**Growth Group Bible Study**

Shining Like Stars - Series

*Finding Joy in Christ*

April 11, 2021

**Reading** Philippians 1:1-11

**INTRODUCTION**

Philippi was the first European church Paul, Silas, and Timothy established after the Macedonian call in Acts 16. This letter was written probably 10 years later around A.D. 60-62 when Paul was in prison at Rome under house arrest as a prisoner of Nero. The letter is an epistle of joy and encouragement in the midst of adverse circumstances. In it, Paul freely expresses his fond affection for the Philippians in view of their consistent testimony and support. He lovingly urges them to center their actions and thoughts on the person, pursuit, and power of Jesus Christ. Paul also seeks to address the problem of disunity and rivalry, urging them to imitate Christ in His humility and servanthood.

**READ:** Philippians 1:1-11

1. Read vs1-2. Look over the greeting. How is it similar or different from Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and Thessalonians and Timothy for example? Is there anything unusual about it? What do you think Paul is trying to emphasize from this start? Why does he mention his apostleship in some and not others?
2. Read vs3-8. What is your first impression from reading these verses about Paul's relationship with the Philippians? What is causing Paul, who is wrongfully put in prison, to have joy? What does Paul contribute to such a good relationship? What are things the Philippians do to maintain this relationship?
3. What is the difference between happiness and joy? Read and explain James 1:2-4
4. Read vs6 – What does that mean to you? Paul expresses a lot of confidence in the Philippians. Where does such confidence come from? What does that say about our assurance of salvation? What hope do you find in this verse?
5. From the relationship between Paul and the Philippians, what are some of the things you can do to improve your relationships with leaders, pastors, and missionaries you know?
6. Read vs9-11 - From his thanksgiving, Paul moves on to tell the Philippians other content of his prayer for them. What is Paul's prayer for them? What is the relationship between love, knowledge, and holiness? What would happen if any one of these is missing in our relationship with God and one another? What is the purpose of Christian growth?
7. How easy is it to love the wrong things (Colossians 3:2; James 4:4)
8. What are some practical ways we can show love with knowledge and discernment? How much do unbelievers learn about Jesus Christ by watching Christians?
9. Think of a recent decision you made or will make, how did/would your love for God, love for others and your knowledge of Him influence you in discerning the choice to make?

**Reading Challenge** - Read the book of Philippians every day for the next 7 days