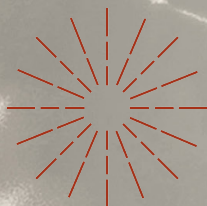


A decorative graphic of wavy, overlapping lines in shades of orange, red, and purple, framing the central text box.

# Philippians

Rejoicing In What Matters

## RADIANT GROUPS STUDY GUIDE





# PHILIPPIANS

## RADIANT GROUPS STUDY GUIDE

OVERVIEW	Sermon-Based Study
EXAMPLE	Acts 16:11–40
INTRO	The Letter to the Philippians
WEEK 1	Philippians 1:1–11
WEEK 2	Philippians 1:12–18a
WEEK 3	Philippians 1:18b–26
WEEK 4	Philippians 1:27–30
WEEK 5	Philippians 2:1–11
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RESOURCES	

# WHY SERMON-BASED SMALL GROUPS?

## To Engage God's Word

When we study God's Word as a small group, we can challenge, deepen and strengthen the faith of one another as we press the truth of Scripture into our everyday lives. While there are many books, resources and studies available for small groups; ultimately, God's Word is what helps us grow in our faith and become more like Christ. This is why we want to gather around the Bible and dig deeper into Scripture. We don't want to base our life on man's wisdom or the experience of others. We want to know what God says. This is where we see that God's promises are real. His wisdom is beyond this world. And His Word has the power to transform lives. There's no replacement for the Bible: Scripture first, Scripture most.

## To Enter the Sermon Differently

While a lot of churches do sermon-based studies, most are a spin-off from the sermon. In this model, questions are supplied after the sermon or included in sermon notes to guide leaders in group discussion. But in this approach, instead of digging into God's Word themselves, groups are prone to spend more time rehashing the points of the sermon, critiquing the message, nodding their heads in agreement or working through question 1, 2, 3, etc.

Instead of a top-down approach where the study is driven by the sermon or a list of predetermined questions, we want to flip the focus to encourage everyone to be in God's Word before Sunday.

Being in the passage before Sunday morning, people come to church anticipating the sermon. This creates an active learning environment and changes the way we enter the sermon. Rather than introducing the passage for the first time, the sermon will clarify and reinforce the meaning of the text as it moves from observation to interpretation. As we listen to the sermon, we are less likely to tune out because we know that we will be discussing these same verses with our group later that day or sometime throughout that week and want to grasp what it means.

## To Emphasize Application

It's easy to read the Bible or hear a sermon and forget it by breakfast the next day. But sermon-based studies keep the passage in front of us. Something changes when we go from hearing and reading Scripture to discussing it. This shifts participation from rows to circles where each person has the opportunity to ask questions, discuss what they are learning and share how these truths apply to their life.

Rather than hearing a sermon and moving on, sermon-based studies build in the necessary time for life change to occur as the Holy Spirit encourages, convicts and helps us apply God's Word. Over the course of one week, sermon-based studies are designed to engage the same passage three times as we move from observation on our own to interpretation during the sermon and application as a group.

Sitting in the same passage for a week and engaging with the text in different ways not only increases familiarity, but it also encourages people to think deeply about the message and meaning. Scripture is meant to be obeyed, not just listened to, read, studied or discussed. When we take time to reflect on what God says and ask, "What does this look like in my life?" it becomes the starting point for change to occur as we become doers of the word, not hearers only.

## To Strengthen Group Discussion

While the insights of a new believer versus a mature believer might vary, both are important in group discussion. As new believers often bring a unique perspective, their questions and takeaways can be refreshing to the rest of the group. Likewise, mature believers can provide deeper insights that enable new believers to grasp how the passage relates to the Bible as a whole.

Sermon-based studies provide the opportunity for everyone to interact with the same message. The sermon brings cohesion to small groups as it builds upon important themes from week to week. As the sermon lays out what the passage means, this prevents the group from slipping into "This is what the passage means to me..." which can be wrong, contradictory or worse, heresy.

# HOW DOES A SERMON-BASED STUDY WORK?

Whether you've studied God's Word for years or are newer in your faith, this study is designed to help you read, understand and apply God's Word. The format is intended to be simple and accessible. This study examines each weekly passage of Scripture from three angles.

