

Bible Study, Series 4, Week 10

Personal Bible Study

Day: 1

Read Philippians 4: 10-11

1. Paul is thanking them for the gifts they sent by Epaphroditus. Is there someone you neglected saying thank you to? Do it now!
2. Because he is a prisoner, Paul did not have any urgent needs at that time. He has learned to be content - to have inner happiness despite unfavorable circumstances. We have to learn that as well. It is not something you are born with. Ask God to help you with it.
3. The faithful know that God provides in all our needs. He can turn any suffering into "the fruit of peace and justice." Read Hebrews 12: 7-11 and find a way to deal with your own suffering in a positive way.

Day: 2

Read Philippians 4: 12

Paul is no cold immovable statue. In the school of life he has learnt many valuable but hard lessons. He had experience of it all.

1. Sometimes it appears as if it is not possible to be a Christian if things are going well for you and if your circumstances are favorable. There are people who think a Christian needs to be poor, stupid or dumb and bad looking. The more difficult things are the better for you! What does Paul say in verse 12 concerning this?
2. Against what and why does Christ warn us in Mark 10: 23-25?
3. What does Mark 10: 27 mean to you?

Day: 3

Read Philippians 4: 14-15

A Christians should be involved in the need of the church. Sometimes we do not agree with the leaders, but that is not a reason to withdraw our gifts, however small they are. We should continue to work and use our humble gifts because without it, the church will be poorer.

1. Think of someone you can help (verse 15) and do something about it.
2. Your own spiritual life and your gifts are very closely related. Read what James says in James 2: 14-17.

Day: 4

Read Philippians 4: 16-18

1. Have a look at the way Paul describes the gifts the Philippians sent him in verse 18.
2. How does your own thanksgiving appear?
3. The gift of yourself burning as incense for God is the most important of course (2 Corinthians 2: 15.) That includes your talents, gifts and skills! Has your purse come to "salvation" yet?
4. What is the attitude with which we are supposed to give according to 2 Corinthians 9: 6-7? What further lesson do we learn from Proverbs 11: 25 and 19: 17?

Day: 5

Read Philippians 4: 17-18

Paul uses terms from the business world a few times. (Verse 15 and 17.) He makes a distinction between a gift and profit. The gift is what the congregation sent him. The profit is their sharing with him in his incarceration that shows their love for him and the gospel. Paul is interested in this profit that holds great spiritual benefits for them. It is a sign of sound spiritual life if a congregation has good financial resources. It also goes for an individual believer, as we give we receive.

We have to be careful here though, because there are many poor congregations that have a lot of spiritual riches and a lot of rich congregation that are really spiritually poor! (Compare Revelations 3: 17.)

1. What do Isaiah 55: 10-11 and Malachi 3: 10 say about this?
2. How much of your personal income are you supposed to give to God's work?

Day: 6

Read Philippians 4: 19-23

1. Paul has no doubt that God can and will provide. Read 2 Timothy 4: 17 and see how Paul speaks from experience.
2. God wants to provide our every need. Is there a difference between our "needs" and our "wants?" If so, what is the difference?
3. What is the definite provision in this verse as well as John 15: 7 concerning this?

4. Can I, for instance, "spot" questions for an exam and ask God to make sure those questions are in the exam? Does God always answer such a prayer? Motivate your answer.
5. Remember that Paul is writing this letter to a congregation. Christ - the head of his body - will supply all the needs of His congregation. His treasure chambers are full and unlimited. With the second coming of Christ the full joy will be with us - then each need will be fulfilled in the purest sense of the word!

Group Bible Study

Read Philippians 4: 10-14

1. We so often take a verse from the Bible and run with it as if we have the whole picture. Verse 13 is a verse like that. On the basis of this verse many people have tried to do the impossible - and sometimes the impossible became possible to them. If this does not happen, there are typically two reactions from people, what are they?
2. What does verse 13 really mean? Read verse 10 - 12 and find out what this "everything" is that Paul is writing about.
3. In which way does Christ give us the strength to do this "everything?"
4. In this piece Paul writes about the circumstances he has found himself in during his life. What influence do circumstances have on a person's life?
5. "If I cannot change my circumstances, I can change." Discuss this statement in the light of verse 13 and 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10.
6. Find out about the difficult circumstances of people in your vicinity and find practical ways to assist them in the light of verse 14.