

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

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

PHILIPPIANS LIVING ON TOP OF THE PILE LESSON #2 Paul's Prayer

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS/ METHODS

WHAT APPROACH SHOULD I TAKE IN BIBLE STUDY?

- OBSERVATION: (1) **What does it say?**
Facts: historical background, literary context, grammatical structure.
- INTERPRETATION: (2) **What does it mean?**
Meaning: definitions, other passages, translations, commentaries.
- APPLICATION: (3) **What does it mean to me?**
My Life: teaching, reproof, correction, training. Commands to obey?
Promises to claim? Sins to confess? Examples to imitate?

INTRODUCTION

When you want to show your friends that you care about them, what do you generally do?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Philippians 1:3-11

Note: Paul wrote this letter to his close friends, the Christians in Philippi. This was the first church established in Europe. Being a prisoner could have presented an obstacle to their wholehearted support, but they took the attitude that it was their imprisonment too. No doubt this meant more to Paul because the church at Rome divided into two groups concerning him—to some, his imprisonment was part of the problem. The chains proved to be no obstacle.¹ Paul's "defense" of the Gospel was made to officials in government leaders in Palestine and Rome. It was an opportunity for Christians to address the emperor.

1. How does Paul feel about these Philippian believers? Why?
2. What strikes you about Paul's words in verses 3-4? (note four inclusive words)
3. How have they demonstrated their partnership with Paul? vv. 5, 7
4. How does Paul demonstrate his partnership relationship with the Philippians? vv. 3-9
5. What "good work" did God begin in these believers?
6. How can Paul be sure that this good work will be completed? Vs. 6 What does this mean for us today?
7. After mentioning praying for them vv. 3-4, what does Paul actually pray? vs. 9 Col 1:9-11
What balance do you see reflected in this request? Why is that important?
8. Paul has more specifics in mind: "so that..." vv. 10-11 What four Christian qualities will result from his request in verse 9? How is each of these essential to spiritual maturity?
9. What does Paul's prayer teach us about how we are to pray for others?
10. How does contact with close friends help us deal with tough circumstances?

APPLICATION

- 1) What commands should I obey? 2) What promises can I claim?
- 3) What sins do I need to confess? 4) What examples should I imitate?

¹ Melick, R. R. (1991). *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* (Vol. 32, p. 60). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.