## **PERSONAL STUDY: What does the passage say?**

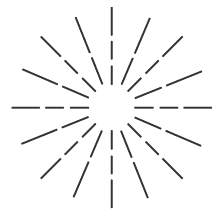
The first part of this study is to read the weekly passage for yourself. Our desire is for you to study the passage on your own before hearing the sermon on Sunday. Read carefully and look for details. Use this study guide to highlight key words or underline phrases that stand out. Then, use the notes page to write down thoughts or questions. As you observe the passage on your own, this provides familiarity and leads to curiosity as you emerge with questions about the text. We pray that this weekly study will change how we come to church and prepare our hearts for the sermon.

## **SUNDAY SERMON: What does the passage mean?**

The second part of this study is based on the sermon. Now that you have spent time reading and observing the passage, the sermon is intended to teach the meaning of the text and call you to respond. Rather than introducing the passage for the first time, the sermon will clarify the author's intent and move your personal study from observation to interpretation. Through the teaching of the sermon, the passage can become more accessible and applicable. Working through the same passage in different ways as readers and listeners allows you to engage God's Word at deeper levels. If you miss the sermon, we encourage you to listen to it or watch it online prior to attending your small group. Use the sermon notes page in this study guide to write questions and notes to share with your group.

## **SMALL GROUP: How does the passage impact us?**

The final part of this study will bring together your personal study and the sermon as you discuss and apply the weekly passage with your small group. During the discussion, your group will summarize the main points of the passage, answer questions and identify ways to respond and apply the text. The goal of small group isn't to rehash the sermon, but rather to work together to press the truth of God's Word into our lives. We don't want to be hearers of the Word only, we want to be doers of the Word and allow Scripture to shape how we live.



# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

## **SCRIPTURE: Read the whole book of Philippians each week.**

The book of Philippians isn't just a letter from the ancient past. It's the living Word of God, written by the Apostle Paul. It's only four chapters, 104 verses and about two and a half pages in most Bibles.<sup>1</sup> As a letter, it's helpful to read Philippians in one sitting from beginning to end. This should only take about 10 minutes. The goal is to grasp the bigger picture and look for connecting ideas.

## **Focus on one passage each week.**

In addition to reading the whole letter each week, take time to slow down and carefully read the specific passage for each week. Lean into the Lord and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through His Word. It might be helpful to write out the passage in the notes page in this study guide or paraphrase the passage in your own words.

## **OBSERVATIONS: What is interesting, repeated or new?**

As you focus on one passage each week, look for action words and details that are repeated as these are the main points of the passage. Use this study guide to underline words or highlight phrases that stand out. Your goal is to engage with God Word's in a way that reveals the author's intent. Use this study guide to write down notes.

## **ASK QUESTIONS: What's confusing or hard to understand?**

One of the best ways to study the Bible is to ask questions. Questions can help uncover the meaning of the text and reveal how these timeless truths apply today. Although some questions will be answered by the sermon, bring one or two questions to your group. This will allow you to learn from other members and help guide the conversation. Remember, preparation leads to participation.

## **RESPOND: What will do you?**

Now that you have read the whole book of Philippians, made observations from the weekly passage and asked a few questions of the text, it's time to shift your attention to application. Before responding too quickly, ask yourself—*Why does this matter?* Your goal each week is to identify one way to respond to the text. This should include one takeaway you can practically apply to your life. How does this passage shape your view of God or the world around you? What will you do each week?



## EXAMPLE: ACTS 16:11-40

Refer to the following as an example for how to approach the weekly text in your personal study time.

*important city*  
11 So, setting sail from Troas, <sup>Paul, Silas & Timothy</sup> we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to (Philippi) which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there *looking to connect with other Christians, no church so they met outside for prayer* was a *where are the men?* (place of prayer), and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named (Lydia), from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The (Lord) (opened her heart) to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. *Baptized immediately by the river!*

*Even evil sees and submits to God*  
16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. *people must believe this girl if she brought much gain to her owners*  
17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. → *power!*

*permanently*  
19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are (disturbing our city)." 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into (prison) ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having

received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

<sup>25</sup> About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, <sup>26</sup> and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. <sup>27</sup> When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup> But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are (all) here." <sup>29</sup> And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup> Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup> And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." <sup>32</sup> And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup> And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. <sup>34</sup> Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

why stay?  
they didn't want to escape, they want to be released!

just like Lydia!

