

# **Philippians: To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain (Matt Chandler)**

## **1. Odd Beginnings (Acts 16:6-40)**

*16:6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. 7 And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. 8 So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 And when Paul[a] had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.*

*11 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.*

*16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.*

*19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.*

*25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, 26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. 27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." 29 And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. 34 Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.*

*35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." 36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace." 37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out." 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. 39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. 40 So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the relationships you have into which you could bring the gospel? What reasons keep you from sharing it boldly?

2. Describe the people that Paul meets in Philippi as described in Acts 16 and how the gospel is shown or spoken to each of them:

a. Lydia (16:14-15)

b. The demon-possessed girl (16:16-18)

c. The jailer (16:23-34)

3. Paul approached three different people three very different ways. What does that say about how we spread the good news today?

a. How would you approach a 'Lydia' today? Similar to how Paul did or differently?

b. You probably do not regularly encounter demon-possessed girls in our culture today. Is there any modern-day application for the approach Paul took to the demon-possessed girl?

- c. The conversion of the jailer is remarkable in that Paul was able to forgive his unnecessary stocks for the sake of telling him about Christ. Why could Paul forgive so quickly something so awful and undeserved, yet we are so slow to forgive wrongs done to us?

4. In the first two conversions, Paul approached the women with words. In the third (the jailer) he used only actions, and the man begged him to tell him about Jesus. What does this say about the balance of words and actions communicating the gospel in our culture today?

5. If you would? Summarize the bible teaching in a sentence. This helps remind you of what you learned and gives a tangible sense of what you read. Go ahead and do that now.

**Memory verse:** "Then the jailer brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.'" (Acts 16:30-31, ESV)

## 2. The Worthy Life (Philippians 1:1-30)

*1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

*12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. 14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.*

*27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. If the mature Christian life is a life where you (a) do life deeply with others regardless of external differences, (b) strive for holiness, and (c) press into Christ in fearlessness, are you growing in your Christian life?

2. Describe some of the difficulties and challenges to living a life worthy of the gospel in our culture today. Be specific!

3. What impact does the dramatic polarization of our society (*i.e. Republican vs. Democrat, Christian vs. non-Christian, etc.*) have in your life? As you share the gospel? As you build relationships with others? What are some other polarized groups that affect you on a regular basis?

4. What are the barriers and external characteristics that we unconsciously (perhaps) use to divide our society and put people into different 'groups' in our minds?

5. List some of the factors and issues that keep Christians from standing together as one. How could this be improved among evangelicals?

6. The Greek word for 'strive' in 1:27 is *synathleo*. It is defined as: "work with someone, implying against an opposition or competitive struggle" and is used only here and in Philippians 4:3. What do this verse and definition imply about how we ought to 'strive'?

7. Agree or disagree: Most Christians strive in many areas of life except their faith.

a. If this is true, why is that and what can be done about it?

b. In what other areas do you strive?

8. Why do Christians erroneously think that when we come to faith, our daily sin should disappear more than it does in reality? Where did we get this idea?

a. Let's not make the same mistake. How can we communicate tension between the unacceptability of sinning for the Christian, and yet the reality that we will still sin?

9. Define: "Fearless Christianity" and explain why it is so hard to practice?

10. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21, ESV)

### 3. The One God Exalts (Philippians 2:1-4, Luke 1:39-55)

*2:1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

*1:39 In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, 40 and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42 and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."*

*46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.  
50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.  
51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;  
52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;  
53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.  
54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,  
55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."*

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Read Mary's song in Luke 1, paying close attention to how God handles the meek and lowly. Are pride and a sense of entitlement present in your life?

2. How can you, like Mary, say that your soul 'magnifies the Lord' (Luke 1:46)?

3. Mary sang this after receiving great news. How can we do that after we have just heard dreadful news or, really, news of any kind?

4. How is it that we have managed to kill gratitude in our lives? Why do we feel a sense of entitlement instead of thankfulness?

5. Are you around meek people? Who? Do you have anything to learn from them?
  
6. What are the effects on a community of believers when Philippians 2:2 is followed or ignored?
  
7. Philippians 2:3 says to do *nothing* out of rivalry or conceit. Is that realistic?
  
8. We can learn a lot about what the Scriptures *do* say by what they *do not* say. 2:3 DOES say: 'in humility *count* others more significant than yourselves'. It does NOT say: '*treat* others more significant than you'. What if it said the latter, not the former? What would the implication be?
  
