

FOR DISCUSSION

1. When have you experienced working with a team toward a common goal? How was unity important to accomplishing this goal?
2. What comes to your mind when you think of the word “church”?

DIG DEEPER

Read Philippians 1:27-30

A COURAGEOUS UNITY

3. In verse 27a, the word ‘conduct yourselves’ in the Greek is *politeuesthe* and carries the weight of behaving as citizens worthy of the gospel. What do you think this means? What does it look like in daily life? Why would this command have meant something to the Philippians?
4. Paul’s exhortation to stand firm brings to mind military imagery of ‘holding our post’. What do you make of the military language in this passage? How’s the Christian life like a war?
5. Why must soldiers have unity of mind and heart? What will happen if they do not?
6. The Greek word for striving together is *synathlountes*. You probably recognize the root word ‘athlete.’ How does this passage encourage us to be teammates? What is the goal? (v. 27b)
7. In this sport’s analogy, we are not to be frightened by our opponents. We are to be bold & courageous. Why?

“this is a clear sign to them of their _____ but of your _____”

How does this enable Christians to be courageous and fearless in the face of suffering?

8. What is “granted” to Christians according to verse 29?

How should we consider our suffering for Christ as something that is a gift from the Father to us? See Acts 5:41.

Read Philippians 2:1-2

A COMPASSIONATE UNITY

9. There are four experiential realities of our relationship with God that Paul appeals to as grounds for unity in the church. What are the four things you see in verse 1 that should serve as **motivations** for unity in the church body?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Application: Which of the four speaks to you most from experience? How does this impact your love for your family? Friends? Church body? Enemies?

10. The fourfold appeal in verse 1 has a fourfold result in verse 2. What are these 4 *expressions* of unity Paul desires to see in the Philippians?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Read Philippians 2:3-4

A CHARITABLE UNITY

11. The two mortal enemies of harmony and unity in the church are listed in verse 3. What are they? Why are these two characteristics so destructive in the body of Christ?

Read James 3:16. How does this relate?

12. What commands are positively emphasized in verses 3 & 4?

13. Read 1 Peter 5:5. If we do not adopt this posture of humility, how does this affect our relationship with God?

BRING IT HOME

14. Are there areas the Lord is placing on your heart where your conduct is not worthy of the gospel? Are there areas where you see His grace and can thank Him for His work in your heart?

15. Our relationship with the Lord will always impact our relationship with others. How have you found this to be true in your own life?

16. Practically, what does it mean to consider others more significant than you? (spouses, children/grandchildren, church, friends, neighbours, etc.)

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that we would live lives worthy of the gospel and would show the world the beauty of the gospel by our lives.
- Pray that we would be unified in mind and heart, standing and striving together toward the goal of winning the lost.
- Pray that we could embrace suffering for Christ's sake.
- Pray that we would know the Lord better and love others humbly and selflessly.