

Philippians: Week 3 Study Questions

Philippians 1:18-26

Paul gives the church of Philippi a mature perspective on suffering as he perseveres and chooses to rejoice through his imprisonment. Through his humble dependence on others and on the Spirit, his confident hope built on past experiences of God's faithfulness, his heart held captive by Jesus, and his understanding that there is always work to do for the gospel, Paul encourages the Philippians to continue on until God calls them home.

Application

1. In humble dependence, Paul knows that the church of Philippi is praying for him because he has allowed himself to be known by them. Who are you fully known by? Who in your life prays for you? What would it look like for you be more transparent and vulnerable within your community so that people can pray more specifically and effectively for you?
2. [Romans 5:3-5](#) tells us that suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope—this is an unbroken chain. If you are in the midst of a season of suffering, how can you see this taking form in your own life? Looking back on suffering in the past, how has it produced endurance, character, and hope in you?
3. Bill suggested that the people who fear suffering the most are people who have not suffered. Some of us live our lives every day trying to avoid suffering. In what ways do you try to minimize suffering in your life? How much energy and time are you spending trying to avoid it? What is one area where you need to lean in to suffering, knowing that it produces hope?
4. How is your view of death different from what Paul describes in Philippians 1:21-24? In what ways do we view death as “loss” rather than “gain”? If you had to fill in the blank for, “To live is _____”, what would you say? (Ex. to be a parent, to be loved by a soulmate, to be productive, to be accepted, etc.)

Key Points

- Regardless of what happens in our circumstances, we should be confident that Jesus is going to give us what we need and will accomplish all that He wants to accomplish in us and through us.
- When we are captivated by Jesus, there is a kind of loving and being known that we will not fully experience until we lock eyes with Him. No amount of intimacy in this world is comparable. When we see Jesus Christ face to face, *that* is the gain of death. It's not theological, theoretical, practical—it is personal.
- When our hearts are captivated by Jesus, death is just the tunnel through which we pass in order to have an unmediated experience with our Beloved—every other experience of intimacy and life is but a dim, faint reflection.
- Hopes in this world will disappoint you, but hope like that produced in Paul's life will not end in emptiness.
- Everything that is good, right, and beautiful that we may be tempted to put our hope in is only here temporarily to point us to Jesus.