

The background features a light gray grid with a central intersection. Large, curved shapes in earthy tones (dark brown, orange, and dark teal) are positioned in the corners, partially overlapping the grid. The word "PHILIPPIANS" is centered horizontally in the middle-right section of the image.

PHILIPPIANS



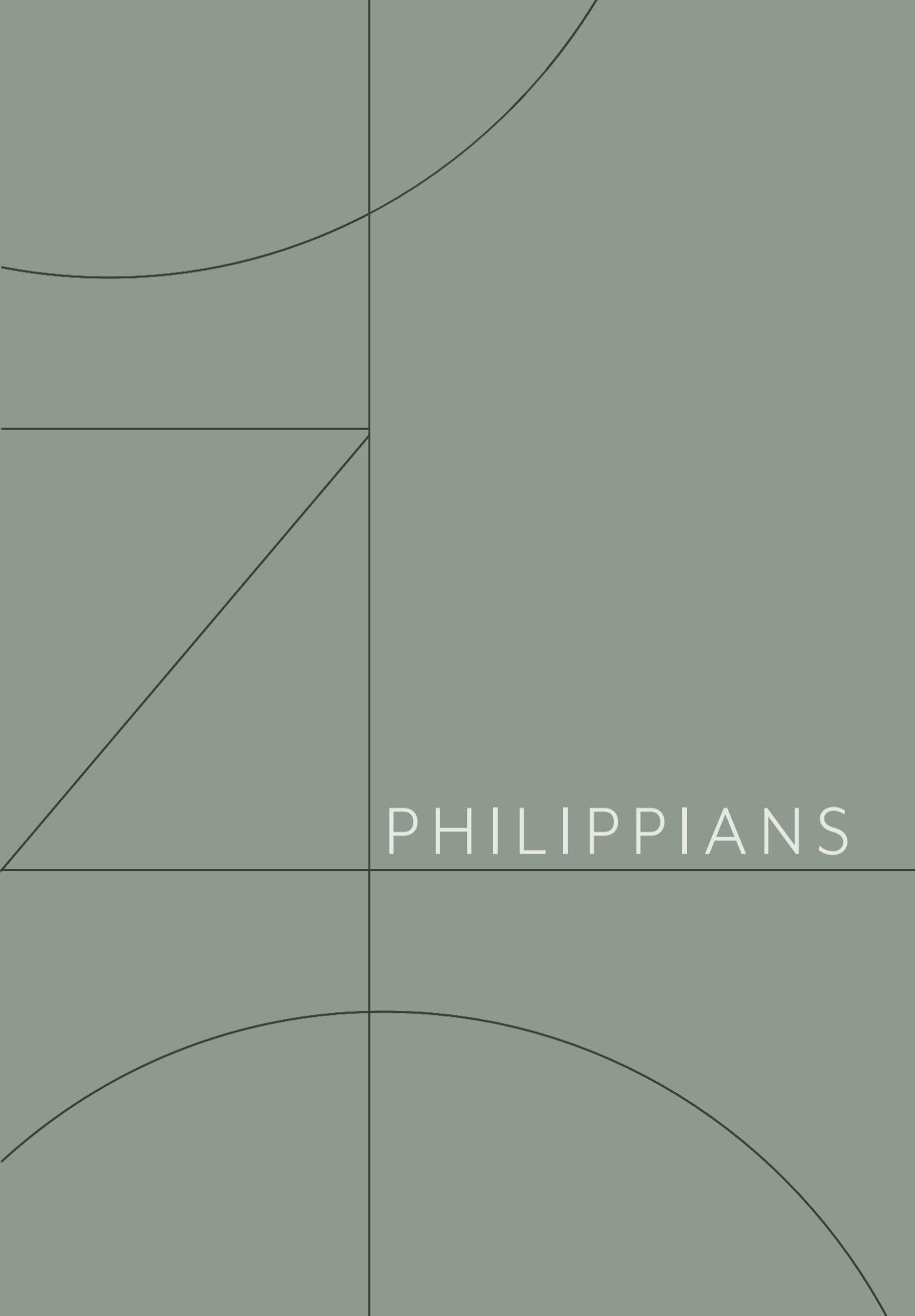
FIND MORE RESOURCES AT **GRACE-BIBLE.ORG**

© 2021 Grace Bible Church
College Station, TX

Created and edited by staff of Grace Bible Church.

This document may be reproduced and distributed freely, but you may not charge a fee greater than your manufacturing costs. No section of this document may be modified without written consent of Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX.

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995, 2020
by The Lockman Foundation. Used with permission.



PHILIPPIANS

CONTENTS

6 WELCOME

9 SURVEY

12 LESSON 1

Philippians 1:1-11

22 LESSON 2

Philippians 1:12-26

32 LESSON 3

Philippians 1:27 - 2:11

42 LESSON 4

Philippians 2:12 - 18

52 LESSON 5

Philippians 2:19-30

62 LESSON 6

Philippians 3:1-11

72 LESSON 7

Philippians 3:12 - 4:1

82 LESSON 8

Philippians 4:2-9

92 LESSON 9

Philippians 4:10-23

102 SYNTHESIS

Put it back together

110 APPENDIX

Leader Helps

Bible Study Tools

Additional Study Resources

New Testament Chronology

Engage Tools

WELCOME

This study of the book of Philippians will guide you to:

CONNECT in authentic community as you and your group share the joys and struggles of life and pray together for big things.

GROW in biblical truth by searching the scripture and actively applying this truth to your life.

ENGAGE in helping people find and follow Jesus by practicing simple disciple-making tools that tune your heart to those who are far from God.

PERSONAL STUDY + PRAYER

God's word, the Bible, is a unique and wonderful book. It is one of His greatest gifts to us. By reading it regularly, meditating on it, and studying it with others, we begin to hear God's voice and to know Him more deeply. As we put biblical truth into practice, cooperating with the Holy Spirit, our relationship with God grows. We become more like Jesus, transforming into mature sons and daughters of God.

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.” **James 1:22-25**

Each lesson begins with personal study sections designed for you to walk through the selected passage verse by verse. The Survey provides the big picture and background information for the book. Lessons 1-9 focus on studying the passages in detail. The Synthesis is a place to record an overall summary of the things you learned in the study.

In this study, you will practice a basic Bible study method that answers three questions:

Look it Over (Observation): What do I see?

Think it Through (Interpretation): What does it mean?

Make it Real (Application): How does it work?

An overview of this method is summarized in the Bible Study Tools section in the Appendix beginning on page 110.

Prayer Reminders: We need God Himself to illuminate His word to us. As we prayerfully approach the study of His word, God shows up! Pray before, during, and at the end of each lesson for eyes to see and ears to hear the things the Holy Spirit has planned to reveal to you.

MEMORY VERSES

Each lesson suggests a verse to meditate on and memorize if possible. It is amazing to experience God reminding us of His word that we have planted in our hearts.

GROUP DISCUSSION

At the end of every lesson, there is a Group Discussion Guide that provides a balanced plan for the time you spend together as a group - connecting, growing and engaging. Use this guide to plan your group time.

APPENDIX

Leader Helps: This section contains a few helpful ideas for anyone leading others through this study. See pages 112-113.

Bible Study Tools: Each lesson contains descriptions of tools that will help you to observe, interpret, and apply scripture. These are summarized on pages 114-118.

Additional Study Resources: This section contains a list of recommended books and online tools on page 119.

New Testament Chronology: A list of the approximate dates of major events in the New Testament can be found on pages 120-121.

Engage Tools: We are called to partner with God in helping people find and follow Jesus. Some of the basic tools for becoming a disciple maker will be introduced in the lessons and can be found on pages 122-131.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The Gospel is the good news of how we can be reconciled to God through Jesus.

GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

BROKENNESS

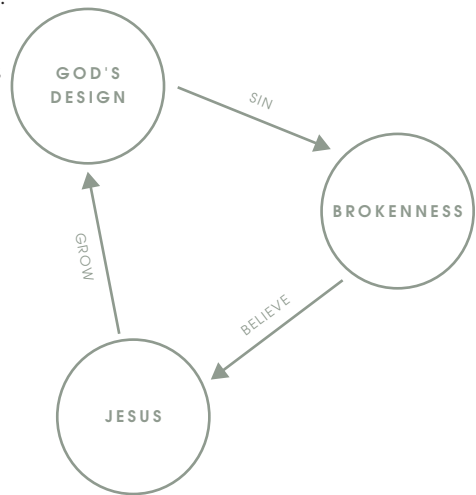
Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust.

This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way.

Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23)

Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a)

Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.



JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live. (John 3:16-17)

Which circle or arrow best represents your life right now?

Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?

SURVEY

Surveying a book like Philippians allows you to grasp the big picture and the overall story line of the book before getting caught up in the details. This survey provides a helpful road map to guide your study during the coming weeks. Begin this crucial first step by taking the next 30 minutes to read straight through Philippians without stopping. Then, answer the questions below before moving on.

1. How would you describe Paul's audience? Are they believers or unbelievers? Are they spiritually mature or immature? What issues are they facing?

2. What are the major themes or big ideas in this book? (Hint: Look for repeated words and ideas.)

3. Now that you have read through the entire book, what are Paul's purposes in writing it? Be as specific as you can.

BACKGROUND

Read Acts 16:6-40 and the following background article on Philippians adapted from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, Victor Books, 1983.

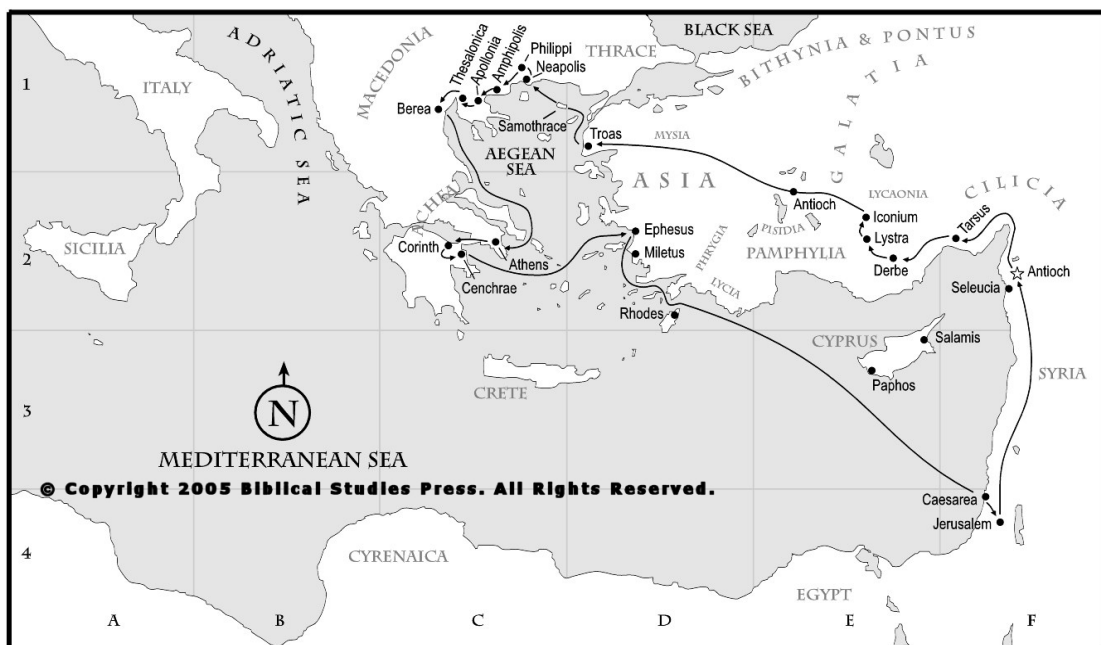
Somewhere between 49 and 52 AD, during his second missionary journey, Paul crossed into the continent of Europe for the first time and came to the Roman city of Philippi, where he led several people to Christ. Among these were Lydia and her family and the Philippian jailer and his family. It is interesting to note from Acts 16 that 1) God acted in supernatural ways to lead Paul to Philippi and that 2) the city appears to have had very few Jews (only 10 male Jews were needed to start a synagogue, yet there wasn't one). Soon after Paul's visit, a local church was established which in later years significantly aided Paul in his ministry to the Roman world. This epistle was written to thank the church for their faithful support as well as to help them continue to mature. Philippians is personal and practical in its tone and teaching. In it, Paul emphasizes the need for believers to rejoice in Christ and frequently discusses the mind of a child of God, for in his view one's manner of life is a reflection of what occupies his mind.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Most scholars agree that the Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Philippians since 1) the work clearly claims to come from him (1:1), 2) reference to Timothy is significant since he was with the apostle when Philippi was evangelized (Acts 16), 3) the information the writer gave about himself (3:4-6) harmonizes perfectly with Paul's life, and 4) the writings of the early church fathers attest to Pauline authorship. Paul was in bondage when he wrote Philippians (see 1:7,13-14). But all do not agree on where this imprisonment occurred, whether Rome, Caesarea, or Ephesus. His reference to the palace guard (1:13) as well as his concern about facing possible imminent death (1:20-26) argues for his writing from Rome. The date of the writing would then be A.D. 61 or 62, approximately 10 years after Paul's first visit to Philippi.

THE CITY OF PHILIPPI

Philippi was the leading city of the Roman province of Macedonia (Acts 16:12) and a significant stopping point on the Via Ignatia. Many of its original settlers were forced to relocate from Rome to Philippi, yet these same residents were given special privileges including the "Italic right." This meant that the colonists, in return for their displacement, were treated as if their land were part of Italian soil. So the residents were citizens of Rome and enjoyed the full rights of Roman citizenship, including exemption from taxes and legal protection from torture. So Paul's words (1:27) "conduct yourselves" (lit. "live as citizens") and "our citizenship is in heaven" (3:20) had special meaning to the Christians at Philippi. The citizens of Philippi spoke Latin and dressed like the people of Rome. They allowed a great diversity of cults and pagan deities in their city and practiced syncretism – the mixture of many religious practices and deities. Yet they held special reverence for the emperor of Rome whom they worshipped as a god.



