

A PHILIPPIANS STUDY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

October 15, 2023

PHILIPPIANS week 5 - Woody Morwood

This Discussion Guide is designed to help you **think more deeply** about the sermon and **engage with others** through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and **allow God to work** in your life as you apply what you discover.

➤ CONVERSATION STARTER

Share a picture from your phone that best captures who you are.

➤ EXPLORATION

Over the last five weeks we have been looking at themes for a victorious Christian life. We have heard about; Cheerful Courage, Praying Boldly, Living with God-Confidence, Surprising Success and True Obedience.

This week will focus on the end of Philippians Chapter one which Paul wrote to encourage and instruct the church. He was unable to be with them because he was in prison and his future was uncertain. He wanted them to be prepared no matter what happened.

Philippians 1:27-28a

“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened

in any way by those who oppose you.”
~Philippians 1:27-28a

In the verses just prior to this powerful passage, Paul reminded the people that he was in a life or death situation and he was at peace with “whatever happens.” Even in light of this, he urged them to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. The Greek word for **“conduct yourself”** is actually a political term that means to “behave as a citizen.”

If you could be a citizen of 2 countries, in what other country would you want to have citizenship? Why?

Paul was urging them to live as good citizens of God's Kingdom. He was not referring to their earthly citizenship in Rome or Philippi, but to their heavenly citizenship.

Paul is saying, Whatever happens:

- *Remember your citizenship in heaven*
- *Remember your identity in Christ*
- *Remember your Godly safe house, your Jesus zip code*
- *Remember what governs your reality - you are a citizen of Heaven*

As followers of Jesus we have dual citizenship. This is a concept that we see throughout the bible. Today we will look at two examples of people who conducted themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. We begin with the story of a woman named Lydia.

Acts 16:11-15 (From your bible, read aloud)

Lydia was a woman from the city of Thyatira who was living in Philippi. She was a seller of purple cloth which would mean that she was a wealthy person. Her earthly citizenship was in Thyatira, but we also see how she lived out her heavenly citizenship.

Lydia was known as a “worshiper of God.” When she heard Paul’s teaching, she led her entire family to be baptized. She then became an important contributor to the work of Paul; offering him hospitality and support for his ongoing mission to spread the gospel.

Another example of a person who clearly lived out their dual citizenship is Epaphroditus.

Philippians 2:25-30, 4:18 (From your bible, read aloud)

The name “Epaphroditus” is a pagan name which means “belonging to Aphrodite” who was worshiped as a Greek goddess of beauty and love. Every time his Greek name was mentioned - people would automatically associate him as someone who belonged to another god.

But here we see Epaphroditus taking great risk to deliver aid and support to Paul. He was so committed to the gospel of Christ that he risked his life to do his part in spreading the gospel. Paul was so moved by the devotion of Epaphroditus that he went to extreme measures to see that he was able to return to Philippi with honor.

What is one thing that you would be willing to risk your life for? Be specific

Both Lydia and Epaphroditus lived out their faith with action. They believed that their citizenship in heaven was more important than their earthly affiliations. Their identities were clear.

Remember Paul's instructions that whatever happens we are called to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. This can be lived out in large and small ways. It means that our

identity is rooted and established first and foremost in Christ and our actions will reflect our allegiance.

When we wonder about our identity and our allegiances we may ask ourselves the following questions:

- Who am I?
- Who will I be moving forward?
- Whose am I?

When our primary affiliation is in being a citizen of Heaven the answers to these questions become shaped by our faith.

Philippians 1:27b (From your bible, read aloud)

We are people who will **“stand firm in one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel.”** The passage goes on to say that we do this **“without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.”**


What would it look like for the church to stand firm in one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel?

What will you do specifically this week to live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ?

> TAKE AWAY

There is so much we can learn from Paul’s letter to the Philippians. As we live faithfully no matter what comes our way, we learn to rely on God for everything we need.

Take some time this week to watch the Bible Project overview of the book of Philippians on the following link:

 [Book of Philippians Summary: A Complete Ani...](#)

Take time to pray for one another that you would conduct yourselves in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ this week.