**Day 1 – Overview**

*Over the next week or so, we are going to work our way through Philippians. We are going to see that it reveals the joy of the Christian life, even when facing suffering.*

Read Philippians (yes, the entire book!)

1. What are the repeated themes that you saw running through the book?

*The book of Philippians is centred around the gospel which holds the relationships between Christ, Paul and the Philippians together.*

1. Re-read 1:1 – 3. Then read Galatians 1:1 – 2, Ephesians 1:1 – 2, Colossians 1:1 – 2. How does Paul describe himself in Galatians, Ephesians and Colossians? How does he describe himself in Philippians?
2. What does it mean for Paul to be an apostle (may need to ask someone this or look it up)?
3. Why does he not use this phrase in Philippians?

*Paul does not need to state his authority as an apostle as he knows the Philippians and they know him. There is an intimate relationship between Paul and the Philippians.*

**Day 2 – How do we read Philippians?**

Before we start getting into Philippians tomorrow, we are going to think about how we read this book, which will hopefully give us greater depth as we work through it.

Read 1:29 – 30, 3:14 – 17 and 4:9

1. What is the common theme in these verses?
2. Whose relationship with Christ are the Philippians to look to?

*When Paul talks about his orelationship with Christ through the gospel, his intention is that the Philippians (and we, today) should* ***look and learn.***

Read 2:12 – 13

1. What are the Philippians to do with what Paul is telling them?
2. How easy do we find it to hear the word obey?

*When Paul talks about the Philippians relationship with Christ through the gospel, his intention is that the Philippians (and we, today) should* ***hear and obey.***

Read 4:14 – 18

1. These verses can be easy to skip over and think they do not apply to us. What do we see about Paul’s relationship with the Philippians in these verses?

*When Paul talks about his relationship with the Philippians through the gospel, his intention is that the Philippians (and we, today) should commit to gospel partnership (working with others to make Jesus known).*

**Day 3 – Gospel-shaped prayer**

We get an insight into Paul’s prayers today, which should help to fuel our prayers.

Read 1:3 – 6

1. What is Paul thankful for? Why?
2. How does Paul describe his relationship to the Philippians in v.5? What does this make you think of?
3. Who will complete the work in the Philippians lives? How does this give us confidence?

Read 1:7 – 8

1. How does Paul feel about the Philippians?
2. Where do these feelings stem from (end v.7)?
3. What has Paul’s affection for the Philippians led him to do (look back to v.4)?

Read 1:9 – 11

1. What does Paul pray for the Philippians?
2. What does this lead to?
3. Are we praying for the things we have seen Paul pray for? If not, why not thank God for gospel partners, pray for gospel affection for others and pray for our love and our fellow believers’ love to increase? Do it now!

*Note: Paul shows this this increased love is for God’s glory and comes through more knowledge of the gospel.*

**Day 4 – Gospel-shaped priorities**

Imagine you were in prison. What news would make you rejoice and shout out? We see today what news makes Paul rejoice even when he is in chains.

Read 1:12 – 18a (just first bit of v.18 – up to end of the paragraph)

1. What circumstance is Paul in that has helped to spread the gospel (especially v. 12 – 14)? How?
2. What makes Paul rejoice (especially v. 15 – 18)?
3. How would we have felt if we found ourselves in either of these circumstances?

Read 1:18b – 26

1. Where is Paul putting his confidence?
2. Rewrite v.21 in your own words. Think: do we often switch this around and think, “I can live how I like and if I die, then I have a safety net of Jesus” rather than living for Jesus now?
3. Why should there be great joy as well as sadness at a believer’s funeral (v. 23)? Do we really think this?
4. For Paul to continue to live meant he would continue to do what?
5. From everything we have seen today, write a summary of Paul’s priorities. How would ours match up? Pray about it.

**Day 5 – Gospel-shaped mindset**

Read 1:27 and 2:1 – 2

1. What phrases does Paul use to show that he wants the Philippians to be fully united?
2. Explain what each phrase means in your own words.
3. Why was it so important to Paul for believers to be united?

Read 2:3 – 8

1. In the church family, who should have higher priority for us – ourselves or others?
2. How did Jesus show this?
3. What limits did Jesus put on serving others?
4. What might this mindset look like for us? Will that be easy or hard?

Read 2:9 – 11

1. Where is Jesus now and what is he doing?
2. How should people view Jesus? How should we view Jesus?
3. If we know Jesus is Lord and see how Jesus served, what should that make us passionate and determined to do?

*At present, only Christians bow the knee to Jesus but one day everyone will bow the knee. On that day, how wonderful will it feel that we can come before him forgiven?*

**Day 6 – Gospel-shaped obedience**

1. How do we feel when we hear the word obedience?

Read Philippians 2:12 – 13

1. What have the Philippians always done?
2. What are they to continue to do?
3. What phrase is used to show that this is really important (end v.12)

*Note: remember 1:6 and who is completing the work, remember the Jesus died for sin – past, present and future. But see the importance of obedience. We need to hold these together.*

Read Philippians 2:14 – 18

1. What should their attitude be as they obey?
2. What will they become? How will they look in this dark world?
3. Living for Jesus can be hard. What encouragement are we given in v.16 to keep going?
4. Paul then gives us another encouragement. Where is the suffering, sacrifice and service that Paul is making for the gospel leading to (end of v.17)?

Read Philippians 2:19 – 30

1. Suffering for the gospel is hard. How did Paul and the Philippians encourage each other (even though Paul was in chains)?

**Day 7 – Gospel-shaped values**

We live in a world that looks to ourselves - we are told in schools that we can be whatever we want as long as we work hard enough – we have it all in us. Today’s passage speaks directly against this but shows us why the gospel is far greater and better.

Read Philippians 3:1 – 7

1. Explain what is meant by the phrase, “confidence in the flesh” (may need to ask someone for this).
2. What reasons does Paul give that he could put his confidence in the flesh?
3. Does he think this is the right place to put his confidence?
4. Where do we try and put our trust for making us right before God? How does this show in our lives?

Read Philippians 3:8 – 11

1. What does Paul consider a loss compared to knowing Jesus?
2. In v.8 the word “garbage” literally means “dung”. How does this make you feel that Paul considers everything dung compared to gaining Christ? Is this how we view school grades, phones, cloths, popularity?
3. What is the only way in which was can be righteous (be in a right relationship with God)?
4. What has challenged us from these verses?