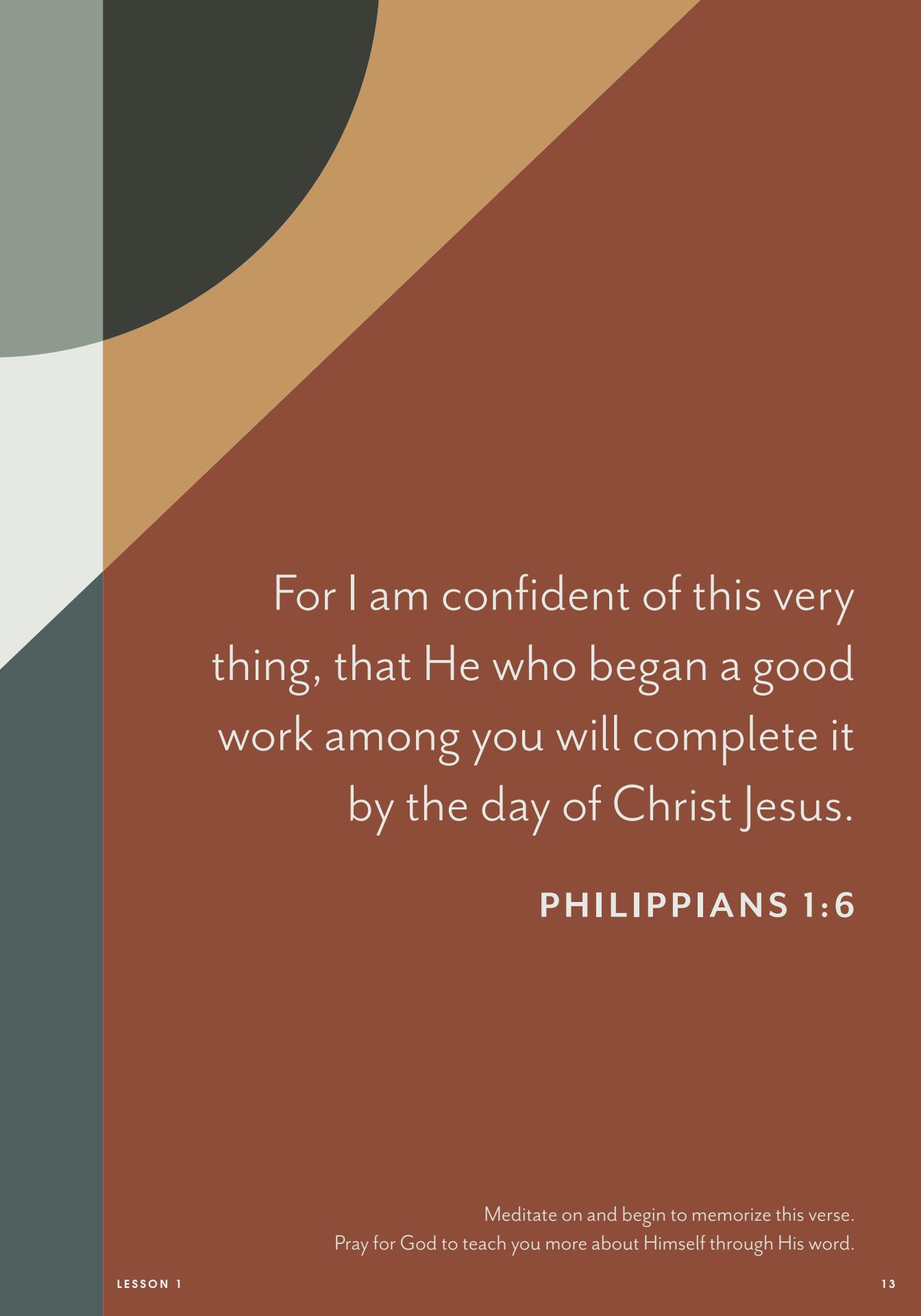
THE HISTORIC OCCASION

When the Philippian believers heard about Paul's imprisonment at Rome, they sent Epaphroditus, who may have been their pastor, to minister to him. He personally comforted Paul, expressing to him the affection of the saints in Philippi, and brought Paul a financial contribution from them so that his confinement would be more comfortable (4:18). Three times before (4:15-16; cf. 2 Cor. 11:9) these saints had ministered to his needs. Thus, this letter might be called a thank you note to the saints in Philippi for their generous gifts. Epaphroditus delivered the letter after he had recovered from a near fatal illness (2:27).

Yet even though his initial reason for writing seems to have been to thank the Philippians for their loving gift, Paul also took advantage of this opportunity to address some of the problems in their church. Apparently rivalry and personal ambition were present among some of the saints (2:3-4; 4:2). Furthermore, the Judaizers were also gaining a hearing (3:1-3) which was seriously worrying to Paul (3:18-19).

lesson

1



For I am confident of this very
thing, that He who began a good
work among you will complete it
by the day of Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 1:6

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of your study. Simply read the passage and write one or two observations for each verse. Your observations might identify people, places, and events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences. The first few observations have been done for you as an example.

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus,
Paul and Timothy are bond-servants

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:
Letter addressed to all

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my

every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day

until now. 6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work among

you will complete it by the day of Christ Jesus. 7 For it is only right for me to feel this way

about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the

defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. 8 For God

is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this I pray,

that your love may overflow still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,

10 so that you may discover the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and

blameless for the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which

comes through Jesus Christ, for the glory and praise of God.

OBSERVATION SKILL: LIST PRIMARY THEMES

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “humility” in 2:1-11. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in the passage.

2. What do we see about Paul's prayer life within this passage?

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

Our observation of Philippians each week will stir up some of the most interesting and challenging questions encountered in Bible study. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for the answer (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). God desires all of us to become approved workmen, “accurately handling the Word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). To that end, **we will learn a new interpretive skill each week** to practice along with the others we have already learned. This week’s interpretive skill greatly improves our understanding of what a passage meant to its original readers—**USE THE CONTEXT**. Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow Paul’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may also need to read ahead in Philippians for clues.

1. How does Paul describe the Philippians "participation" with him throughout the book? (See 1:5, 1:7, 2:1, 3:10, 4:14, 4:15)

2. What is the “good work” which God will complete in verse 6? Specifically, does Paul have in mind either participation in the proclamation of the gospel or one’s personal sanctification or both? (See 1:2, Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 3:17 - 4:2, 2 Timothy 4:5-8)

3. According to verses 9-11 , what is the relationship between love and knowledge? Why do we need both? Why are the things Paul prays for significant?

4. What is “day of the Christ”? (See 1:6, 10; 2:16; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:17-5:2) What impact does it have in the life of a believer?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

Our Bible study is only complete once we apply what we've learned. Begin by answering a few reflection questions designed to demonstrate how each passage relates to our own lives. Next, step back and look at the passage as a whole and list potential principles. A principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. A principle is not specific to a particular person or time. Finally, decide on specific action steps that you will begin to take right away to apply the principle in your daily life and consider how the principle impacts the relationships in your life.

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. What qualities do you see in Paul's prayer life from this passage that made him such an outstanding leader? Specifically, how does Paul's example challenge you personally? What concrete changes can you make this week in your prayer life?

2. What kind of community (or koinonia) do you hope to experience in your group? How does it compare with the community Paul models with the Philippians?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Jesus noticed and cared for the people around Him. He taught His disciples to do the same. As His followers, we are also called to love our neighbors, the people with whom we live, learn, work and play.

Turn to page 123 and prayerfully fill in your Every Neighbor Map. Be ready to share it with your group next week.

For more insight, watch the Every Neighbor Map video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Spend a few minutes discussing your group's purpose. Of all the things we could be doing, why are we here? Why is this time important to be present for and to prioritize?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. How do we observe scripture? What are we looking for and what questions are we asking?
2. Read Philippians 1:1-11. Share some of your observations.
3. Why is it important to observe first?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

Review the skill of Using the Context.

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. Why is it important to personally apply biblical truth to your life?
2. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?
3. What kind of community do we hope to experience in our group?

ENGAGE TOOL - **Every Neighbor Map (p. 123)**

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now.

Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

GOALS:

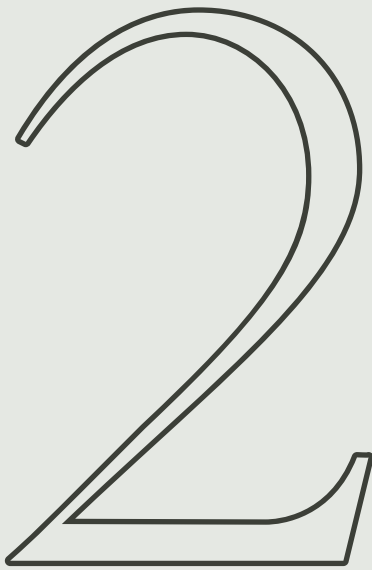
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

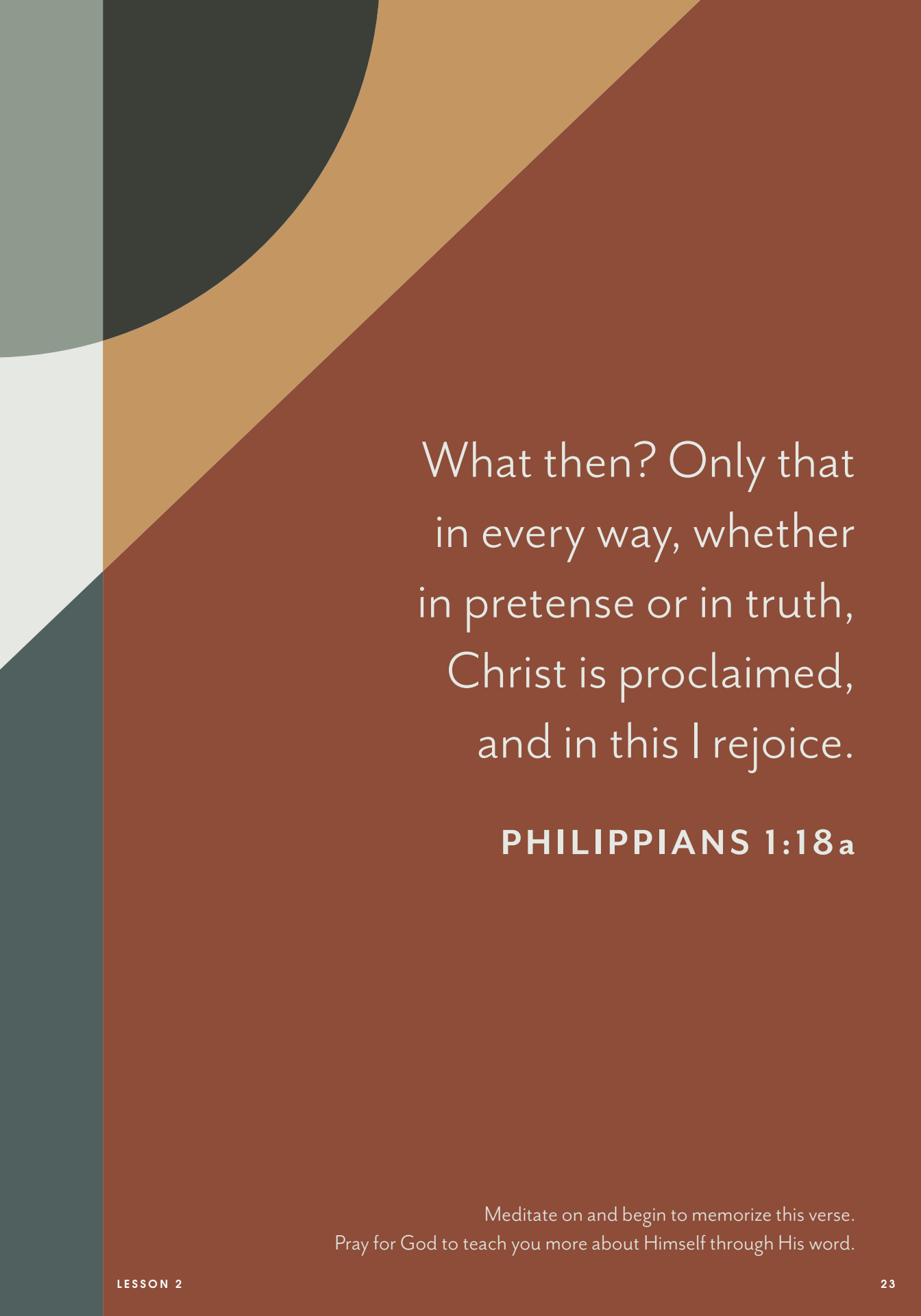
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

lesson





What then? Only that
in every way, whether
in pretense or in truth,
Christ is proclaimed,
and in this I rejoice.

PHILIPPIANS 1:18a

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 1:12-26

12 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brothers and sisters, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. 15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from goodwill; 16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; 17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking that they are causing me distress in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

But not only that, I also will rejoice, 19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my eager expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all

boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes. 25

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that your pride in Christ Jesus may be abundant because of me by my coming to you again.

OBSERVATION SKILL: INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

Like last week, read the passage and write down your observations. This week, we will begin to write our own questions as well. Just record the questions that naturally come to mind as you try to understand and apply the passage! If you need help getting started, you can use these examples:

| WHO IS... | WHAT IS THE... | WHY DID THE AUTHOR... | HOW... |
|---|--|--|---|
| Paul talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action? | meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases? | choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____? | was this action accomplished? will this situation occur? |

- 1. List your interpretive questions.
- 2. Highlight the different motivations you see in this passage.
- 3. Underline anything related to life and death in the passage.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

STUDY CROSS-REFERENCES

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a “Word Search” that will provide all Biblical references that use the English term.

1. Answer two of your own interpretive questions:

2. How does this passage relate back to 1:1-11? Specifically, why does Paul feel the need to assure the Philippians of the gospel’s progress here in this passage?

3. Why can Paul rejoice even when envious and ambitious people are preaching Christ “whether in pretense or in truth”? Specifically, what did Paul likely believe about God and His Word (see Isaiah 55:11; Romans 1:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:8-10)?

4. What kind of “salvation” is Paul referring to in verse 19? Keep in mind, it is translated as “deliverance” here in the NASB, but is usually translated “salvation” elsewhere. What different range of meanings can this word have in the NT? (See 1:28; 2:12-13; Acts 14:9; 27:20; Romans 5:9-10) What does it most likely mean here? And why?

5. What is Paul’s perspective on “life” and “death”? Furthermore, how does this differ from our contemporary culture’s view on these same two topics?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. Verses 21-26 describe Paul's personal mission statement of his life. In your own words, write out a mission statement for your life. How would you answer the question, "Why am I here?"

2. What circumstances in your life can cause you to believe that God's purposes are thwarted? What truths about God will help you to remain steadfast in your faith this week?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOLS

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Continue to add names to your map on page 123. Pray for opportunities to love, serve, and engage with your friends this week.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share high or low from the week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.
3. Goals: how did you do on your application of truth last week?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose.

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 1:12-26. Share some of your observations.
2. What were some of the themes you saw in this section?
3. What did you see about motivation?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

Review the skill of Cross References. How does looking up cross reference help us understand scripture?

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. Share your personal mission statements.
2. What are some circumstances in your life that can cause you to believe God's purposes are thwarted?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: **Every Neighbor Map (p. 123)**

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now.

Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

GOALS

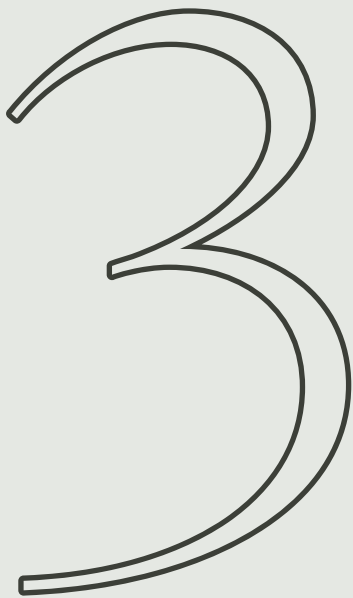
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

