

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of September 1-7, 2024
"PAUL'S JOYOUS CONFIDENCE"

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

What is one thing that you are thankful for today?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Philippians 1:1-11.

1. How does Paul describe himself in verse 1? How do you feel about being a servant? Would you like Christianity better if it didn't include the servant part? What is great about being a servant of Christ?
2. Would you consider gratitude as an attitude or an action? What difference does gratitude make in a Christian's life? Is it a nice-to-have, or is it mission critical?
3. What does it mean to be a partner in the gospel? What did the Philippians do in their part of the partnership?
4. What do you learn about God in verse 6? What is one way that God is not like us? Have you ever been frustrated with your progress in the faith? How does verse 6 inform us when we feel that way?
5. Paul does not hesitate to express his affection for the Philippians in verses 7-8. We often hear that feelings cannot be trusted. Do you agree? What is the right biblical balance when it comes to our feelings?
6. Back in verse 4 Paul mentions his prayer for the Philippians. Now, in verses 9-11, he tells us what he is praying for. What is on Paul's heart for the Philippians in this prayer? What strikes you about this prayer?

7. When you consider that Paul had written this letter in prison, why do you think he is joyful? How could he write in verse 4 that, "*I always pray with joy*" when his outward life was such a mess? What can we learn from this?

NEXT STEPS

- I will live a life of gratitude.
- I will show what it means to be a partner of the gospel.
- I will trust in God's work in my life.
- I will test myself if I am in the faith.

Don't forget to:

- Go through the devotionals every day this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.

CLOSING THE SESSION

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for genuine joy that depends not in circumstances but in Jesus Christ alone.
- Pray for relationships to grow with other Christ-followers, that you will encourage and care for one another.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends, and loved ones.
- Pray for protection, provision, healing and comfort for everyone who's going through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual pain.

BIBLE READING GUIDE

September 2	Acts 16:11-24
September 3	Acts 16:25-40
September 4	Philippians 1:1-11
September 5	Psalms 103:1-8
September 6	Matthew 6:5-15
September 7	Psalms 23:1-6
September 8	Jeremiah 20:7-13