<sup>35</sup> But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." <sup>36</sup> And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace."

<sup>37</sup> But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? (No!) Let them come themselves and take us out."

Boldness to keep a good reputation for Christ

<sup>38</sup> The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. <sup>39</sup> So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

As Roman citizens they deserved a fair trial they never received.

<sup>40</sup> So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged (them) and departed.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." -v31

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
What's repeated, interesting or new?

Lydia and the prison guard have very similar experiences but are two very different people. Lydia is a successful business owner. The prison guard works overnight with the 3rd shift. Yet both heard the gospel and believed in Jesus and were immediately baptized along with their family. Then they invited Paul and Silas as guests into their home to meet their family.

## QUESTIONS

What's confusing or hard to understand?  
Write down one or two questions and discuss this with your small group.

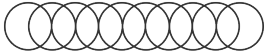
Why did Paul and Silas stay in prison after the earthquake if the doors were open and their chains fell off? Why wait for the guard to check on them and not just run out and escape?

## RESPOND

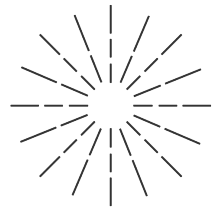
What does this passage reveal about God, yourself or the world around you?  
What is one takeaway you can apply to your life?

When God wants to build His church, He will move in powerful ways! I am challenged by Paul's boldness and demand to have respect given to Christ and the local church, even if this means he will be mistreated and suffer.





# PHILIPPIANS INTRO



# THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS<sup>2</sup>

## **Who is Paul writing to?**

Paul is writing to a group of Christians in Philippi, which was located in northern Greece. They were discouraged and fearful because of Paul's imprisonment for preaching the gospel. If you want to know how to read this letter, think of Paul writing to a group of young, scared and discouraged Christians because he is in prison.<sup>3</sup>

## **When is he writing?**

When the book was written, Paul was an old man with failing health. Sitting as a convict in Rome, he awaited his impending execution and scribbled this letter with gratitude and joy to the church at Philippi. This is around 62AD, which is 30 years after the ascension of Jesus.

## **Why is he writing?**

The church at Philippi had special significance for Paul since it was the first church he founded in Europe (Acts 16:6–40). The first convert was Lydia and women continued to have a prominent role in the church. Paul and Silas were imprisoned in Philippi for exorcising a demon from a fortune-telling slave girl, but God miraculously delivered them, and they proclaimed the gospel to the Philippian jailer. Paul likely visited the Philippians a few times after his initial departure, and they maintained active support for his ministry.

Paul wrote to the Philippians prompted by their latest gift, sent with Epaphroditus—a member of the Philippian congregation. Yet, Philippians is more than a thank you letter. Paul uses this occasion to encourage the believers to persevere in spite of opposition.<sup>4</sup> It would have been easy for the Philippians to turn their backs and distance themselves from Paul, but they remained faithful to him.

Drawing on known military language from the time, Paul exhorts the Christians to advance the gospel bravely as fellow servants of the true King in the face of terrifying opponents. This is not just an epistle of joy. It's about fearlessly advancing the gospel with joy.<sup>5</sup> Above all, Paul is hopeful that the Philippians continue to make progress in their faith. The gospel is too glorious to be content with past achievements. As God's people, we're called to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (3:14).

# PHILIPPIANS

**1** Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,  
To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the  
overseers and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord  
Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> always in  
every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup> because  
of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> And  
I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring  
it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel  
this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are  
all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the  
defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how  
I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And it is my  
prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge  
and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent,  
and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the  
fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory  
and praise of God.

<sup>12</sup> I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to  
me has really served to advance the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become  
known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that  
my imprisonment is for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And most of the brothers, having  
become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more  
bold to speak the word without fear.

