

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

PHILIPPIANS

LESSON #1 Living On Top of the Pile

INTRODUCTION

God's purposes are accomplished in the world through the work of God's Spirit and the work of God's people. How has this combination worked in your own spiritual journey?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Philippians 1:1-2

Note: Paul founded the church at Philippi before any others in Macedonia (on his second missionary journey). This was likely written from prison in Rome around A.D. 60-62. It is his letter for thanks for helping him in his time of need. The major theme is that God expects the Christian life to be joyful, made more so by the unity of believers with a common mission. Paul had a special place in his heart for these believers. We will see how he was a servant to the people of Philippi. God used Paul's obedience and faith to begin this church.

Read Acts 16:6-15

1. What principles do we learn from Paul about following God's leading?
2. When have you experienced a 'divine redirection' from God? What were the results?
3. How does Lydia's life illustrate the work of God's Spirit and the work of God's people?
4. What significance might there be that the first European convert was a woman?

Read Acts 16:16-40

5. We see two kingdoms in conflict here. What values are reflected in each? Vv. 16-24
6. What happened to Paul and Silas as a result of the complaints of the slave girl owners?
7. How did Paul and Silas deal with their situation? Vs. 25 How was this possible?
8. Imagine you were imprisoned with Paul and Silas. What might you be feeling? How might your response to these circumstances have been different from theirs?
9. Why didn't Paul and Silas escape following the earthquake? What does this reveal about their character? What was the result of their actions?
10. What were God's higher purposes in having Paul and Silas imprisoned?
11. How might God have used these events in the life of the new church in Philippi?

APPLICATION

- What is one principle from this lesson which you can apply to help you be a more effective witness in your circle of influence?
- For next week: read Paul's letter to the Philippians at least once (takes 10-15 minutes).