9. We are called to have confidence in Christ (2 Cor. 3:4; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 3:5-6; 4:16). How do you 'fear' God while approaching with confidence?
  
10. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3, ESV)

## 4. The One God Opposes (Philippians 2:3-11, Luke 1:50-53)

*2:3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*1:50 And his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.*

*51 He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;*

*52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones  
and exalted those of humble estate;*

*53 he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you see people like they have souls or are they your servants?
2. What things can you do that aren't so pleasant so others do not have to?
3. What do you do when you see people chasing what appears to have value, meaning, and substance but is really chasing the wind? What do you chase that diverts your attention from God?
4. Why do we chase wind?
5. **James 4:6** says that God 'opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble'. So?

6. Talk about the true source of our grumbling. Is it even feasible to never grumble?

7. For who or what would you risk your life? Would you honestly be willing to lose your life so that the gospel would advance?

8. Do you approach your community of faith with the attitude and the heart of 'how do I serve' or 'how can I be served'? How can you either become a person that approaches it to serve or stay that way if you already are?

9. An objective evidence of conversion is humility in service. What are some others?

10. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "Do all things without grumbling or questioning." (Philippians 2:14, ESV)

## 5. Christianity Made Simple (Philippians 3:1-9, Psalm 63)

*3:1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and 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. 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—*

*63:1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.  
3 Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.  
4 So I will bless you as long as I live;  
in your name I will lift up my hands.  
5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,  
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,  
6 when I remember you upon my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
7 for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.  
8 My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.  
9 But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth;  
10 they shall be given over to the power of the sword;  
they shall be a portion for jackals.  
11 But the king shall rejoice in God;  
all who swear by him shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why don't we yearn? Why is there a gap between certain 'great' men and women, and us? Is there a gap in your life?

2. Why are we so easily satisfied?

3. The goal is not to be looking good on the outside, but to have our goal be Him. What does that mean and how does a Christian accomplish that?

4. What are some of the reason we ought to go hard after Jesus?

5. What are the 'secondary pursuits' in our lives that distract us from the primary?

6. What are the things that stir your affections for Christ?

7. The author of Hebrews makes the claim that there is sin, and then there are things that hinder you that are not necessarily 'sin' (Hebrews 12:1). What are the things that hinder you that are not 'sin'?

8. How can someone who lives their Christian life as a list of rights and wrongs, move it to a life that is consumed with Christ?

9. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Philippians 2:8a, ESV)

## 6. Owned (Philippians 3:7-12)

*3:7 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— 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What is it that stirs your affections for Jesus Christ, and what is it that robs those affections?
2. What are the three reasons that Paul gives to pursue Christ?
3. True or false: The church where everyone looks pretty on the outside is dangerous. Explain:
4. It seems that when Christians fall into great sin they retreat. They retreat from God, their spouse, their friends, and their God. Why is that? What would you tell someone that might help them learn to move towards God and his people instead of away during those times?
5. Why don't we yearn for God?
6. Church as a 'hobby' is a terrible way to live your life. What is an appropriate word for filling in the blank? "Church is a \_\_\_\_\_".

7. What exactly is the help to Christians today to see the men and women in the Bible and all throughout Christian history living deeply for Christ?

a. What can you do to let that impact you in a greater way?

8. One of the main challenges of this text is to move things you value that are ridiculous and think of them as rubbish. That means moving them from things that may have driven you for years to completely moving them out of your life. How does that happen?

9. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** “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 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 3:8-9, ESV)

## 7. Never Satisfied (Philippians 3:12-15)

*3:12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What are some spiritual goals that you might need to set for yourself? Remember, these need to be tangible, possible, and need to have some kind of time frame attached to them.
2. What changes would need to take place for someone to become an applier of the Scriptures instead of just one who acquires more knowledge of it?
3. How do you develop a holy discontentment? What things are OK to be discontent about, are there things that are not?
4. If knowing where you are weak and where you are strong serves as the basis for holy discontentment, where are you weak and strong? Who are others you can ask to help you see this in you?
5. Who are some men and women that are weak where you are strong? How can you purposely sharpen each other?
6. What are some 'victories' in your past?

a. Are you remembering them in a positive way (encouragement) or negative way (complacency)?

7. List some other areas of life in which you strain (i.e. job, school, etc.)? Why do those come to the surface and take priority over spiritual straining?

8. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."  
(Philippians 3:14, ESV)

## 7. Waiting (Philippians 3:16-21, Titus 2:1-8)

*3:16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained. 17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

*2:1 But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. 3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, 4 and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. 6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 7 Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How are you going to apply the truth of God and when?
2. Are you being obedient to that which you already know?
3. Who are godly men and women that you can get 'under'? What keeps younger Christians from seeking out these relationships? What characteristics should these people have?
4. Where are your eyes?
5. Why do we always want something new as opposed to growing in what we already know?

6. In what areas are you essentially living out a lie by not applying what you know? Who could you talk through this with, confess to, and get prayer coverage from?

7. The Christian's eyes and hearts should be set on the day where all is made right and we sit at the banquet table of the Lamb. Why do we substitute this fallen, broken, pathetic world for that glorious reality? What specifically diverts our gaze?

8. "Any time something negative happens, it is a gift to remind us of our fallen, broken world." Is it really a gift? Is it truly possible to see the negative things that happen as a reminder that this is not home?

9. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself." (Philippians 3:20-21, ESV)

## 9. Rejoice? (Philippians 4:4-6, Romans 11:33-36)

*4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

*11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What situations have you been in, what tragedies have befallen you that you would ask God to redeem? What can you dwell on now that might change your perspective, knowing the teaching of this text?

2. 'God knows every fact. Ever.' What are the implications of that in your life? What about as you plan your life – mate, kids, jobs, money, etc.

3. 'He does not owe you anything.' What does that imply when struggles and hard times hit?

4. Matt describes his child as something 'on loan from God' and 'everything I have is already His.' Do you see your kids like that? Your job like that? Your spouse? Your money?

a. How would your life change in these areas if you truly saw it?

5. The session talks about not scrutinizing God. We probably do not do that overtly, but are there subtle ways we live where we show a lack of faith and arrogance by scrutinizing Him?

6. What does a person look like who is rejoicing biblically? Smiling? Energetic? Weeping?

7. One of the toughest things is to give wise counsel to someone who is hurting. We either give ridiculous Christian advice (“Smile...God is in control.”), or go to the other extreme and do them injustice (“I understand. It is OK to be mad and to be frustrated with God”). What can you tell a person who is hurting? A way to think about it might be to ask yourself what could someone say to you that would actually help?

8. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4, ESV)

## 10. Mature Faith (Philippians 4:4-10)

*4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. 10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What is going on in that head of yours? Where does your mind find itself dwelling?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What discipline does Paul say we use to combat anxiety? What type of that discipline is used?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who are some people you know that are marked by peace?
  - a. What external things do you see that make you believe that about them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What would you suppose is going on internally in that person?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Discuss the balance of truth and emotions. How can a Christian keep in tension the true doctrine of Scripture, yet keep the relational aspect alive?

5. What are some of the lies that believers buy into that pull them into sin?

6. Flesh out “dwell on truth.” What does that mean? How does it look in everyday life?

7. What is a fantasy of yours that you can call to mind regularly?

8. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” (Philippians 4:6, ESV)



5. Paul seemed to intentionally walk into places where lows would be experienced. These places are where he knew that when he preached, he would be punished. Why did he do that and why do we avoid those types of situations so much?

6. Why haven't Christians experienced the polar opposites that Paul did? Is it just 'fate'? Something in us (i.e. cowardice)?

7. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

**Memory verse:** "Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am, to be content." (Philippians 4:11, ESV)

## 12. True Contentment (Philippians 4:11-23)

*4:11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. 14 Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. 15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. 18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How do we become someone that does not just give mental assent to facts but have our life changed by the Bible and by Christ?

2. Define 'contentment.'

3. What are the two places from which we learn contentment?

a. Of the two places, which do you learn more from?

b. Are you exclusively from one or the other?

c. Why do you think you lean towards one over the other?

4. Matt tells the story of his horrible illness in Asia and how he had sweet times with the Lord during that episode. How does someone in a time like that have a sweet time with the Lord? Is that realistic for all Christians or just pastors?

5. How would you explain to someone – in context – Philippians 4:13? Are there any other passages that come to mind that you hear often taken out of context?

6. Summarize the teaching of this passage in one sentence.

7. Summarize the teaching of the book of Philippians in one or two sentences. Write out some of the life lessons that you will take from this.

**Memory verse:** “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Philippians 4:19-20, ESV)