

FOOD TIME: (30-45 minutes) – Remember to give some direction for this time.

MEETING TIME: (45 minutes)

The book of Philippians is such an encouragement because it boasts the unity that we should have under Christ. Paul starts that with the first chapter here as he shows his appreciation for the church in Philippi. That appreciation that he shows is one that is wrapped in love and care, which is a mirror of Christ's relationship with us. As we discuss this week, think **about** how this letter that Paul writes can still relate to us today. We can live out these verses in the way that we talk to one another, treat one another, and continually lift one another up in prayer.

READ Philippians 1:1-11

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **3** I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, **4** always in every prayer of mine making request for you with all joy, **5** for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; **7** just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers with me of grace; **8** For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. **9** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, **10** that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, **11** being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

FACILITATE Discussion Questions

1. How can Paul's joy in verse 4 relate to how we can pray for each other?
2. How important is fellowship amongst other believers?
3. What works has God been doing in your life lately?
4. Why is Paul's prayer in verse 9 relatable to us today?
5. How can we encourage others to live with the love that Paul has here in the opening chapter?

PRAY- Take the last 10 minutes to pray about the needs of the group.

APPLICATION- Paul exudes so much love to the church here, and we have the opportunity to do that today as well. As you go out this week, think about how you can impact someone's life simply through showing that same kind of love. Is there someone that you are struggling with? Someone that has hurt you? How can you get to a point of surrendering to the Lord and praying joyfully for them? Also think about how you can lift one another up in your connect group. How can you come together under the affection of Christ, and find joy in the fellowship that you have with one another? Take the time to find something that someone in your group needs prayer for.