<sup>15</sup> Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but  
others from good will. <sup>16</sup> The latter do it out of love, knowing that  
I am put here for the defense of the gospel. <sup>17</sup> The former proclaim  
Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me  
in my imprisonment. <sup>18</sup> What then? Only that in every way, whether  
in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, <sup>19</sup> for I know that through your prayers  
and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my  
deliverance, <sup>20</sup> as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not  
be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ

will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. <sup>24</sup> But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. <sup>25</sup> Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

<sup>27</sup> Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup> and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

**2** So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, <sup>2</sup> complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who



works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup> Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

<sup>19</sup> I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. <sup>20</sup> For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. <sup>21</sup> For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. <sup>23</sup> I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, <sup>24</sup> and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

<sup>25</sup> I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, <sup>26</sup> for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. <sup>27</sup> Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. <sup>28</sup> I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. <sup>29</sup> So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, <sup>30</sup> for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

**3** Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

<sup>2</sup> Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as

to righteousness under the law, blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— <sup>10</sup> that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

<sup>17</sup> Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup> For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

**4** Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

<sup>2</sup> I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>10</sup> I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. <sup>11</sup> Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup> I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

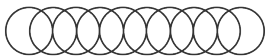
<sup>14</sup> Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. <sup>15</sup> And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. <sup>16</sup> Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. <sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>21</sup> Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. <sup>22</sup> All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

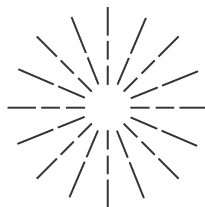
<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

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**PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11**  
**WEEK 1**



## PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

**1** Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,  
To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the  
overseers and deacons:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord  
Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> always in  
every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, <sup>5</sup> because  
of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> And  
I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring  
it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel  
this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are  
all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the  
defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how  
I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And it is my  
prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge  
and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent,  
and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the  
fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory  
and praise of God.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
What's repeated, interesting or new?

## QUESTIONS

What's confusing or hard to understand?  
Write down one or two questions and discuss this with your small group.

## RESPOND

What does this passage reveal about God, yourself or the world around you?  
What is one takeaway you can apply to your life?





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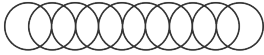
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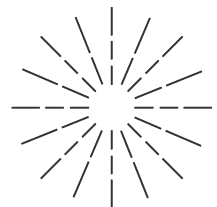
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**PHILIPPIANS 1:12-18A**  
**WEEK 2**



## PHILIPPIANS 1:12–18A

<sup>12</sup> I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

<sup>15</sup> Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. <sup>16</sup> The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. <sup>17</sup> The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. <sup>18</sup> What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
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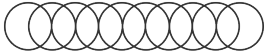
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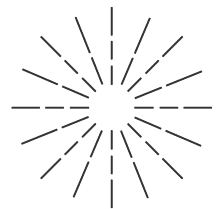
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**PHILIPPIANS 1:18B-26**  
**WEEK 3**



## PHILIPPIANS 1:18B-26

Yes, and I will rejoice, <sup>19</sup> for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, <sup>20</sup> as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. <sup>24</sup> But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. <sup>25</sup> Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
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## QUESTIONS

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## RESPOND

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What is one takeaway you can apply to your life?

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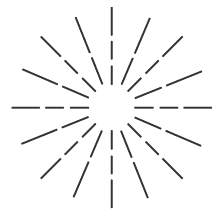
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**PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30**  
**WEEK 4**



## PHILIPPIANS 1:27–30

<sup>27</sup> Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup> and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. <sup>29</sup> For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>30</sup> engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.



# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
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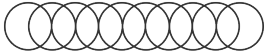
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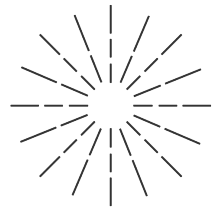
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**PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11**  
**WEEK 5**



## PHILIPPIANS 2:1–11

**2** So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, <sup>2</sup> complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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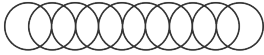
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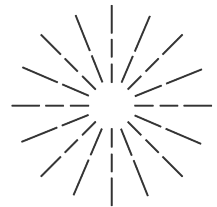
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**PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13**  
**WEEK 6**



## PHILIPPIANS 2:12–13

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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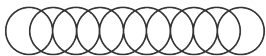


