



PHILIPPIANS
Part 12 – Aug 28
Philippians 4.10-23
Leaders Guide
(Approximately 60 min)



Connect Spend time allowing group members to connect with one another relationally. (5 min)



Celebrate Ask how they've seen God working in their lives since you met last. (or relating to the previous meeting's discussion) (5 min)



Coach Facilitate discussion using the guide below (30 min)

Focus: Joy's Fertilizer

Big Idea: We fertilize the life of joy through our generosity in 4 ways.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”
Phil 2:3

Read through Philippians 4.10-23 and share a couple of things that stand out to you.



Do you think others would view you as a joyful person?

Overview:

In the message Sunday we looked at ways to fertilize joy in your life

A common theme in the book is around what this word signifies: JOY. Paul mentions this word 16x and he is modeling joy as he experiences it even while in a Roman prison as he wrote this letter. He also commends the church in Philippi for a characteristic that actually helps fertilize joy.

In this letter, one of the ways that the Philippians helped fertilize their joy and the Apostle Paul's joy was through generosity with their money. One of the main reasons the Apostle Paul wrote this letter was to thank them for financially supporting him by sending a financial gift.

We fertilize the life of joy with generosity when we...

1. Keep a right **perspective** about money.

Our lives often reflect a hidden drive that money will bring us happiness. Whether it's driven-ness, selfishness, it's all mine I earned it, overwork, super busyness all convey the belief that I have to have more and more to be happy since I think if I can just reach this level then I can be truly happy.

2. View generosity as a **partnership** with God to spread the Gospel.

How does God get money into circulation to spread the Gospel and meet human needs? Through His followers. Through Christians.

3. Enjoy the **pleasure** that generosity brings.

Generosity is not mean to stifle enjoyment nor to hurt us. It does mean that we are to sacrifice. But it does not mean that it hurts us. Actually, God reciprocates our giving by giving to us.

4. Practice a consistent **pattern** of giving.

For the Philippian church, it was not a one and out, giving at the spur of the moment. Rather it was consistent. Have you heard the phrase practice makes...perfect. Actually practice makes permanent.



Discussion Questions:

2. Question 1: What are some reasons why it is important to keep a right **perspective** about money?

Question 2: Why do you think it is important to view generosity as a **partnership** with God to spread the Gospel?

Question 3: What does it mean to enjoy the **pleasure** that generosity brings?

Question 4: What is one way that you can Practice a consistent **pattern** of giving?



Quotes and passages from the teaching:

God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9.7)

We all want a life that is full of joy, energy, and enthusiasm. Such a life literally refreshes the hearts of others. They exude a relational fragrance that builds you up. They make deposits into the lives of others. That's what this church did for Paul as they shared their resources with him.

"Paul's "everything" is constrained by the context. His point is that whatever the circumstances in which he finds himself, whether with the rich and the powerful or with the poor and the powerless, whether preaching with power to substantial crowds or incarcerated in a filthy prison, he has learned to cast himself on God and to be content. He can do all these things, everything that God assigns him to do, through the one who gives him strength. Let the gospel advance, let God's will be done in me and through me, Paul is saying, I am content, for I can trust the one who invariably strengthens me to do what he assigns me." Carson, D. A.

He chose us to do it in a very unwieldy way because he wants us to show our love to Him in a tangible way through our giving. He chose the partnership plan. He chose us to get his money into circulation through our tithes and offerings. You and me are the conduits God has chosen to meet the financial needs of West park. He chose you and me to partner with him in spreading the gospel.

With knowledge comes responsibility. Some of you have great capacity to give much and you are doing so. Some of you have great capacity to give much and you are not doing so. If you are not, God wants you to partner with Him and release it for Kingdom purposes. God may have made you wealthy so you that you could use your resources for maximum kingdom impact.

I'm not looking for what I get out of what you will give, but what you will get out of it. He is saying that when we are generous, God does some positive accounting for our benefit.

When we give, we store up heavenly treasures, things that we will enjoy in heaven forever. I believe that these treasures we store up have something to do with increased and growing capacity to enjoy heaven. Someone said that the only money we will see again is the money we give away. And it will return to us with compound interest.



EXPERIENCE: A time to apply

Here is a spiritual assignment for this week: Challenge:

The Steak Challenge:

Take a bold step of faith in your giving between now and Jan 1, 4 months.

- Maybe for some of you it's tithing, giving 10% for the first time.
- For some of you it's regular giving instead of sporadic.
- For some of you it's giving a large gift.
- For some of you it's creating automatic regular bank debits for your giving. Our web site shows several ways you can do that.

If you take a next step of boldness in generosity here at WP and in January you feel that it was not a blessing, that you should not have done it, you let me know and I will take you out for a steak dinner.

I gave this challenge at a church I started many years ago in Georgia in the states. Nobody asked me for a steak dinner after the challenge, but years later I received an unusual letter from a guy that was in that church, heard me speak on this, and took the challenge at that time. He was so thankful he did it!



Communicate Share important information items with your group. (5 min)



Care Spend time praying as a group. You may want to take specific prayer requests from your team members. (10 min)
