

Being Disciples: Practicing the Way of Jesus

A STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS

Practicing the Way of Jesus Together For Brooklyn

Dear RPS family,

As we come to the conclusion of Paul's letter to the Philippians we are reminded why Paul is writing this letter in the first place: to say thank you. The church in Philippi has supported Paul throughout his ministry and now that he is in prison their generous gifts are keeping him alive. In these final verses Paul explores the place of gratitude and stewardship in the life of a follower of Jesus.

Paul demonstrates and teaches us that discipleship is about using the gifts you have been given, those gifts that have been entrusted to you, for the glory of God and for the service of others.

Paul thanks the Philippians for their concern, he calls them to be content, he celebrates their consistency, and demonstrates his confidence in the fact that God is a generous God and will supply every need of theirs. Ultimately Paul is echoing Jesus, who invites us to rest in this generous God and in doing so to live generous lives. God's gifts are limitless, and His love knows no bounds and that means we, with joyful confidence, can give to others all that God has given us.

In Christ,
Chris

The Way of Stewardship

Study for the Week of 11.22 | Philippians 4:10-23

Look to the Scriptures

- Open in prayer ask God to for wisdom to discern, for eyes to see and ears to hear.

Look to the Text

- What is happening in this passage? What phrases jump out at you?
- Faith - In v. 11-12 Paul speaks of being content in every situation and knowing the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need? Why would Paul have to talk about "facing plenty" as though that were something he would need to be practice being content in? Do you find it difficult to be content when you have plenty? Do you ever think you have plenty? And then, of course, how does Philippians help us find contentedness in seasons of need?
- Love - Paul commends the Philippians for their consistency in their love and support of him. They have been steady and steadfast as Paul has been on his missionary journeys. How does their consistency model for us how we are to use our gifts and resources? Why is consistency an important part of being a steward of your gifts and resources?
- Hope - In verse 13 and 18 Paul expresses a confident hope that God will supply his every need. How has this proven true for Paul in his relationship with the Philippians? Reflecting on your own recent weeks, how have you seen v.13 and v.18 come to fruition for you? Take the time to share and celebrate and cultivate hope in the God who supplies or every need in Christ Jesus.

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Luke 11:11-13

Listen to one another

- Consider sharing places where you are facing hardship in this season of your life.
- Or pray a version of the Examen such as sharing the following:
 - Consolation: A time in the past week where you felt close to God.
 - Desolation: A time in the past week where you felt far from God.
 - Looking ahead: What are you looking forward to or most worried about in the coming week

Pray

- Spend time praying for one another and our world incorporating both what you have studied and prayer requests in your time of prayer.

Practice

- Paul encourages the Philippians in Phil 4:9 to “practice these things”, so take this time over the next few weeks on 1 or 2 spiritual practices that you would like to work on. It could be something you are currently doing or a new practice you want to take up. You can do this as a group together or as individuals, but consider how you can practice the way of Jesus together during this time. Some suggestions: Daily Scripture reading, keeping Sabbath, fixed-hour prayer, memorize Philippians 2:5-11 together, etc. Talk about how what you have discussed in your group might help your daily/weekly practices.

How are your spiritual practices helping you to have the mind of Christ? How do they lead you out thinking first about yourself and instead thinking and serving others?