

“JOYFUL IN HARDSHIP”
PHILIPPIANS 1:12-30

We can be joyful in hardship because of the gospel’s progress through our circumstances.

After planting the church in Philippi during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:11-40), Paul now writes to them ten years later from Roman imprisonment. Amazingly, he is not discouraged but joyful! In fact, the word “joy” appears fourteen times in these four short chapters. *In this passage, we learn that Paul is joyful in hardship because of the gospel’s progress in the present (vv. 12-18), and in the future (vv. 18-26), which spurs us on to joyfully make progress in the gospel together in whatever happens (vv. 27-30).*

APPLYING THE WORD

Read Philippians 1:12-30 aloud and pray that the Lord will apply this passage to your group.

Introductory Question: What’s one of the most surprising moments you’ve experienced in your life?

The Joy of the Gospel’s Progress in the Present (vv. 12-18)

- How has God used difficulty in your life to surprisingly grow you in the gospel (vv. 12-14)?
- Where are you being pulled toward envy of others rather than joy in Christ in this season (vv. 15-18)?

The Joy of the Gospel’s Progress in the Future (vv. 18-26)

- How do others try to fill in this blank: “To live is _____ and to die is _____” (v. 21)?
- Like Paul, what happens when we make it our joy to help others progress in the gospel (vv. 22-26)?

The Joy of Progressing in the Gospel Together in Whatever Happens (vv. 27-30)

- Where are you prone to forget that living out the gospel is done in community, not just privately (v. 27)?
- In what ways does this passage call us to practically serve one another as gospel teammates (vv. 27-30)?

PRAYING THE WORD

Philippians 1:12-26 prompts us to remember that we are dependent upon the prayers of others and prompts us to pray for one another (v. 19). As you pray this passage together, consider asking someone to pray that we would be filled with joy and not envy in this season (vv. 12-18). Ask someone else to pray that we would find joy in helping others make progress in the gospel (vv. 18-26). Finally, ask someone else to pray that we would grow in the gospel together in whatever happens (vv. 27-30).

STAYING IN THE STORY

Day 1	The sufferings of the Apostle Paul (vv. 12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:16-33)
Day 2	God can redeem where others try to destroy (vv. 15-18; Genesis 50:15-21)
Day 3	Those who trust in God will never be put to shame (vv. 19-20; Job 13:13-28)
Day 4	Only the gospel gives confidence and comfort in life or death (vv. 21-26; Psalm 49)
Day 5	The joy and goal of growing in the gospel together (vv. 27-30; Ephesians 4:1-16)