

Small Group Discussion Guide
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Phillipians 4:1-9

Leaders Notes

Merry Christmas! This is our last sermon discussion guide before the New Year. This week we finish Phillipians by looking at how every aspect of our lives is different when we submit our lives to Christ's authority. Also, if you have not responded to the end of the year survey, please do so online by the end of the day Sunday.

Discussion Questions

Read Phillipians 4:1-9

1. According to Paul's teaching in this section, how is your life different because you are "in Christ?" Specifically in the following areas:

- a. your Relationships (vv1-2.)
- b. your disposition / countenance (vv 4-5)
- c. your concerns? (6-7)

2. How can we practice the things taught by Paul without being legalistic (elevating the DO above the DONE)?

Read Phillipians 4:10-23

3. Paul indicates here (10-13) that he doesn't let his circumstances affect his eagerness and willingness to serve Christ because of his belief in the gospel. When your life is easy do you doubt your need for God? and when it is difficult, do you doubt that God is doing something in your life that is for your good?

4. How does verse 19 help us understand the often misunderstood meaning of verse 13?

1. Answers:

- a. relationships: You are “in the lord.” Therefore there is a common bond that exists between you and other believers as a result of your standing before Christ. This bond is so important to Christ and therefore to Paul, that they both throughout the scriptures encourage unity in the church. So when we face conflict with those believers in our church, we have a default setting that is “agreement” in Christ. That is, we give one another grace and we practice humility and forgiveness as we pursue conflict resolution.
- b. Disposition / countenance: This is one for your personal reflection: how can you rejoice in the lord in all of your circumstances? If you can't, what does that tell you about how much you value your standing before Christ?
- c. Your concerns: you can still be “concerned” about things, but that concern does not control your thoughts and emotions. You are able to be at peace with what is happening in your life because you believe in the power of God and that you have an audience before Him and he listens to you.

2. **Answer:** Paul is teaching the Philippians to train themselves towards righteousness. This is ok because Paul teaches and admonishes this in light of the gospel. Because of sin, our minds and bodies do not drift towards Christ but away from him. We must train ourselves in our pursuit of Christ otherwise we are just riding an emotional roller coaster.

3. **Answer:** basically, what Paul wants his readers to see here is that circumstances, good or bad, are not tied to one's standing before God in Christ. Therefore you are free from anxiety or apathy towards your circumstances to fully engage in serving and worshipping Christ.

4. **Answer:** Verse 13 isn't telling us that if we add Christ into our protein milkshake we will finally be able to benchpress 425 lbs. Yet often that happens. What verse 19 shows us is that God who supplies our needs to accomplish the things he wants to accomplish (his glory). So don't tattoo verse 13 on your back.