



**1. Gospel-Centered Community: The Church is a Family**

- Philippians 1:1
  - A. The Christian life is not meant to be lived alone.
  - B. Overseers (Elders) led the spiritual matters and decision-making.
  - C. Deacons led the tangible serving ministries.
- Philippians 1:3-4
  - A. “Joy” (*chara*) is used 16 times in Philippians, “The Epistle of Joy”.
- Philippians 1:7-8
  - A. Paul’s attention was not on himself: It was on the gospel and his fellow “partakers of grace”.
  - B. Jesus said in Mark 3:31-35. “whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”
  - C. What are your core relationships really centered on?

**2. Gospel-Centered Courage: Faith Has a Ripple Effect**

- Philippians 1:9-11
  - A. Love + Knowledge = Discernment
  - B. “Fruit” (*karpos*) is also used to list the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.
  - C. John 15: He is the vine and we are the branches. We bear fruit when connected.
  - D. We are not the main characters.
- Philippians 1:12-14
  - A. It takes someone bold to start the ripple effect in a workplace, family, friend group, or school.

**3. Gospel-Centered Mission: The Church is an Army**

- Philippians 1:20-21
  - A. “To live is Christ” - Jesus is not an accessory in our lives.
  - B. “To die is gain” - Those in Christ have everlasting life and our old selves have already died because we are a new creation. There is nothing worse that the world can throw at us; therefore, we can be fearless.
  - C. Christians were severely persecuted under Emperor Nero (54-68 AD) and Diocletian (303-311 AD) and Christianity grew each time.
- Philippians 1:27-29
  - A. The Armor of God is listed in Ephesians 6. Our weapons are not physical. They are spiritual.
  - B. We are deceived to think that any path avoids suffering altogether.
  - C. Suffering for Christ today may include changes in social dynamics or priorities.
  - D. Matthew 16:24-26

## **Group Discussion Questions**

1. Read Philippians 1:3-8. God calls us to have a strong vertical relationship with Him and strong horizontal relationships with each other. Is the Church today known for joy-filled relationships like what we see between Paul and the Philippian church? How can we better live this out and what are some of the barriers that keep us from having joy-filled relationships?
2. Read Philippians 1:9-11. What helps you stay filled with the “fruit of righteousness” (the fruit of the Spirit) and what detracts from this on a daily basis?
3. Read Philippians 1:12-14. Have you ever seen someone’s faith have a “ripple effect” in a workplace, family, friend group, or school? How can you start this in your setting?
4. Read Philippians 1:20-21. Why does it so often seem that Jesus is an “accessory” for people’s lives rather than the focal point? What fears keep us from going “all in” for Jesus today and if dying is “gain”, what is left for us to be afraid of?
5. Read Philippians 1:27. “Core to Corners” is a theme that we see throughout the New Testament. How can we balance the joy of relationships with “striving side by side for the faith of the gospel”? In other words, what does it look like for the church to be a family and also be an army?