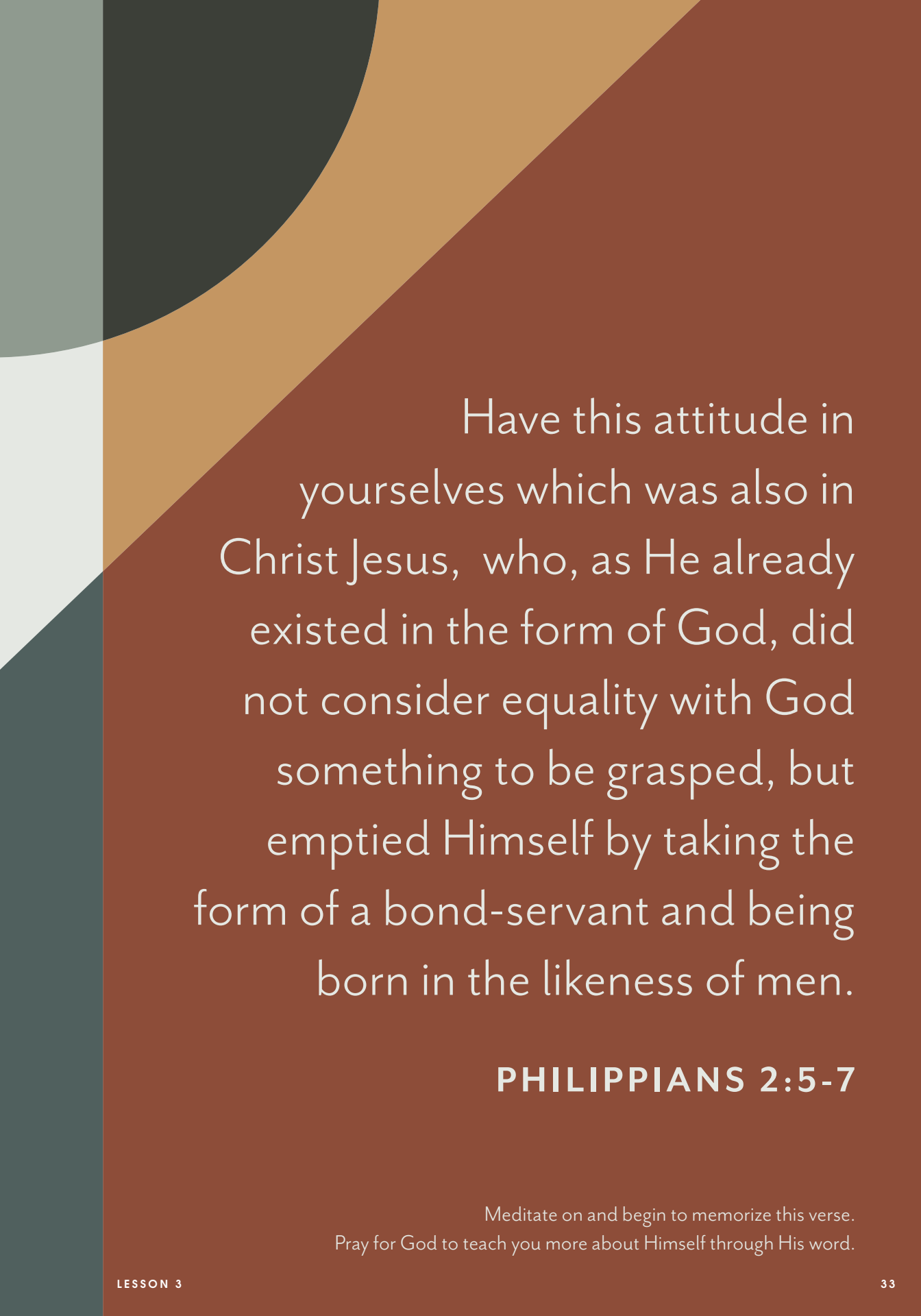
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

lesson





Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, as He already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-7

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read these passages.

PHILIPPIANS 1:27-2:11

27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 and in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and this too, from God. 29 For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on His behalf, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

2 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves

which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, as He already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross. 9 For this reason also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.
2. In verses 27-30, list the specific things that the Philippians are exhorted to do in order to live "worthy" lives.
3. Underline everything that relates to unity within this passage.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Notes” on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions:

2. Review the background information on the city of Philippi (p. 10). Why does Paul command them in verse 27 to “conduct yourselves” or as could be translated “discharge your obligations as citizens”? Specifically, what is the relationship between their citizenship and their conduct? (See 3:20; Ephesians 2:19, 4:1)

3. Trace the author's flow of thought in this passage. Specifically, how does 2:1-4 relate to 1:27-30 and to 2:5-11?

4. How does Paul describe unity in this passage? What is the relationship between unity and humility? What are the results of Christ-like unity?

5. What does it mean that Christ "emptied Himself"? Specifically, of what did He empty Himself? Was He less than God while on earth? (See Matthew 24:36; Mark 5:30-31; John 1:1-3, 14; 17:5; Colossians 2:9)

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. What attitudes or situations can cause division in relationships in your life whether at home, in your workplace, community or church?

2. How does Christ's model of humility uniquely motivate you towards humility?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Simply talking about Jesus as part of your everyday conversations is a great way to bring His light into the spiritual darkness all around us. Be sure your conversations include asking lots of questions and listening! Most people are open to talking about spiritual things IF they feel heard and respected.

Turn to page 124 and to learn how to turn conversations toward spiritual things. Also, watch the video on Starting a Spiritual Conversation at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Did you see God working in any specific ways?
2. Gratitude: read a Psalm, make a list of what your group is thankful for, offer short praise prayers.
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week? Were you able to connect with any friends from your Every Neighbor Map?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to share why they prioritize biblical community in their life.

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 1:27-2:11. Share some of your observations.
2. What are some of the themes or big ideas you saw?
3. What were some of Paul's exhortations in this section?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. What attitudes or situations can cause division in your relationships?
2. How does Christ's model of humility uniquely motivate you towards humility?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Starting a Spiritual Conversation (p. 124)**

Read over and discuss how to start a spiritual conversation. What has been your experience talking about your faith with friends?

Is there a friend or neighbor you could have a spiritual conversation with this week? Pray for opportunities!

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

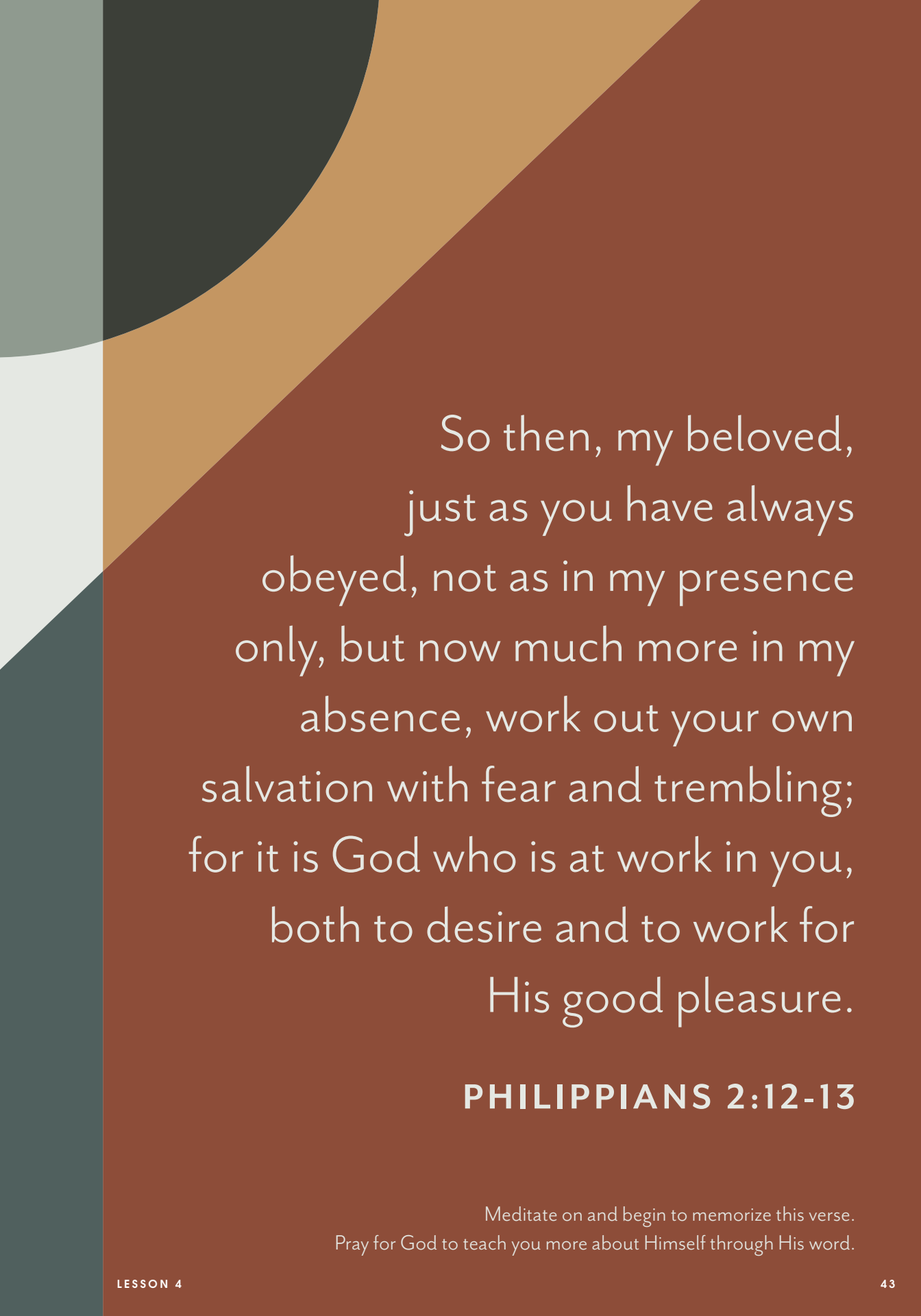
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

