



## PHILIPPIANS OVERVIEW

Stuck in house arrest, Paul writes to encourage the Philippian church to live as citizens worthy of the Gospel in the midst of their suffering. Paul's letter to the Philippians is so apt for us today. We need his words that can enable us, in light of and because of Christ Jesus, to rejoice in the midst of suffering, trial and loss. Now is the time to be a united church on mission together, willing to lose it all for Christ's fame and our gain.

### **PART 10: THE PATH TO PEACE**

Read the text: Philippians 4:2-9

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 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.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

In today's passage, Paul begins to wrap up his letter by addressing the conflict between Euodia and Syntyche and once again calling them, and the whole church, to be of one mind. Instead of living in anxiety, he invites them to experience true peace through bringing their neediness to God. The path to peace starts with bringing our needs to God in prayer. God will not always say "yes" to our prayer in these moments, but He will always do what is best. Paul also invites them to pay attention to their thoughts and to think on the reasons we have to give praise to God. Our thoughts will always build a place for either anxiety or for hope to stay in our hearts. Practicing an awareness of our need, God's presence, and the things He has done that are worthy of praise will lead to His peace dwelling with us in every circumstance.

### **Discussion Questions:**

*These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.*

1. Pastor Donald said we are never more human than when we say, "God, I need you." When you think about your neediness, how does that make you feel? How have you viewed "neediness" in the past?
2. What are some of your current needs? Practice being honest about your neediness with each other and stop to bring those needs to God together in prayer.

3. When we bring our needs to God in prayer, He will not always say “Yes,” but will always do what is best. Do you really believe that is true? How does that make you feel? If there’s a disconnect between what you “know” is true and what you “feel,” why do you think that is?
  
4. Pastor Donald shared, “Your thoughts will always build a place for either anxiety or hope to stay.” What is shaping your thoughts during your normal week? Take some time to reflect together on what is filling your mind and shaping your thoughts throughout the week (social media, news, entertainment, God’s Word, etc.). As you think about each “practice”, are they resulting in the peace of God with you? What would you like to see God change and what tangible step can you take this week?