



### Philippians Group Discussion Guide Week 6

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 2:19-30.

*19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. 20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. 23 I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, 24 and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also. 25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, 26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, 30 for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.*

**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:
  - *It may seem like Paul is just giving traveling plans for Timothy and Epaphroditus; however, there is clearly a lot more going on here. How is this connected to the preceding verses? What has he been saying up to this point? Summarize what Paul said at the end of chapter 1 about a life worthy of the Gospel and what he has said in chapter 2 about having the same mind as Jesus Christ. Notice similar phrases and words and images.*
  - *How do Timothy and Epaphroditus serve as examples of how Paul has been telling the Philippian church to act towards one another and live in the world?*
  - *Why does Paul commend Timothy here for being “concerned” (anxious) for the welfare of the Philippian believers but then in chapter 4 tells them not the “anxious” (same word) about anything? What’s the difference?*
  - *How does Epaphroditus complete “what was lacking” in the ministry of the Philippian church?*
  - *How would sending Epaphroditus back make Paul less anxious about the church (v. 28)?*

### **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?
- *Where else are we encouraged in the Bible to follow examples and to be an example?*

### **How do I/we apply this passage?**

- What are we to think/feel/do?
- What sins does this passage expose in you/us?
- *Why are examples so important? Do you recognize your need for examples?*
- *Who are examples that you look at in helping you follow Jesus? How do they help you? How can you better learn from the example of others? (examples: meet with someone more regularly who follows Jesus well, read biographies of exemplary Christian examples throughout history, etc).*
- *Who are you an example for? How can you be more intentional to serve as a good example/model for others? (if you are a parent...what do your kids need to see more of in you?; meet with someone who is less mature in the faith; are there things you need to stop doing/start doing?)*

### **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?