lesson

4



So then, my beloved,
just as you have always
obeyed, not as in my presence
only, but now much more in my
absence, work out your own
salvation with fear and trembling;
for it is God who is at work in you,
both to desire and to work for
His good pleasure.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-18

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure.

14 Do all things without complaining or arguments; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding firmly the word of life, so that on the day of Christ I can take pride because I did not run in vain nor labor in vain. 17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. 18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.

OBSERVATION SKILL: UNDERLINE ALL VERBS

As in previous weeks, read the passage below, and write down your observations, questions, and themes on the following page. This week, we will begin to underline all of the verbs. Quick review: A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action takes place (“I did not run in vain” in 2:16) or that a state or condition exists (“it is God” in 2:13). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.
2. Underline all the imperative (command) verbs in this passage.
3. Underline all verbs.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

LOOK UP KEY WORDS

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as net.bible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. For even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a “Word Search,” “Strong’s Search,” or “Word Study.” The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books and many hours now takes one internet browser and a few seconds!

1. How does 2:12-13 relate to the previous passage in 2:1-11?

2. Do a word study of the word "salvation" to determine its range of meaning. Refer back to Philippians 1 as well to determine what kind of "salvation" Paul is referring to in 2:12.

3. Specifically then, what role do works play in our “salvation”? (See 2:15-16; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; Ephesians 2:10) Why should “fear and trembling” characterize how we “work out” our own salvation? (See 2 Corinthians 5:10-11)

4. How does God work in us “both to will and to work”? (See Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:22-27; Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:19-23)

5. Why does Paul move from such profound statements in 2:12-13 about our salvation to such a basic command about grumbling? Try and trace Paul’s flow of thought within this passage.

6. The concept of “joy” appears throughout this book. What is the specific source of his joy in this section?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. Do you have a tendency toward leaning on self effort to grow in maturity? Why or why not?

2. Paul longed to receive glory in the “day of Christ.” How can you invest your life this week so that you will not “run in vain” now?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Continue looking for opportunities to talk about your faith in natural winsome ways.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. What are you thankful for this week?
2. What are you asking God for currently?
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week? Were you able to have any spiritual conversations with friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What would happen if we just focused on one of these - Connect, Grow, Engage?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 2:12-18. Share some of your observations.
2. What commands did you see in this passage?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss the skill of looking up key words. Why is it helpful?

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Do you have a tendency toward leaning on self effort to grow in maturity? Why or why not?
2. How can you invest your life this week so that you will not “run in vain” now?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Starting a Spiritual Conversation (p.124)**

Pair up and practice starting a conversation using one of the prompts

Pray together for opportunities to talk about your faith in natural and winsome ways this week.

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

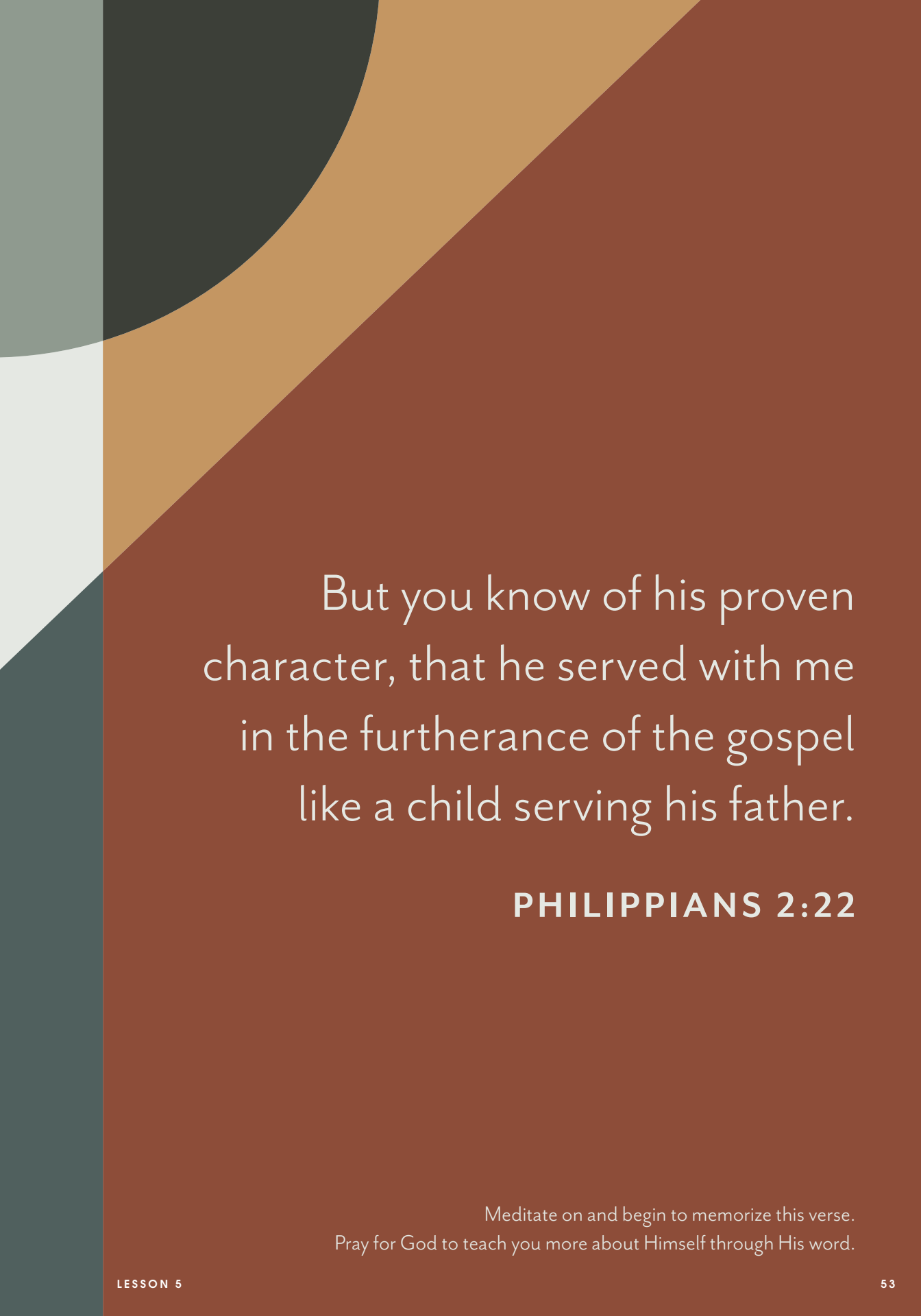
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

[illegible]

lesson

5



But you know of his proven
character, that he served with me
in the furtherance of the gospel
like a child serving his father.

