COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Citizens of Earth
Joy Made Complete | Philippians 3:17-19

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 3:12-16, Paul tells the Philippians he is not perfect. Yes, his spiritual longings to know Christ are immense, but he's does not know Christ Jesus fully and is not like him completely. Therefore, Paul presses on to become like Jesus because Jesus has made him is own. Paul presses on because he has been purchased by Christ not in order to be purchased by Jesus. Paul rests confidently knowing God will work in those who are mature enough to admit they have not arrived.

APPLY // PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16

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 3:1-16
2. Why does Paul immediately tell the Philippians he is not perfect? What effect might this have on the Philippians? On us?
3. Why is it important to remember that we, like Paul, have not yet arrived to complete maturity? What are some ways people might respond to their sin/shortcomings/weaknesses that are unhelpful? How do these ways compare with how Paul responds?
4. Explain Paul's motivation for pressing on? How can we be motivated the same way? Discuss dangerous motivations and their potential results.
5. What does Paul mean when he says, "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead"? What might this look like in our lives?
6. How does heaven motivate us to press on toward Christ? What are some practical ways we can think about heaven in our daily lives?

STUDY // PHILIPPIANS 3:17-19

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. Read Philippians 3:12-19.
2. What's the main idea of verses 17-19?

3. In verse 12, Paul just admitted he was not perfect. Now he's telling the Philippians to imitate him. How can Paul make such a statement knowing he and others are imperfect? What makes Paul worthy of imitation?
4. What does verse 17 teach us about the role of community and discipling in the life of a Christian? At what point in our Christian walk should we be able to say what Paul says, "Imitate me…"?
5. What do you notice about Paul's attitude in warning the Philippians about enemies of the cross? Why is Paul in tears as he is warning the Philippians? How should this inform our attitude toward unbelievers?
6. Paul describes the enemies in a couple ways:
    a. What does it mean these enemies' end is destruction?
    b. What does it mean "their god is their belly"?
    c. What does it mean "they glory in their shame"?
    d. What does it mean to have "minds set on earthly things"?
7. Overall, how would you describe these enemies?
8. Which of these enemies' traits do you struggle with most?

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 apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: Where do you see God's grace in your pressing on toward Jesus? Where would you like to see God's grace help you press on all the more?