



HOW TO LIVE: Reading the Book of Philippians

6-7:30PM Wednesdays / Sept 10 - Nov 12 / WEPC Chapel

Life is complex. The New Testament book of Philippians provides us with straightforward spiritual guidance in light of the essential teachings of Christianity. For anyone that would like to grow as they learn what it means to follow Jesus. Led by Kevin Greene, Changjwok Deng, and Becca Wethered. Questions? kevin@wepc.org

What's Our Plan?

Class	Date	Text	Theme
1	Sept 10	Acts 16:6-40	How to Begin a Church
2	Sept 17	Philippians 1:1-11	How to Enjoy People
3	Sept 24	Philippians 1:12-30	How to Hope
4	Oct 1	Philippians 2:1-11	How to Know God
5	Oct 8	Philippians 2:12-18	How to Grow
6	Oct 15	Philippians 2:19-30	How to Have Fellowship
7	Oct 22	Philippians 3:1-9	How to be Ruthless
8	Oct 29	Philippians 3:10-21	How to be Passionate
9	Nov 5	Philippians 4:1-9	How to Make Peace
10	Nov 12	Philippians 4:10-23	How to be Content

Catch Up & Warm Up

"I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon... I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare... as a son with a father he has served with me in the Gospel." Philippians 2:19-22

"I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all." Philippians 2:25-26

Last week we talked about Paul and the partnership he has with his trusted co-laborers, Timothy (19-24) and Epaphroditus (25-30). We learned that these unlikely relationships only come about in light of Jesus Christ.

At the end of class, we explore a few things that make for a good fellowship.

- Sharing Christ
- Gospel Partnership
- Bestowing Honor
- Vulnerability

So, let's try it out: Think about someone you value as a partner in the Gospel. What do you appreciate about them? How do they serve as a complement to you in ministry? What are some ways Jesus uniquely works through them? **Take a risk this week and tell them** how you see Jesus at work in them, and how you enjoy your partnership in the Gospel.

Philippians 3:1-9, How to be Ruthless

- When do you find yourself getting angry?
- What is righteousness?

¹Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

²Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. ³For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—

- What is the connection between “rejoice in the Lord” (1) and Paul’s outrage (2)?

- Paul uses three contemptuous terms for his opponents in v.2. What does each one communicate?

1.) “Dogs”

²⁶ “And he answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” Matthew 15:26

2.) “Evildoers”

³² “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” Luke 5:32

3.) “Mutilators of the flesh”

⁶ “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love”. Galatians 5:6

- What was the purpose of circumcision in the Old Testament?

“This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring.”
Genesis 17:10-12

- Paul has three affirmations for his fellow Christians in v.3. What does each one communicate?

1) “We who are the circumcision”

¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well” Romans 4:11

2) “We who serve God by his Spirit”

²⁴ “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24

3) “We...who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh”

⁴ though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

- What credentials does Paul have?

- What point is Paul making here?

⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

- How does Paul discount those credentials?

- What additional items does Paul add to his list?

- Why does Paul discount those credentials?

“Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”
Matthew 16:24-26

Further Thoughts on *How to be Ruthless*

Diagnostic Questions

- If you were to die tonight, would you go to heaven?
- If God were to ask you, “Why should I let you into heaven”, what would you say to Him?
- What does God think of you right now?
- What can you do to change His opinion of you?
- When is it most difficult for you to believe that you are righteous in Christ, you have God’s love, favor, and acceptance?

The Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 60-61

How are you righteous before God?

Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.

Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments, of never having kept any of them, and of still being inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without any merit of my own, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, and as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.

All I need to do is accept this gift with a believing heart.

Why do you say that through faith alone you are righteous?

Not because I please God by the worthiness of my faith. It is because only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness make me righteous before God, and because I can accept this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than through faith.

Seeing & Becoming Like Jesus: Britton Smith

Our repeated themes for Wednesday Night Fellowship will be **Spiritual Vision: Seeing Jesus** (“What is Jesus doing?”) and **Spiritual Formation: Becoming Like Jesus** (“How do we change and grow to look like Jesus?”).

Paul tells the Philippians to “put no confidence in the flesh (3)” and rejoice in “the righteousness that comes from God that depends on faith” (9). **Think of a time or situation where you found yourself angry. How did Jesus meet you in your anger? What is it that you need to speak the truth in love?**

Group Discussion

Tell the group about a time or a situation where you found yourself angry. How did Jesus meet you in that situation? What is it that you need to speak the truth in love?

Practice

“And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith” (Philippians 3:9).

This week, pay attention when you are tempted to put confidence in the flesh. Then, repent and remember that Christ died for your sin and for your righteousness.

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God." I John 3:1 Stuart Townend ©1995 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing). Used by permission. CCLI #708363

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He would give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross
My guilt upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power's, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Before the Throne of God Above

"These are they which follow the Lamb... they are without fault before the throne." Revelation 14:4-6 Charitie Lees Bancroft (1863); Tune: Hubert Parry (1916). Public domain

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is love
Who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on His hands
My name is written on His heart
I know that while in heav'n He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart
No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end to all my sin
Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me
To look on Him and pardon me

Behold Him there! the risen Lamb
My perfect, spotless Righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM
The King of glory and of grace
One with Himself I cannot die
My soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high
With Christ, my Savior and my God
With Christ, my Savior and my God