

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Living Worthy of the Gospel (Pt. 1)*Joy Made Complete* | Philippians 1:27

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**.

In verses 18b-26, Paul teaches the Philippians by revealing the struggles of his heart. On one hand, Paul desires to see Christ face-to-face, which means death. On the other hand, Paul knows that his gospel partnership with the Philippians will result in fruitful labor if he remains alive. In the end, Paul knows that either in life or death, Christ will be honored in his body.

APPLY // PHILIPPIANS 1:18B-26

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. What do you notice about Paul's confidence in verses 18-26? Where is his confidence? How does this challenge you?
3. Paul understands that all of life is lived inside the "circle" of Christ. Why are we tempted to let Jesus only be one "circle" of many within our lives?
4. How do you see Paul living out his own prayer from verses 9-11 here and putting his own desires aside to pursue other-oriented love?
5. Paul equates fruitful labor with helping the Philippians "progress and joy in the faith." What are some ways this fruitful labors manifests itself in your life and in the life of Restoration Church?
6. For the Christian, why is dying gain? How does this help you now?

STUDY // PHILIPPIANS 1:27

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 1:27-29. (Focus on verse 27 this week)
2. Notice the first word. Discuss the purpose of starting the sentence with "only." What does that communicate to us?

Part of having the discussions the way we are is to help people read their Bibles. Most of us would run right over this first word. But stop and get the group to discuss why Paul would put this word here. He could have just said, "Let your life..." but instead he

said, **“ONLY let your life...” I think Paul is communicating something of heightened importance. To get the sense of “only” you can look at different translations.**

3. What does the phrase “manner of life” mean? Is there a difference between “manner of life” and individual actions we may commit? If so, how do we differentiate between the two?
 4. What does it mean to be “worthy of the gospel of Christ?”
The gospel is that we are not worthy of Christ. But now Paul says to live worthy of the gospel? Again, think about what these phrases mean and do not mean. Paul is clearly not saying we have to have a perfect life that’s worthy of earning Christ. Get the group to discuss what he does mean – remember to keep all of Philippians in context. Think about the differences between the manner of life and individual actions we may commit. The former is what characterizes us (the literal translation as your footnote might say is “behave as citizens worthy)”, the latter might be isolated incidents, that if sinful we need to repent of.
 5. How does the “so that” help you understand the meaning of this passage?
 6. Paul calls the Philippians to marked by “standing firm in one spirit with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”
 - a. What theme(s) do you see in this phrase?
 - b. What does it mean to stand firm in one spirit with one mind?
 - c. How do personal differences/desires related to being in one spirit with one mind?
 - d. What does it mean to strive for the faith of the gospel?
 7. How do you see what Paul desires in the Philippian church present in the life of Restoration Church? Praise God for where this is the case.
 8. Where do you think we need to improve and/or what things do you think are likely to attack our unity in the gospel? Pray to God for continued progress and protection/promotion of our gospel unity.
There are a couple of striking themes in this verse: unity, community, centrality of the gospel. Help the group think about these themes and their importance in the life of a church. What do we need to be united in? Everything? In not, then what? How do we deal with differences in preference or desire? Remember, he’s not just talking to individual Christians but to “you all.”
- Try to bring the discussion to concrete ways this unity in gospel community is happening at Restoration. Also think about ways we need to improve and/or areas where our specific church is most vulnerable to division. Take some time to praise God where we have unity, ask him to continue to protect and promote the unity inside the life of our church.**
9. 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: How is your love for God and love for others?