

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

2-18-07 - "The Philippi Church of Christ – More Peace"

OPEN: Below are several stereotypical "negative" situations. See if you can find a way to focus on the possible "good" contained within them:

- A child that has just turned "of age" decides to leave his mom and move in with his dad.
- You find out that your spouse lied to you.
- Your spiritual mentor is involved in an addictive sin.
- A close friend gets fired for "no apparent reason".
- Your child/grandchild/friend's child confesses to you that they are addicted to drugs/alcohol.

DIG: Read Philippians 4:2-8

Get to work! In verses 2-3, Paul speaks of Euodia and Syntyche (who are having a disagreement with each other) as past "co-workers" for the gospel. He also calls Clement and the rest of the church his "fellow workers".

- How does "getting to work" in taking the gospel message to the lost help a church by-pass disagreements and disunity on lesser issues?

Get to rejoicing! In vs. 4, Paul says this twice...almost as if his Philippi brethren might read past this as impractical advice.

- How can rejoicing be a practical part of a Christ-follower's life (in other words, what would it look like for someone to have "rejoicing" as something on their daily "to-do" list)?
- If a person actually spent time each day doing some rejoicing, what would be involved? What effect would it have on the individual? What effect would it have in his/her difficult relationships or conflicts?

Get to praying! In vs. 6, Paul says that anxiety has no place in a Christ-followers life. If anything, it should lead him/her towards grateful prayer and petition.

- What do we get anxious about in other people that would cause us to be dis-unified with them?
- When we have "legitimate worries," how would physically bowing our heads to God, finding a place of gratitude for Him, and then laying those worries out in prayer and request overcome our worry/anxiety?

Get focused on the right things! In vs. 8, Paul may very well articulate the "secret to life".

- Here are some Christian's objections to living life faithful to this verse. How would you respond to them?
 - "Your living in denial of 'real life' if you don't focus on the negative, too."
 - "Paul is just giving us an ideal to 'shoot for', he never expected us to do it in every single circumstance."
 - "Fixing things is what brings peace. Not just focusing on the true, noble, right, pure, lovely and admirable things."
 - "Sometimes, in some situations, or with some people, there is nothing excellent or praiseworthy. This verse doesn't apply to those."
- Can you think of other objections?

DISCUSS

- Can you think of a scenario that has NOTHING praiseworthy in it?
- Can you think of a person who has NOTHING praiseworthy about them?
- Can you think of a person that could convince you that they have NOTHING in their life that is praiseworthy?
- Is there an experience in your life that you have yet to find something praiseworthy about?

PRAY: Ask God to make all of us "rejoicers", "pray-ers", and "focused thinkers" so that we may have more peace that "passes all understanding".