

## COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**Advancing by Suffering***Joy Made Complete* | Philippians 1:12-14

## REVIEW

Paul wrote Philippians for the sake of unifying the church in the enjoyment and advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unity in the gospel births communal joy that results in the advance of the gospel to the lost. As we partner together in the gospel, the result is **joy made complete**.

Verses 8 highlights Paul's affections for the Philippians church and verses 9-11 reveal what he's praying for his brothers and sisters. This prayer comes from his affections of love and aims to produce actions of love. The love here is sacrificial, costly, other-oriented love that does not require reciprocation (*agape* love). To some level, that love is already present in the Philippian church and Paul prays that it would abound more and more to the glory and praise of God.

## APPLY // PHILIPPIANS 1:8-11

Consider practical ways to apply the text of Scripture. Think about implications at the individual and corporate level remembering God's word shapes our beliefs and our behaviors.

1. Read Philippians 1.
2. Focusing on verses 8-11, what drives Paul's affections for the Philippians church? How do you see that same type of affection in your own life or in the life of other Restoration Church members?
3. What do you think stifles our affections for one another? What do you think spurs our affection for one another?
4. How does the *agape* love Paul prays for in verse 9 compare with some cultural definitions of love?
5. Why is it important to remember true love has both affection and actions?
6. How does the gospel enable and ensure this type of love within a local church?
7. What are some specific examples you have seen *agape* love inside of our church body? Are there areas you want to see it abound more and more?
8. How does this *agape* love result in glory and praise to God?

## STUDY // PHILIPPIANS 1:12-14

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God's word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Re-read 1:12-14.

2. How does this passage relate back to verses 1-11? Specifically, why does Paul feel the need to assure the Philippians of the gospel progress here in verses 12-14?
  3. In verse 12 Paul references “what has happened to me.” What are some of the specific events that have happened to Paul (cf. Acts 16:19-24; 2 Cor. 11)?
  4. As Paul writes, he sits in prison (v. 13). He says, “my imprisonment is for Christ.” What does that mean?
  5. Read 4:21-23. How does that help us understand what’s taking place in 1:12-14.
  6. In verse 14, Paul says his imprisonment has had effected other believers in two ways – confidence and boldness. Is that what you would expect? Why would Paul’s imprisonment have such an impact?
  7. What keeps us from having confidence in the Lord and boldness “to speak the word without fear?”
  8. What is Paul’s supreme focus in these verses? How does this challenge you to relate to your circumstances?
- 9.
10. General Bible study questions:
    - a. What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
    - b. What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
    - c. How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
    - d. How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other help apply the gospel to your lives.

**QUESTION:** Where are you encouraged by the sacrificial love expressed within the life of Restoration Church? What are some area areas where you need to ask God to help your sacrificial love abound more and more? What are some areas where you can praise God for the presence of sacrificial love in your life?