PHILIPPIANS 2:22

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 2:19-30

19 But I hope, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. 20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know of his proven character, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself will also be coming shortly. 25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need, 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly, so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned

about you. 29 Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold people like him in

high regard, 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to

compensate for your absence in your service to me.

OBSERVATION SKILL: CIRCLE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES

Read the passage, write down your observations, questions, and themes, and underline all verbs. This week we will begin to circle all of the key words or phrases . These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “gospel” in 2:22) or thematically set the theme or main idea for the passage (like “proven worth” in 2:22).

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.

2. Circle all descriptions of both Timothy and Epaphroditus within this passage.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. How does this passage relate to 2:12-18?

2. What is it about the character and conduct of Timothy and Epaphroditus that created Paul's confidence in them?

3. Why is it significant that Paul has no one else of kindred spirit? (See 2 Timothy 4:9-11)? What can we learn about the challenges of spiritual leadership from this passage?

4. What can we learn about caring for other people in this passage? Specifically, what cost did these men pay in their service to others? And what benefits did their service yield?

5. How do Timothy and Epaphroditus personify the theme of “unity” throughout Chapter 2?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. Who are the people in your life that you partner with for the sake of the gospel?

2. What would you risk in your life for the gospel? Is there anything that you would hold back?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARE YOUR STORY

One of the most powerful ways to help people find Jesus is to share with them your own story of meeting and trusting in Him.

Turn to page 125 and write a simple draft of your faith story. For more insight, watch the Share Your Story video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Share a highlight or struggle you experienced.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week? Did you have any chances to talk about your faith journey with friends?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some ways to overcome the temptation to skip group time?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Have someone describe Paul's relationship with Timothy and Epaphroditus.
2. Read Philippians 2:19-30. Share some of your observations.

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Who are the people in your life that you partner with for the sake of the gospel?
2. What would you risk in your life for the gospel? Is there anything you would hold back?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing Your Story (p. 125)**

Read over and discuss how to share your story. Ask someone to share a 5 minute story of finding Jesus.

To whom could you share your story of finding and following life in Jesus this week?

GOALS

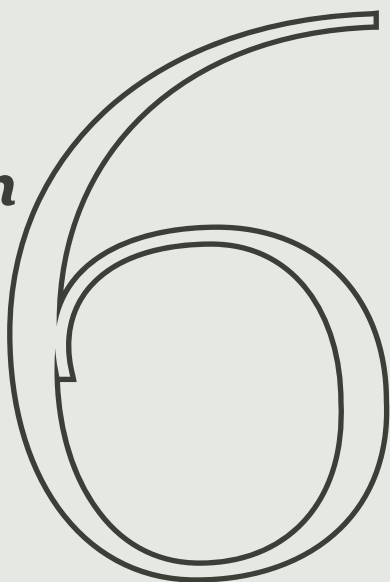
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

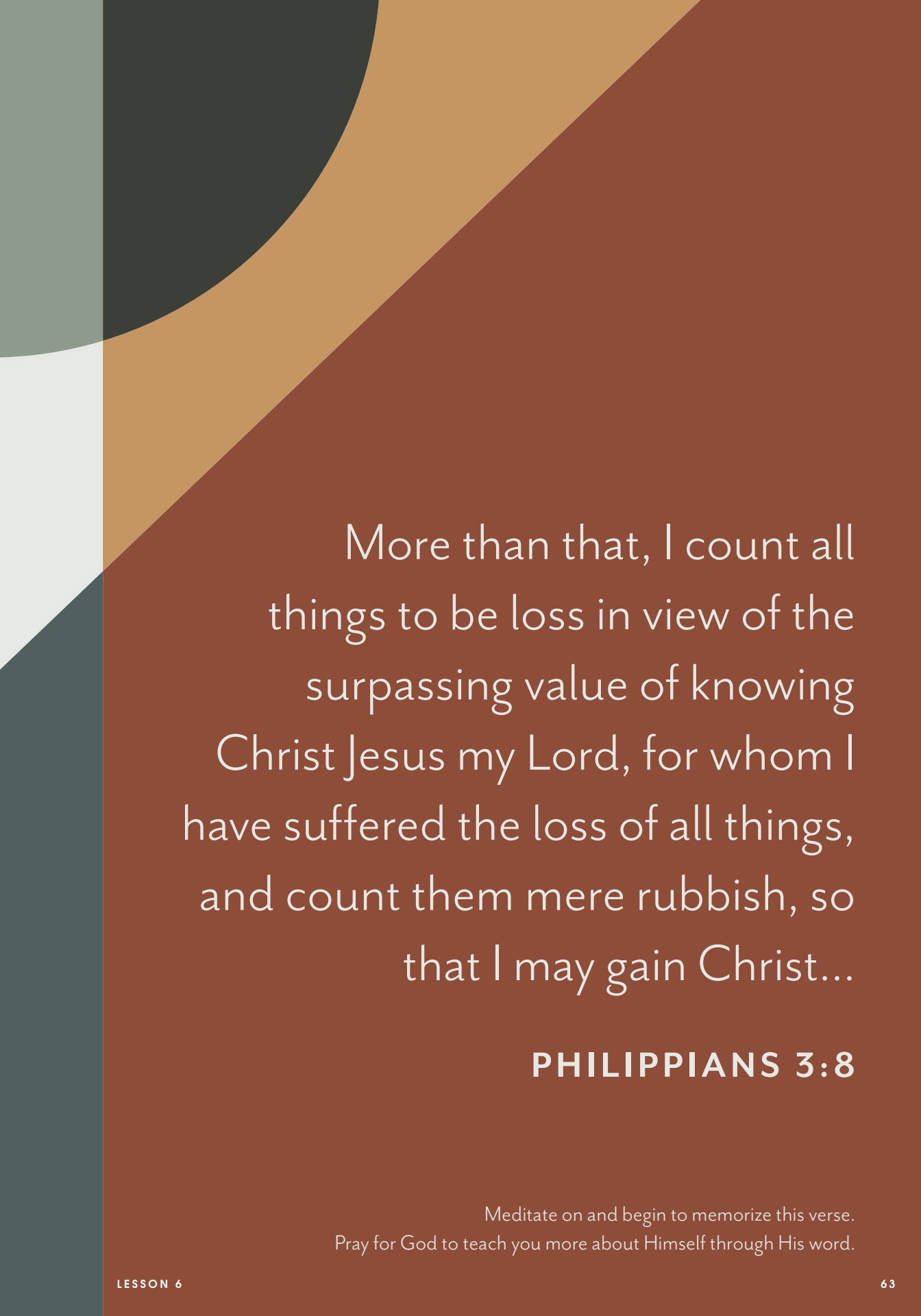
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

lesson





More than that, I count all
things to be loss in view of the
surpassing value of knowing
Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I
have suffered the loss of all things,
and count them mere rubbish, so
that I may gain Christ...

