

Disciples Church

Lesson 3: Wednesday May 17, 2017

**Discussion Guide**

**Philippians**

**Joy in Suffering 1:12-18**

12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. 14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

1. How have your trials served to advance the gospel?
   1. Spend some time speaking about your testimony and how you have put your faith on display for others and the fruit that has come from these experiences.
2. Charles Spurgeon says, “Notice the beautiful self-forgetfulness of the apostle Paul. So long as the gospel could be more widely published, he did not mind where he was, or what he suffered.” Is this your mindset? As you go through your days, at home or at work, are you thankful for encountering trials so that you can shine the brightness of Christ to a dark world? How are you struggling with this? What should change in order for you to more clearly show people Jesus?
3. Our passage indicates that often people who stand firm in their proclamation help “weaker” Christians to also stand firm in their endurance. Has this ever happened to you? Explain your situation and share with the group.
4. Have you ever felt the comfort of God in your suffering? Share with the group your experience.
5. Read Romans 9:1-3. How have you suffered knowing that your loved ones continue to pursue sin and reject God? How can you start to trust God in this trial?
6. If we are pursuing “bread that perishes” and making our lives all about the creation rather than the creator, how will we see our suffering?
7. If we are see Jesus as our all satisfying treasure, how will we see our suffering?
8. Read James 1:2-4. How can you start to make small changes in your day to glorify God in your trials instead of grumbling?
   1. What does grumbling reveal about your heart in suffering?
   2. What does your grumbling reveal about your trust in the goodness of God?

\*\* Spend some time in prayer thanking God for joy in suffering. \*\*