



## 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. Many of us are also suffering right now. During this pandemic, we are experiencing loss, but we are not losing. We are in this together, growing in Christ and in unity, and God is refining us through suffering and purifying us through loss. To live for Christ and die to self in community in the midst of suffering and loss is to Christ's glory and our gain.

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.

## WEEK 7: FORMED BY HIS LEGACY TO LIVE FROM HIS LEGACY

Read the text: Philippians 2:19-30

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

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, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. 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. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

In today's passage, Paul honors two people who have left a legacy: Timothy and Epaphroditus. Both men were formed by the legacy of Jesus Christ (2:1-11) and were therefore able to live lives from the legacy of Jesus impacting Paul and many others. When we think about legacy, we need to pay attention to who is upstream from us and is forming us and the legacy we will leave for those downstream from us. Ultimately, we must ask if we are being formed by the legacy of Jesus through others and if we are leaving a legacy that will point others to our Savior.

### **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. We are who we are today because of the impact others have had on our lives. Hopefully, this impact has formed us to become more like Jesus. Take some time to share stories about who God has used most significantly in your life to form you and make you more like Jesus. What did you learn from them and what legacy did they leave for you? How did God use them to shape you? Be specific and take time to reflect on these relationships, thanking God for them. If you

haven't yet, find a way to reach out to them and let them know how God used them in your life.

2. Pastor Alex shared some specific things to pay attention to when looking for people whose legacy you want to learn from. Ultimately, it must be people who are formed by the legacy of Jesus...who have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:1-11). Go through the characteristics Paul shared about Timothy and Epaphroditus and reflect on whether these are true of you. Where do you need the Spirit to make you more like Jesus?
  - a. Genuinely concerned for the interests of others
  - b. Serves as a son to the Father
  - c. Loves like a brother or sister
  - d. A fellow worker- eagerly joins others in the hard work of ministry
  - e. A fellow soldier- united and focused on the mission God has for us
  - f. A messenger- understands and carries the message of the Gospel
  - g. A trusted minister (servant)- faithful to serve and meet others' needs
  
3. Who are the people "downstream" from you who will be impacted by the legacy you leave? Take time with your group to reflect on the legacy you are currently leaving? Does it look like Jesus? As you see failures in this, don't despair... you are forgiven by Jesus and those downstream from you are not dependent on you to save them; they need Jesus as much as you! Yet, this is an opportunity to confess where you have failed in being intentional with the legacy you are leaving and to ask the Spirit to empower you in this. With whom will you be more intentional regarding the legacy you will leave?