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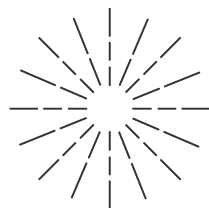
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**PHILIPPIANS 2:14-18**  
**WEEK 7**



## PHILIPPIANS 2:14-18

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup> Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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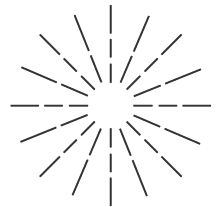
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**PHILIPPIANS 2:19-30**  
**WEEK 8**



## PHILIPPIANS 2:19–30

<sup>19</sup> I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. <sup>20</sup> For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. <sup>21</sup> For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. <sup>23</sup> I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, <sup>24</sup> and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

<sup>25</sup> I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, <sup>26</sup> for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. <sup>27</sup> Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. <sup>28</sup> I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. <sup>29</sup> So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, <sup>30</sup> for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.



# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
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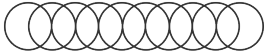
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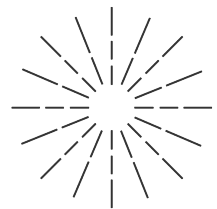
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**PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11**  
**WEEK 9**



## PHILIPPIANS 3:1–11

**3** Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

<sup>2</sup> Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— <sup>10</sup> that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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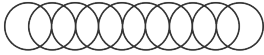
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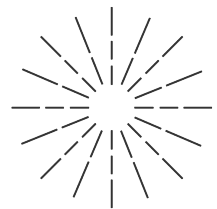
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**PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16**  
**WEEK 10**



## PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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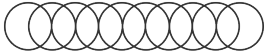
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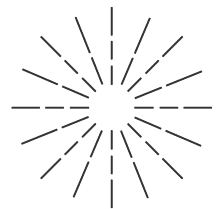
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**PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:1**  
**WEEK 11**



## PHILIPPIANS 3:17–4:1

<sup>17</sup> Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup> For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

**4** Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

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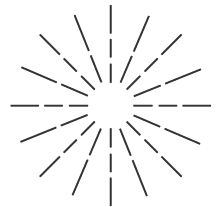
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**PHILIPPIANS 4:2-9**  
**WEEK 12**



## PHILIPPIANS 4:2–9

<sup>2</sup> I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.



# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

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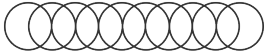
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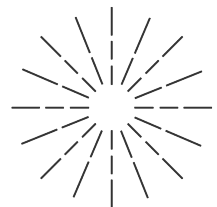
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**PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13**  
**WEEK 13**



## PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13

<sup>10</sup> I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. <sup>11</sup> Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. <sup>12</sup> I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

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## QUESTIONS

What's confusing or hard to understand?  
Write down one or two questions and discuss this with your small group.

## RESPOND

What does this passage reveal about God, yourself or the world around you?  
What is one takeaway you can apply to your life?

# SERMON NOTES

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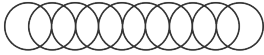
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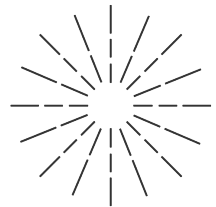
# GROUP NOTES

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**PHILIPPIANS 4:14-23**  
**WEEK 14**



## PHILIPPIANS 4:14-23

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. <sup>15</sup> And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. <sup>16</sup> Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. <sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>21</sup> Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. <sup>22</sup> All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

# STUDY NOTES

## SCRIPTURE

Read the whole book of Philippians. Then, read this week's passage. Write down a phrase or verse that stands out to you from this week's passage.

## OBSERVATIONS

What actions or details stand out?  
What's repeated, interesting or new?

## QUESTIONS

What's confusing or hard to understand?  
Write down one or two questions and discuss this with your small group.

## RESPOND

What does this passage reveal about God, yourself or the world around you?  
What is one takeaway you can apply to your life?

# SERMON NOTES

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# GROUP NOTES

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# **EIGHT COMMITMENTS OF SMALL GROUP**

## **1. SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

I will pursue spiritual growth and encourage my group as they grow in their walk with Christ.

## **2. CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS**

I will be present and make it a priority to know and stay connected with the people in my group.

