

STUDYING THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS
IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 3 - Imitating Christ's Humility - Philippians 2:1-11

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.

PHP 2:1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, [2] then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. [3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. [4] Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

PHP 2:5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

PHP 2:6 Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

PHP 2:7 but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

PHP 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death--
even death on a cross!

PHP 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

PHP 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

PHP 2:11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 3 - Imitating Christ's Humility - Philippians 2:1-11

25. What four qualities mark unity with Christ? (2:1)

26. How can Christians show their unity in Christ in practical ways? (2:2)

27. What did Paul say about self-centeredness? (2:3-4)
28. What did Paul exhort believers to have? (2:5)
29. What did Christ set aside when He became a man? (2:6-8)
30. How did Jesus limit Himself? (2:6-8)
31. How was Christ fully God and fully man at the same time? (2:6-8)
32. How is Christ the best example of humility and unselfishness for us? (2:6-8)
33. Why did Christ take on the limitations of being human even though He was of the same nature as God? (2:7)
34. How did God exalt Jesus? (2:9)
35. How did Christ win sovereignty over all people and over everything? (2:10)
36. What confession will every person make? (2:11)

Lesson 4 - Shining as Stars - Philippians 2:12-18

PHP 2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

PHP 2:14 Do everything without complaining or arguing, [15] so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe [16] as you hold out* the word of life--in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. [17] But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. [18] So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 4 - Shining as Stars - Philippians 2:12-18

37. What did the Philippian Christians need to obey? (2:12)
38. What were the Philippian believers to work out? (2:12-13)
39. How would God help the Philippians obey Him? (2:12-13)

40. What instructions did Paul give in relation to everyday Christian living? (2:14-16)
41. Why were the Philippians not shining "like stars" in their world? (2:14-16)
42. Why did the Philippian assembly need to show a united front to unbelievers? (2:14-16)
43. What would enable Paul to boast about the Philippians? (2:14-16)
44. Whose honor was Paul concerned about? (2:16)
45. How did Paul view his own life? (2:17)
46. How did Paul view the faith of the Philippian believers? (2:17)
47. What did Paul want his friends at Philippi to experience? (2:18)

Lesson 5 - Timothy and Epaphroditus - Philippians 2:19-30

PHP 2:19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. [20] I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. [21] For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. [22] But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. [23] I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. [24] And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

PHP 2:25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. [26] For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. [27] Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. [28] Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. [29] Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, [30] because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 5 - Timothy and Epaphroditus - Philippians 2:19-30

48. Why did Paul plan to send Timothy to the Philippians? (2:19)
49. What was Paul's opinion of Timothy? (2:20)

50. What was Timothy's relationship with the church at Philippi? (2:20)
51. In Paul's view, why did Timothy stand out? (2:21-22)
52. When would Paul send Timothy to the Philippians? (2:23)
53. Why was Paul confident that he would revisit the believers at Philippi? (2:24)
54. Who was Epaphroditus? (2:25)
55. Why did the Philippians send Epaphroditus to Paul? (2:25)
56. How did Epaphroditus feel about his friends in Philippi? (2:26)
57. What happened to Epaphroditus? (2:26-27)
58. How did God spare Paul tremendous sorrow? (2:27)
59. How did Paul demonstrate his selflessness? (2:28)
60. How were the Philippians told to welcome home Epaphroditus? (2:29-30)
61. Why were the Philippians told to honor their messenger? (2:30)