



June 9, 2019

DIGGING DEEPER

Philippians 1:12-18

The purpose of this document is to help us take the word beyond our Sunday gathering and to **think through the practical implications of the Scriptures** and then to **be intentional about living the word out.**

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Convicted for Christ

Philippians 1:12-13; Acts 23:1-11, 27:21-26

Questions Worth Asking

Paul wanted to make sure it was known to the saints in Philippi that his prison sentence was a service rendered to his Savior. God had Paul where he did for the purposes of advancing the gospel. Rome was where the Redeemer was sending Paul to serve. Paul saw lives being changed as the result of his conviction being shared during his confinement. It was clear to all in Rome, who were aware of Paul's imprisonment, that he was there because of his convictions regarding Christ. The trumped-up charges brought by the Jews were false (Acts 25:7). Paul didn't carry the weight of shame and guilt that would typically come with being a prisoner. Instead, he wore it as a badge of honor. He was well aware of where he was, but he also knew why he was there. Paul was convicted for being an unapologetic follower of Jesus. And for that, Paul had no need to apologize.

1. What convictions do you have that you would be willing to be convicted for?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- What influences or influencers have caused you to develop the convictions you have?
- How have you deepened your faith with the Lord over the weeks, months and/or years?
- In what ways has a growing faith changed the way you live out your faith among believers and nonbelievers?

2. Why do we apologize for or conceal the beliefs that we have which are not popular in today's culture?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- In what ways (as subtle as they may be) have you noticed that you suppress your love for the Lord around others who don't share that love?
- How has the reality of hell and the presence of sin in the lives of people you know and love been burdening your heart?
- How can be strategic and intentional about planting and watering seeds in lives that are adverse to the gospel?

Steps Worth Taking

Here are some **suggested steps** that will help you hold fast to concrete convictions in a callous culture...

1. Gather regularly with believers to praise God and respond to the preached word.
Missing a Sunday gathering should be the result of extenuating circumstances. And those are few and far between. Christ is building his church and using his bride. We must be fully engaged in order to fully develop as disciples.
2. Consider the weight and severity of sin (Romans 6:23) and the serum that the Savior has entrusted to you...the gospel that leads to salvation.
3. Pray and consider subtle ways to plant and/or water seeds of salvation with at least one person. Begin your deployment of saturating that person with loving soft touch points of the Lord's love.

We will be surprised how God will use the simplest things to make a significant impact in someone's life.

Conviction Breeding Confidence

Philippians 1:14

Questions Worth Asking

Paul's conviction of who Christ was landed him at least a four year stretch in prison. But the Christ-like character that was on display in the midst of his conviction was building up confidence in those who were followers of Jesus. Confinement would seem to be a poor strategy for galvanizing troops to take the hill in the name of the King. However, when a leader takes the posture of determination and defiance in the face of destruction, people that are a part of the movement begin to feel empowered to take a stand as well. Rather than shying away from the faith because of fear of persecution, Paul was seeing brothers and sisters being "much more bold to speak the word without fear." Paul's fight for the faith was inspiring others to be faithful in a time when being a Christian would be more likely to land you in prison rather than see you become a New York Times bestselling author.

1. What about seeing someone fight for their faith inspires you to stand up for the faith?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- What was it about someone's faithfulness to God that caused you to admire that individual?
- What about the fight for faith sparks some feelings of concern or downright fear in you?
- Describe a moment in your life when you stood firm on the word and didn't waver in what you believe.

2. What effect has your posture in pain/persecution had on another brother or sister's faith?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- How has pain and/or persecution impacted the way you have responded to God?
- Why does it seem that people of faith falter when times get difficult?
- What has helped you to develop a forehead of flint so that you aren't as easily moved in hardship?

Steps Worth Taking

Here are some **suggested steps** that will help you fan the flame of faith in you and others...

1. Set aside time every morning to frame your day to fight the good fight.
 - a. Read a Psalm;
 - b. Meditate on a verse(s) that resonates that morning;
 - c. Pray the passage to the Lord;
 - d. Live out the truth that day that the Lord reveals through his word that morning.
 - e. Share, via text, what the Lord has impressed on your heart from his word.
2. Share your hardships and heartache with someone and ask them to pray for and with you. Be responsive to the encouraging words the Lord speaks to and through your brother or sister.
3. Identify a brother/sister that is hurting and check-in with them and share an encouraging word from the Scriptures with them.

Providential Placement

Philippians 1:15-18; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 4:12-17; Psalm 139:13-16

Questions Worth Asking

Christians complaining about confinement is a clear indicator that we are focusing on our comfort and not considering Christ (Hebrews 12:1-4). It is also an indicator that we don't know that God providentially places us in prisons for the purpose of advancing the gospel. Knowing the Lord will change our perspective and our pursuit in seasons of pain and persecution. Rather than run or hide, a proper perspective on prison, birthed out of relationship with our Savior, will propel us to advance the gospel with a passion and purpose that is second to none other. Ignorance, however, of who God is and how he moves will cause the believer to back down in the face of adversity, which would cause us to miss out on a move of God. We must get to know the Lord that loves us so we will obey him no matter where he places us, be it the palace or the prison.

1. Based on your responses to discomfort, what would you say has shaped your perspective of persecution?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- Based on commercials, shows, movies, marketing, etc., what has been society's message on sacrifice and suffering?
- How has a focus on a destination (i.e. graduating with honors, athletics, etc.) helped you to determine to endure hardships?
- What would you like your attitude and behavior to look like in difficult times?

2. In what ways has a proper perspective of God's providence changed the way you view and/or handle difficult times?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- What has brought you peace in the midst of a storm?
- How have you seen a positive perspective in painful times change the severity of the situation?
- How has a poor perspective in difficult times intensified the pain you experienced during the trial you were facing?

Steps Worth Taking

Here are some **suggested steps** that will help you have a perspective that will position you to praise during persecution...

1. **Read and meditate on [Psalm 139](#).**
2. Get to know Jesus
 - a. Read through the Gospel according to John.
 - b. Observe what Jesus was willing to endure so you can be saved.
 - c. See how he called his disciples to do the same for others.
 - d. Write down the promises he has for those who obey him.
3. Look over one of the suggested steps in Conviction Breeding Confidence section of this Digging Deeper Document.