

Pressing On Toward The Goal – Week Three
Further Reflection and discussion material – Philippians 1:27-2:11

Looking To Jesus As The One We Imitate

Read through together Phil 1:27-30

In the final verses of chapter one, Paul speaks of the expectation that followers of Jesus live as “citizens of heaven”.

1. What comes to mind when you think of disciples who might stand firm in the Spirit?
 - a. What does might this look like when it happens well?
 - b. What might this look like when Christians fail to do this?
2. How might disciples strive together with one accord for the faith of the gospel?
3. What do you think that Paul might be referring to, when he encourages the followers to “not be frightened”?
4. How might the opposition receive act as a sign of those who will be destroyed, and those who will be saved?

Read through together Phil 2:1-4

As Paul’s letter progresses, he deepens what it means to live as citizens of heaven, specifically through the imitation of the king of heaven Jesus.

1. Within Paul’s four specific statements, which one stands out to you as something that you have experience most profoundly within your own life as a follower of Jesus.
 - a. Encouragement from being united with Jesus.
 - b. Comfort from the love of Jesus.
 - c. Common sharing in the Spirit.
 - d. Tenderness and compassion.
2. Where have you experienced the unity and/or humility that Paul speaks of in verses 2-4?

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Read through together Phil 2:5-11

This section of scripture (specifically vv6-11) is often regarded as an early Christian hymn, written about Christ Jesus.

1. If you're interested in reading another passage that is often regarded as an early Christian hymn, take a look at Colossians 1:15-20. What similarities and/or differences do you notice?
2. Paul speaks of Jesus, "who being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage...". If you can't recall fully from the sermon this section, take a read through the following passages about what it looks like when God often shows up...
 - a. Exodus 24:16
 - b. Leviticus 9:23
 - c. 1 Kings: 8:11
 - d. Exekiel 1:28
3. Paul seems to draw on a similar line of thinking in 2 Corinthians 4:6, as he speaks of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. In conversation with you group, how might you continue to explore this idea of Jesus...
 - a. Being the very nature God.
 - b. Not using this nature (or form) as something to his own advantage.
4. Hansen explore a variety of "ECHOES" seen within this hymn between the narrative of Christ and that of the original Adam story. Take a look at the various comparisons, and discuss your thoughts...
 - Christ** – Existing in the nature/form of God.
 - Adam** – Created in the image of God.
 - Christ** – Did not grasp equality with God.
 - Adam** – Tempted to be like God.
 - Christ** – Took the nature/form of a slave (servant).
 - Adam** – Enslaved to sin.
 - Christ** – Obedient to death.
 - Adam** – Death after disobedience.
5. We see within Christ the willingness to enter into obedience, submission, and ultimately sacrifice. What does it mean for you as a disciple to walk in that same path as you seek to imitate Jesus?