

## Small Group Guide – Week 50

### A Life Worthy of the Gospel

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*December 13-19*

*Philippians 1:27-2:16*

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

### ***Philippians 1:27-2:16***

After Paul's opening remarks in the letter to the Philippians, he turns to discuss how the Christians at Philippi should live. He describes the manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ. He begins by explaining why it is so important to live a life worthy of the gospel (1:27-30). Then, he presents the main quality that each Christian should possess (2:1-4) before presenting Jesus Christ as our example and Lord (2:5-11). The section then ends with Paul providing an exhortation and challenge (2:12-16). Paul's message is that the salvation provided by God produces a radically changed life that distinguishes the Christ-follower from the unbeliever.

### ***Study the Text . . .***

***Christ-followers are united in faith as they strive together for the sake of the gospel (1:27-30).***

Paul's words to the church in these first four verses are encouraging but also challenging and a little terrifying. The standard he calls for is perfection. He calls the church in the city of Philippi to be united and working together or striving together for the sake of the gospel. This is not an easy task. The church in Philippi was very diverse. Today it is still difficult for Christians to find unity together, but unity is Paul's message and there is a reason.

- What is a clear sign to the enemies of the Christians of their destruction?
- What two things have been granted to the Christian for the sake of Christ?
- What conflict is Paul and the church at Philippi engaged in fighting?

When the enemies of God see God's children united and working together for the advancement of the gospel of Christ in the midst of adversity, they realize their lives are meant for destruction and that Christians are truly saved by God. Therefore, our manner of life and attitude towards one another is a clear witness of the power of the gospel of Christ. The church unites to be a witness to the world. Secondly, the church unites and strives together because we have been granted to not only have faith in Christ but also suffer for the sake of Christ. The way we suffer for Christ is also a witness to the world, but God does not desire for Christians to suffer alone. In the midst of suffering, we should find our comfort in Christ and His church. See 2 Corinthians 1:3-11. The third reason the church is to be united is because we are engaged in the same conflict that Paul is engaged in fighting. The church is at war against the forces of this world. We all know that a united army is stronger and more powerful than an army that is divided. Together as one united church Paul is calling the Christians at Philippi to take on the forces of darkness with the message of the gospel. To read a similar challenge by Paul to the church at Ephesus see

Ephesians 4:1-16.

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

- Do you feel like it is difficult for the church to unite and strive together pursuing one purpose? Why or why not?
- Do we live as if our manner of life is a clear sign that our salvation is from God?
- How do you feel about suffering? Are you prepared to suffer for Christ?
- Have you ever thought about the difference between suffering alone, and suffering along side the body of Christ?
- What conflict are we engaged in along with Paul?
- Do we live like we are at war?

### ***Study the Text...***

***Humbly count others as more significant than yourself as you live united lives in purpose and love (2:1-4).***

Paul's focus does not change at the beginning of chapter 2. He is continuing to expound the manner of life that Christians are to live. He reiterates the importance of being of the same mind especially considering we all have the same love. Then, he commands us to not do anything out of rivalry or conceit but to humbly consider others as more important.

- Why is unity such a big theme in the writings of Paul?
- What does it mean to be humble?
- Why do you think Paul has to tell Christians to not do anything out of rivalry or conceit?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in the life of a Christian who desires to be humble?

### ***Group Discussion...***

- How do you define humility?
- How important is humility in the life of a follower of Christ?
- How important is the Holy Spirit in a Christian's ability to be humble?
- Why do we struggle with rivalry and deceit in the church?
- Are there currently any rivalry or pride issues that we need to address?

### ***Study the Text . . .***

***Christ Jesus humbly made himself nothing and died on the cross to provide salvation for sinners and bring all glory to God (2:5-11).***

Verse 5 begins with Paul saying, "have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus." Paul is about to present Jesus Christ as an example of humility, and he says that we can be humble like Christ because of Christ. We can have that mind. Why?

## Small Group Guide – Week 50

### A Life Worthy of the Gospel

The Church at Brook Hills

December 13-19

Philippians 1:27-2:16

---

Because Christ gives us the ability through His Spirit to live a humble life.

- How is Christ described in verses 6-8?
- Read Luke 2:1-7.
- Read Luke 23.

Jesus came into this world not in a palace but a barn. His first bed was a manger. He then died naked on a cross. He became a humble servant so that God the Father would be glorified. Because of his humility, God the Father exalted him above every name. Jesus is Lord and every tongue will confess this truth.

### ***Group Discussion...***

- During this season of advent, let us reflect on the birth of Christ and consider how the God of this world took on human flesh and became a man. Where was he born? To whom was he born?
- Jesus' life was not one of royalty but of faithfulness to His father. Looking at the life of Jesus, how do you define humility?
- Jesus did not humbly die on a cross because he was seeking to be the Lord of the universe. He already was. So why did he die?
- Why do we humbly serve Christ as he humbly served His father?

### ***Study the Text...***

***Christ-followers shine as lights in this world as they hold fast to the gospel of Christ (2:12-16).***

This passage ends with Paul reiterating his challenge for the Christians at Philippi to serve God together without grumbling or questioning. He challenges them to continue to obey, but he reminds them that God is the one working in them for his pleasure and glory.

- Why does Paul tell them to work out their salvation with fear and trembling?
- How do we hold fast to the word of life?

### ***Group Discussion...***

- In this dark and twisted world, how do we shine as lights of the world?
- Can we shine as lights or be humble servants without the power of the Holy Spirit?
- Is there any grumbling or division in the small group or among you and others in the church that needs to be resolved?
- How can we encourage and support one another as we work out our salvation with fear and trembling and hold fast to God's word?
- How does God use us working through divisions and conflict to work out our salvation and make us more like Christ?