

Disciples Church

Joy in Contentment<>Philippians 4:10-23

Week of August 30, 2017

**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

1. Do you have gratitude in such a way that it is known to all people around you? When someone serves you or gives to you, do you adequately thank them? Since all good things ultimately come from God, is your ultimate thanksgiving and praise directed toward Him?
* Whether you answer yes or no to those questions, how can you be *more* vocal and prayerful about your thankfulness?
1. In our passage tonight, Paul speaks about being brought low, facing hunger and need. Can you relate to that?
* Given that you’re with us tonight, God has sustained you and/or is sustaining you through tough circumstances. Despite the trials, are you filled with joy knowing that? How does Paul’s example motivate you to put off bitterness and complaining and put on thankfulness, obedience, contentment, and dependence on God in it all?
1. For those who have never experienced being brought low to the degree of facing real hunger, being homeless, being tortured, etc., how are you equipped spiritually to face these things if that is God’s plan for you? What truths of God will get you through it joyfully?
2. Share with your group what ways our lesson tonight helped correct and/or inform how you understand Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”
3. In the lesson we heard, “The secret to true contentment is knowing we have the highest treasure, the sweetest gift, the eternal joy of Christ Jesus.” This is the sum and most important point of tonight’s lesson. Discuss it in your group to whatever degree is needed to be sure everyone understands it and how it applies to contentment in all circumstances. (cf. Psalm 73:26)
4. Read Proverbs 10:4, Proverbs 21:5, and 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12. What is God’s word saying in these verses about laziness, hard work, and each household earning its own living?
5. In Ephesians 4:28, we saw that we should not only take care of our own needs but also seek to have enough to be able to be generous with others. Do you need to cut back your own expenses so that you can have more to give away?
6. Based on the opening and closing of the letter to the Philippians, Paul is very affectionate towards fellow believers. How can Paul’s model encourage this in you and continue to cultivate this at our church?
7. Thinking back over the whole letter to the Philippians:
* What reasons have we seen for having a joy the lost world doesn’t have or understand?
* What elements of the letter have convicted you most, encouraged you most, and compelled you most?
* Make a personal note for yourself: to the degree you don’t recall the content of the letter or the depths of the teachings, you have a great opportunity to review those things so that you may learn more deeply.
1. In our Philippians passage tonight, we see a very practical way that the generosity of others carried their brother Paul along. How does this motivate you to personally be looking for ways:
* to support ministries faithfully working for the Lord in greater ways?
* to give to other believers in need in greater ways?
1. In light of a right heart, contentment, and healthy petition as seen in James 4:3 and Matthew 6:11, take the rest of the time to pray to our good God.