

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1-14-07 - "The Philippi Church of Christ – More Joy"

OPEN: Read or reference the unbelievable story of Peter's miraculous escape from jail and Rhoda's funny reaction to her joy when she heard him in Acts 12:14.

- Share times when you were so overjoyed that you did something crazy or embarrassing.

DIG & APPLY–

- Read Philippians 1:12-14 – *Paul's Chains (or 'Bad Circumstances')*
 - What stands out to you about this passage?
 - Paul says he's fine with his circumstances because they are "advancing the gospel". What does it mean to "advance the gospel"??
 - What two groups is the gospel being advanced in, according to Paul, and how?
 - What 'bad circumstances' are in your life, is it hard to see how they could show Christ?
 - (Help each other imagine how they might or could or have.)
- Read Philippians 1:15-18 – *Paul's Critics (or 'Difficult People')*
 - Identify everything 'bad' about the people Paul is referring to here (both inwardly in the motives, and outwardly in their actions).
 - How does Paul ease his heart or emotions concerning these difficult people?
 - What kind of 'difficult people' have you been "blessed with" in your life?
 - How have you inappropriately handled them in the past?
 - How might you ease your heart or emotions concerning difficult people in a healthier, more "Paul-like" or "Christ-like" way?
- Read Philippians 1:19-24 – *Paul's Crisis (or 'Matters of life and death')*
 - Remember that Paul is awaiting a trial to determine the outcome of the charges against him. He faces anything from complete freedom and pardon to the death penalty.
 - How does Paul handle this uncertainty emotionally?
 - Has anyone here faced a crisis that was a matter of life and death, or at least quality of life matters? How did/do you handle it?
 - Is it idealistic to think that we can have Paul's perspective in the midst of crisis? Or is this real and possible?

PRAY: *Paul's Continuation* – To close your group...Read 1: 25-26.

- What is Paul resigned and committed to doing for the Philippians?
- What is Paul's motivation? What does he want the Philippians to have as a result of his continuing with them?

Pray that each of you will also continue eagerly in the work of Christ so that others will have "progress and joy in the faith."