open to all. Every person matters to God and to us. We want all to know they belong here.
- Trusting God. God is real, personal, and active. We pray, believing He hears and answers.

Grace to you,  
Steve

Home Group Leader's notes  
Philippians 1:12-30

Here is a very brief backdrop of the letter to the Philippians.

Background: This letter was sent by Paul and Timothy to encourage and thank believers in the church in the city of Philippi. Prior to this letter, Paul had visited Philippi. While there, some women and their households (*Oikos*) chose to follow Jesus. After they cast out a demon of a women earning money for locals, they were beaten and imprisoned. While they were fettered, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns, and God miraculously unfastened everyone's bonds and opened all the doors. Paul prevented the jailer from killing himself. The jailer and his household (*Oikos*) were saved and baptized. Later, the believers in Philippi sent funds to help Paul and the team of people bringing the good news to new places. This letter was written by Paul while imprisoned in Rome. One of the prevailing themes is the unity and joy of those who are partners in the gospel.

Home Group Notes that were inserted in the "Trinity This Week" folder.  
Philippians 1:12-30

Reflections

When do you remember a difficult time that required having a 'good attitude?'

Learn from the Bible

Read Philippians 1:12-30.

How was Paul's update encouraging to the church? Why? (12-14)

- Paul revealed that though he was in prison, his circumstances turned out for the positive of sharing the gospel in two ways.
- First, he was able to share the gospel right where he was in prison.
- Second, those who heard were encouraged and emboldened to share the gospel where they lived.

What was Paul's attitude about his circumstances? Why did he "rejoice?" (15-18)

- Regardless of the ill motives of others and his own difficult circumstances, he rejoiced that Christ is proclaimed.
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What was the source of Paul's help? (18-19)

- Paul cited three reasons for his ability to continue to boldly proclaim and to be delivered from the oppression of his circumstances.
- Through prayers
- Through the provision of the Holy Spirit
- Through knowing that ultimately his hope in Christ will deliver him

How would you summarize Paul's view of life? (20-24)

- For to me to live is Christ, to die is gain
- Either way, his desire was to be fruitful for Christ
- He trusted in God's plans and power
- His passion was to engage in fruitful labor for the sake of others

What was Paul's goal for the Philippian believers? What might it cost them? (25-30)

- That they conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ
- That they stand firm in one spirit – striving together for the faith of the gospel
- That they don't live in fear of opponents
- That they count it a blessing to suffer for Christ's sake

How would you answer the question: 'For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Discuss together

What impresses you about Paul's view of his circumstances and future? How is this relevant to our lives?

- This is an opinion response. Please allow time for people to respond and value them by listening well.

According to this passage, what helps us take on Paul's (and Timothy's) view and courage? (Please be specific)

- There are a number of factors
- A high view of Jesus Christ and desire to partner with him, seeing suffering for His sake as a high privilege.
- Prayer
- Trusting the work of the Holy Spirit
- Believing in God's sovereign and powerful works
- Examples of others
- Sense of partnering with others in God's family

Why is there suffering involved for 'partners in the gospel?' What is the "conflict/struggle?" What was Paul's attitude toward suffering? (1:5; 29-30)

- Suffering should not be a surprise. Jesus promised us that following him would involve suffering.
- We live in a world of conflict, a world with powers at war.
- Suffering for Jesus' sake is a privilege, a blessing,

SPECIAL NOTE: Please encourage people to join in the joy of memorizing God's Word.

Partnering in the gospel of Christ with you,  
Steve