



Philippians Group Discussion Guide Week 8

The guide follows the same format: three questions followed by prayer. My additional questions are in italics. Please especially make sure you consider the application questions I ask. Have a great study!

Read Philippians 3:17-4:9.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

4:1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

What does the text say? In this section we are seeking to make as many observations as we can. I encourage you to mark up the text above you (underline, circle, draw lines connecting verses/words, write short comments, etc).

- Summarize the context...what was said in the preceding verses? How does this fit within Paul's thought process?
- What are key words/phrases in the passage?
 - What are the repeated words/phrases? Why are they significant?
 - What are important connecting words and how do they help us understand Paul's point?

- What themes or ideas are being emphasized?
- What does this passage say about God? Man? Sin?
- What questions do you have?
- Some other questions to help discover what the text says:
 - *In verse 17, Paul says to imitate him. What does he want them to imitate?*
 - *Who are the enemies of the cross? What does it mean that their god is their belly and their glory is their shame and they have their minds set on earthly things?*
 - *What does it mean to be a citizen of heaven?*
 - *What does it mean that we await our Savior? What specifically do we learn about the hope we have as Christians from the end of chapter 3?*
 - *How does the beginning of chapter 4 relate to chapter 3?*
 - *Look at 1:27. How do verses 1-3 of chapter 4 relate to that verse and help us understand what Paul says here?*
 - *Why is this division between these two women such a big deal?*
 - *What themes are mentioned again in 4:1-9 that have been mentioned in the book already?*
 - *Paul has commanded them to rejoice multiple times in this letter. Why does Paul emphasize this so much?*
 - *How does Paul say to combat worrying? What are the specific steps (pay close attention to each word)?*
 - *In verse 8 Paul gives 8 parameters for our thinking. Describe each one. How does this relate to chapter 3 and the enemies of the cross who have their minds “set on earthly things”?*
 - *In verse 9 Paul again tells them to emulate his example. Why does Paul continue to emphasize this point?*

What does the text mean?

- Describe Paul’s main point in a sentence or couple sentences. What is the big/main idea?
- What are some of the subpoints? Summarize Paul’s thought process and some of his supporting points.
- What other passages could be helpful in understanding this text better?

How do I/we apply this passage?

- What are we to think/feel/do?
- What sins does this passage expose in you/us?
- *Does your life give evidence that you are a citizen of heaven?*
- *How does 3:20-21 encourage you?*
- *Do you struggle to rejoice always? Why? How does this passage challenge you and help you?*
- *How do you struggle with worry and how can this passage help you?*
- *How can you dwell more on things that fit the parameters mentioned in 4:9?*

Pray

- What is there to praise God for from this passage?
- What sin(s) is there to confess?
- What is there to ask God for?