## **3. ACCEPT OWNERSHIP**

I will look for big and small ways to contribute and care for needs that come up in my group

## **4. BE AUTHENTIC**

I will trust, be transparent and strive to be open while maintaining respect and confidentiality in my group.

## **5. EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY**

I will invite my group to speak into my life while extending grace to my group.

## **6. CELEBRATE GROWTH**

I will encourage and celebrate when God is working in the lives of my group.

## **7. SERVE TOGETHER**

I will serve with my group and look for ways to permeate the westside of Indianapolis with the hope of the gospel.

## **8. MULTIPLY MINISTRY**

I will be open to new members and as we grow, we will multiply to advance God's work so more people can experience what we have experienced.



# ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



## WEEKLY GAUGE:

1. This week was great. My high was...
2. This week was bad. My low was...
3. This week was the same. I am stuck in a rut...



## VICTORY AND FAILURE:

1. What is one win from this past month?
2. What is one failure from this past month?
3. How are you being recharged?
4. What has been most draining?



## MORAL GUARDRAILS:

1. Am I aware of any unconfessed sin in my life?
2. Do I have anyone I need to forgive or ask for forgiveness?
3. Have I been jealous, lying or complaining?
4. Have I been with a man or woman in an inappropriate way?
5. Have I exposed myself to any explicit materials this week?
6. Have I looked for opportunities to point others to Christ and the hope of the gospel?
7. How have I demonstrated love and respect to my spouse?
8. How have I sought to have spiritual input with my family?
9. What is one relationship I want to focus on?
10. How can my small group support me?

# CHARACTER QUALITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



WHAT CHARACTER QUALITY DO YOU WANT TO GROW IN?

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT YOU AS A SMALL GROUP?

**Boldness** – not afraid to share your faith with gentleness and conviction

**Compassion** – empathy for someone and courage to act on their behalf

**Contentment** – at peace rather than worry, fear, anxiety, envy or jealousy

**Even-Tempered** – not reacting with sinful anger or a quick temper

**Faith** – unswerving confidence in God and His promise of good regardless of present circumstances

**Forgiveness** – releasing someone from a wrong that has been done and not dwelling on it

**Honesty** – truthful and above reproach in all things; not deceptive

**Initiative** – inviting people into your life and taking an interest in others through hospitality and service

**Joy** – supernatural delight in the Lord that overflows into a love for others

**Kindness** – putting the needs and well-being of others first

**Patience** – a spirit of mercy, humility and trusting that God is in control

**Peace** – fulfillment and confidence that comes from being rightly related to God and others

**Purity** – thinking and acting in godly ways while fleeing from sexual immorality

**Self-Controlled** – bringing thoughts, emotions and actions under the control of the Holy Spirit

**Truth in Love** – willing to speak what's right while not being harsh

**Wholesome Speech** – build others up with words that edify; not vulgar, gossip, slander, lying or sarcasm

# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH



WHAT SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE DO YOU WANT TO GROW IN?  
HOW CAN WE SUPPORT YOU AS A SMALL GROUP?

**Accountability** – to be honest with yourself, honest with others and honest before the Lord

**Bible study** – desire for God's Word; regular time of reading, studying, meditating and applying Scripture

**Corporate worship** – engage with God and other believers by participating in weekend worship

**Fasting** – take a break from food, media or activity to use this time to meet with the Lord through prayer, focus and dependence on Him

**Giving** – cheerfully and generously giving to the Lord and others through your time, talents and treasure

**Prayer** - a regular time of praise, confession and intercession for others

**Rest** – setting aside time to slow down and stop the busyness of life as a reminder that our final rest is in heaven

**Scripture memory** – hiding God's Word in your heart and reflecting on Scripture

**Serving** – looking for big and small ways to care for the needs of others

## ENDNOTES

1. Merida, T., Chan, F., Platt, D., & Akin, D. L. *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Philippians*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016).
2. *ESV Study Bible: English Standard Version*. (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2008).
3. Dever, M. *The Message of the New Testament*. (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2005).
4. Merida, T., Chan, F., Platt, D., & Akin, D. L. *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Philippians*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016).
5. Merida, T., Chan, F., Platt, D., & Akin, D. L. *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Philippians*. (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2016).



