

PHILIPPIANS – LESSON 2 – “There You Are!”

DAY 8

Begin this week by reciting Philippians 1:21

Memory Verse:

Philippians 1:21

²¹For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Now try to say it from memory.

Reflect: Paul wrote these words from prison while he was in chains. He knew that Heaven was his home and his eternity with Jesus was secure. In light of this, he could declare that going home to be with Jesus in the after life is better than the hardships we face in this life. When Paul wrote “to live is Christ” he was telling believers that pressing forward in this life and serving others is our way of becoming more like our Lord. What are ways you can follow Jesus with increasing faithfulness, even when the road is hard?

DAY 9

Read: Philippians 1 and Philippians 1:9-11.

Reflect: How we think and the way we see the world dramatically impact how we live each day. Paul does not simply pray for love to increase. He asks God to deepen the knowledge, insight, and discernment of the Christians in Philippi. Love that is led by wisdom and insight is powerful. If we find ourselves responding to raw emotions and don't temper these feelings with wisdom and heavenly insight, we may find ourselves acting with grace but lacking truth. How can you increase your prayers for knowledge, insight, and discernment for both yourself and the Christians you care about?

Journal:

- List Christians you love and care about who need to grow in wisdom and insight as they follow Jesus.
- What specific prayers can you lift up for each of these people, and how can you encourage them to continue loving with grace but also keep growing in knowledge and discernment?

Pray: Pray for God to grant you, and people you love, increasing spirit-led knowledge, insight, and discernment. Confess where you have operated on loving grace but have lacked wisdom and insight into God's truth.

DAY 10

Read: Philippians 2 and Philippians 1:12-14

Reflect: Your chains can unleash someone else. What a revealing passage of scripture! Paul writes that his suffering, incarceration, and boldness to keep preaching has ignited a fire in the hearts of other believers. The gospel was advancing. Some of the believers that heard of Paul's situation began to share the good news of Jesus on their own. Paul's chains unleashed the gospel. Are you willing to count the costs and follow Jesus, even if it costs you something? How can your willingness to follow Jesus and face hardship or persecution advance the cause of Jesus in the places God has put you?

Journal:

- What were some of the positive outcomes of Paul's very painful and negative situations?
- What are specific ways you could count the cost and pay the price for following Jesus, and how could God use your faithfulness to spread the good news tight where you live, work, and play?

Pray: Ask God to give you courage to count the cost, take up the cross, and follow Jesus no matter where he leads and what the cost might be.

DAY 11

Read: Philippians 3 and Philippians 1:15-18

Reflect: Paul makes mention of some "Here I am" people who claim to know and follow Jesus. Try to get your mind around what is happening. Paul was in jail because of his faith and was facing serious persecution. At that same time, some Christians were trying to antagonize Paul while he couldn't preach. Driven by envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition, these people went out to proclaim the good news of Jesus....mainly to spite Paul. It seems crazy! Though their motives were corrupt, the gospel was not! Paul rejoiced that the good news of Jesus was proclaimed, even when it was done by people that were self-centered. How can you search your heart and seek to share Jesus out of good will and not selfish ambition?

Journal:

- List people you know who share Jesus with a pure heart and consistent passion? What can you learn from their example?
- What are some steps you can take to share your faith more often? What tools and learning opportunities can you use that will equip you to share faith with greater effectiveness?

Pray: Pray for theme members of your church to grow in their passion for the gospel, love for the lost, and practice of sharing their faith through the rhythms and flow of their days.

DAY 12

Read: Philippians 4 and Philippians 1:19-20.

Reflect: *Hopeful, confident, and trusting*.....these words reflect the disposition of the apostle Paul while he was in a brutal situation. Through this season of persecution, he was confident that God would use even his imprisonment to bring glory to Jesus and spread the good news. When it was all said and done, Paul's deepest desire was to exalt his savior Jesus Christ, even if it cost his own life. What is your faith like when things seem to be going wrong, people are turning against you, and your efforts to live for Jesus seem to backfire? Do the words *hopeful, confident, and trusting* reflect the condition of your heart?

Journal:

- How do you tend to respond when you face deeply painful times and it feels like God is far away?
- How can you express greater faith and confidence in God during the hard times you face as a follower of Jesus?

Pray: Pray for Christians you know and care about who are going through a hard time. Ask God to give them hope, confidence, and trust that God is on the throne.

DAY 13

Read: Philippians 1:21-26

Reflect: Paul's honest and unguarded words in this passage reveal a man who was saying "There you are." If Paul was only thinking of himself, he could have given up, stopped fighting, and just let Jesus take him home to glory. Instead, he kept pressing on, refused to give up, pined up the cross, and kept following Jesus. What motivated Paul to keep pressing on? It was the people he loved and the lost sheep who still needed Jesus. Paul's life shouted from the rooftops "There you are!" He was all about serving others, no matter the cost. What price will you pay for others to meet Jesus and encounter the Savior who died for them?

Journal:

- Consider the people that God has placed in your life so that you can help them grow and progress in their faith (family, friends, people at church, neighbors, etc....)
- What are ways you can help one or more of these people make progress in their journey with Jesus or to Jesus?

Pray: Pray for personal discipline and diligence to help others grow in faith. Ask God to make this an ever increasing passion in your life.

DAY 14

Memorize: Conclude this week's personal study by again reciting **Philippians 1:21:**

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Reflect: The incarnation of Jesus was an act of infinite sacrifice. He left the beauty of heaven for the stench of a stable. He relinquished angelic praise to hear words of rejection and denial. To live like Christ is to walk in his footsteps. What can you sacrifice as you increase your commitment to follow Jesus? It could be time, reputation, finances, or anything else you tend to hold on to. Make a choice to sacrifice something today so you can follow Jesus every day.