

Dig Deeper into Philippians 1:12-26 for individuals and lifegroups

Philippians 1:12-26 The priority of the gospel

What matters is that the good news goes out...

- 1) v12-14 ...despite opposition
- 2) v15-18a ...despite mixed motives
- 3) v18b-26 ...despite delaying being with Christ



Q: What's getting in the way
of this priority for you?

comfort
waiting
busyness/distraction

Here are some questions and resources to help dig deeper into Philippians 1:12-26....

1. V12-14. How is it that suffering can advance the gospel? How did it happen for Paul, how might it happen today? What perspective might this put on any situations you or others are facing at the moment?
2. V15-18a. Some people are more likely to shy away from sharing the gospel, others are more likely to share the gospel but with wrong motives? Which is more of a temptation for you, and what lessons are there here?
3. Which of Paul's attitudes in v18b-26 are you most challenged by and why?
4. What would you say are the things that get in the way of you sharing the good news with others? What is there to remember about Jesus that helps you?

Pray that Philippians might help you to see the wonder and the priority of the gospel. Why not spend time rereading and meditating on Phil 2:5-11 to this end. And pray for specific friends and family who you would love to see come to know him.

Some resources...

- Turn over for a little introduction to some themes in **Philippians** (repeated).
- Here is the **Bible Project's** introduction and helpful diagrammatic representation of Philippians, also showing how central Phil 2:6-11 is in the book:
<https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-philippians/>
- Click here for a **wordsearch** on Philippians!
https://www.christianbiblereference.org/ws_Philippians_0.htm
- Listen to the "Two sisters and a cup of tea" podcast, series 10 is on Philippians:
<https://www.twosistersandacupoftea.com/season-11/philippians>
- Tim Keller's interview about his terminal cancer can be found at:
<https://www.premierchristianity.com/interviews/tim-keller-i-never-want-to-go-back-to-the-prayer-life-i-had-before-cancer/14736.article>



An introduction to four brief themes in Philippians...

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel Phil 1:27.

A “JESUS MINDSET”...

The word mind (2:2) or mindset (2:5) comes up a couple of times in the book, particularly in the famous chapter 2, when Paul is calling upon the Philippians to have the same humble and other-person-centred thinking of Jesus (also exemplified in Timothy 2:19-24 and Epaphroditus in 2:25-30). The same “mindset” word is also translated *feel* 1:7, *view* 3:15, *mind* 3:19 and 4:2 and *concern* 4:10. It will be fantastic to pray for one another (using perhaps the prayer of 1:9-11) that we will have this “Jesus mindset”. We can pray that the good news of Jesus’ identity (before whom every knee will bow, 2:10), his gift of righteousness (which trumps all worldly forms of status, 3:7-8) and the many reasons he gives us to rejoice even when circumstances are hard (1:18, 4:4), will help us to stand together in partnership in the gospel, becoming more like him each day.

PARTNERSHIP...

The Greek word *koinonia* (meaning fellowship or partnership) comes up in different ways in 1:4, 1:7, 2:1 and 4:14 (translated “partnership” or “sharing”). Paul had a deep relationship with these Macedonian churches, and they were commended for their financial generosity in 2 Cor 8:1-4 above and beyond their means. This theme will be really helpful to us as we consider how we can partner together in the work of loving Jesus, loving one another and loving Huntingdon at CCH. Not only in formal roles on the rota, or generous giving, but in all the small acts of love that happen between church and lifegroup members as we seek to do everything without arguing or grumbling (2:14).

SUFFERING...

Paul is suffering as he writes this letter (likely from a prison in Rome in around AD 62), though he can speak of many benefits that come from that (1:12-26). The Philippians are also likely facing some sort of opposition (1:28) as they seek to live out their faith in the only Lord and Saviour in a very Roman town that would have pressed for loyalty to Caesar. Many in our church are suffering in different ways at the moment. Let’s allow God’s word to help us to see how God can use suffering, but also let’s support and encourage one another as Paul did with the Philippians and the Philippians did with him.

UNITY...

Paul calls the Philippians to stand together as one (1:27) and to be like-minded (2:2). When a church is under pressure, it’s so easy to let relationships suffer, and for little things to get between brothers and sisters (as was obviously happening for Euodia & Syntyche- two workers who had fallen out). In the place of grumbling and arguing, Paul calls for abounding love (v9) and bags of joy! (1:4, 1:18, 1:25, 2:2, 2:18, 2:29, 4:1, 4:4). We have a wonderfully united church, but the book will help a Christ-centred unity to grow despite difference, finding common ground that overcomes relational difficulties.

As you read through Philippians in your own time you’ll spot these and other themes.