PHILIPPIANS 3:8

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-11

1 Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble for me, and it is a safeguard for you.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; 3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and take pride in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh, 4 although I myself could boast as having confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he is confident in the flesh, I have more reason: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

7 But whatever things were gain to me, these things I have counted as loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count

them mere rubbish, so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

OBSERVATION SKILL: HIGHLIGHT REPEATED WORDS OR PHRASES

Read the passage, write down your observations, questions, and themes, and underline all verbs. This week we will begin to highlight repeated words or phrases. Include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “loss” and “rubbish”). You will want to highlight things repeated in other places (such as “rejoice” found in 1:18; 2:17, 18, 28; 3:1; 4:4, 10).

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.
2. Box all the things that Paul naturally could have put on his spiritual resume.
3. Highlight all the accounting terms in verses 7-8 (for example “gain” or “loss”).

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions:

2. In verse 2, why does Paul describe his opponents as the "false circumcision"? Looking through the entire passage, on what grounds does Paul disagree with these people?

3. Why does Paul list his own spiritual background and accomplishments in verses 4-6? (See Galatians 1:13-14) Specifically, what is he trying to prove to his opponents?

4. In verses 7-9, why does Paul ultimately consider his prior accomplishments of such little value?

Specifically, what do all these things fail to provide? (See Romans 3:19-21)

How did he eventually experience what his accomplishments couldn't provide? (See Romans 3:28; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

5. In verse 11, what is it about his future resurrection that remains uncertain? Specifically, is he concerned about the certainty of his resurrection or the quality of it? (See Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 15:20-23; 2 Peter 1:10-11; Hebrews 11:35)

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. Are there examples in your life that you "put confidence in the flesh" such as your spiritual heritage, accomplishments, or education?

2. How have the things you identified acted as substitutes for the singular passion of knowing Christ?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARING YOUR STORY

Continue to develop your story of finding and following Jesus. Write it out. Practice sharing it with a friend.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Share something you are celebrating or that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week? Did anyone have a chance to share their story of faith this week?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some reasons you stay committed to our group?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 3:1-11. Share some of your observations.
2. Describe Paul's "spiritual resume."

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. What are some things in your life in which you are tempted to "put confidence in the flesh"?
2. Have these things distracted or been a substitute for the singular focus of knowing Christ? How?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing Your Story** (p.125)

Spend some time working on your stories and praying for specific friends with whom you could share your story of finding and following life in Jesus this week.

GOALS

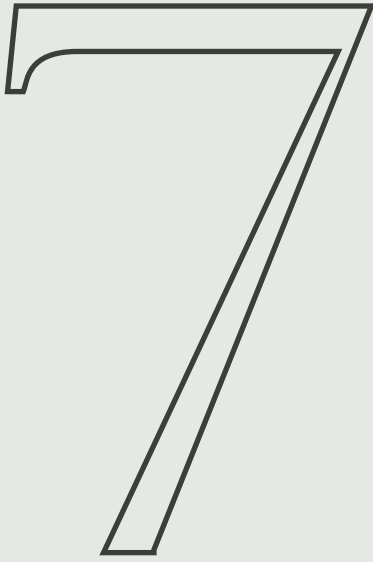
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

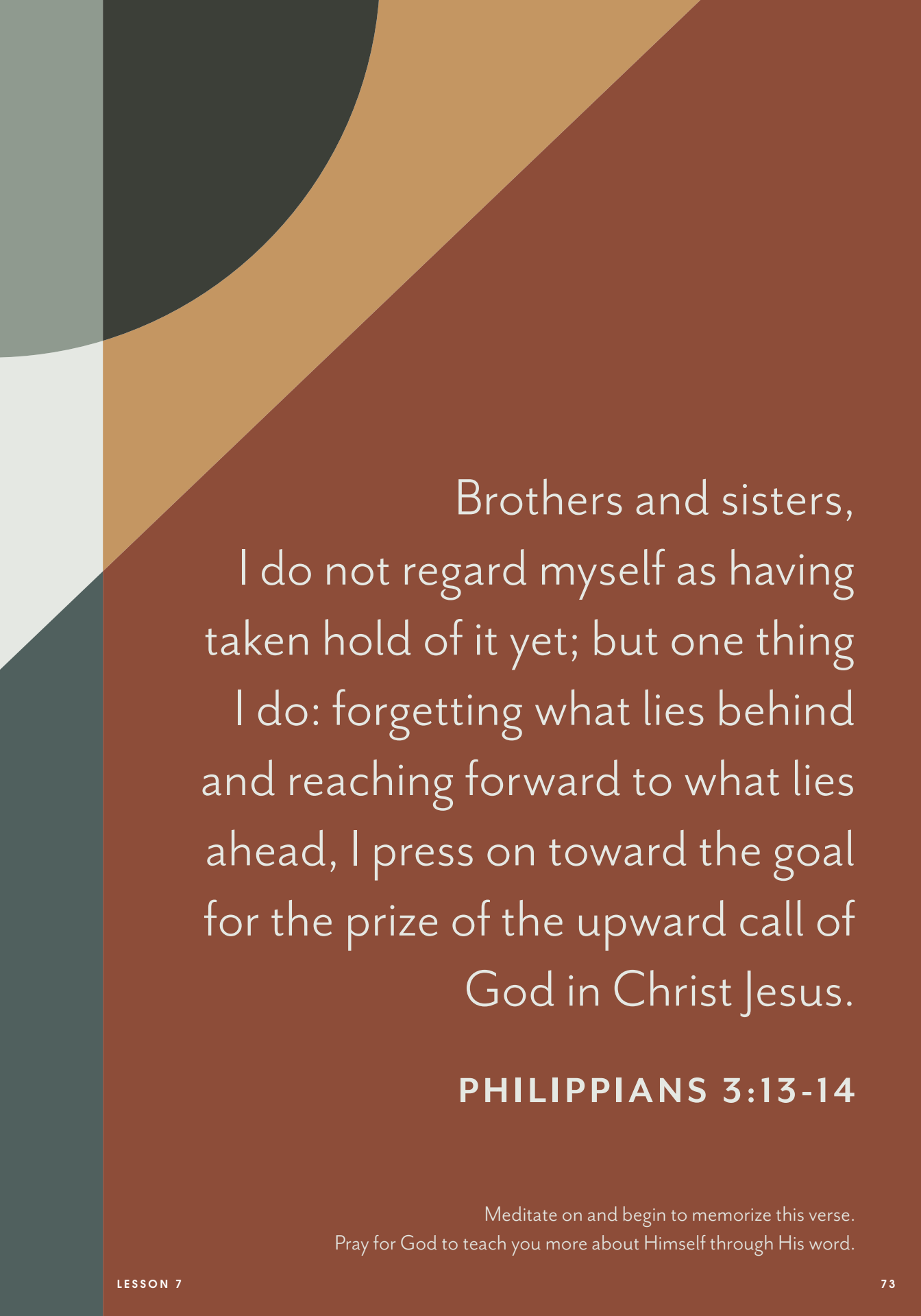
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

[illegible]

lesson





Brothers and sisters,
I do not regard myself as having
taken hold of it yet; but one thing
I do: forgetting what lies behind
and reaching forward to what lies
ahead, I press on toward the goal
for the prize of the upward call of
God in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 3:12 - 21

12 Not that I have already grasped it all or have already become perfect, but I press on if I may also take hold of that for which I was even taken hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not regard myself as having taken hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Therefore, all who are mature, let's have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that to you as well; 16 however, let's keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

17 Brothers and sisters, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even as I weep, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who have their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we

also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our lowly condition into conformity with His glorious body, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

PHILIPPIANS 4:1

1 Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, whom I long to see, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART ONE)

COMPARISON: either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so (e.g., “like a child serving his father” in 2:22).

CONTRAST: points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: but, rather, yet, however (e.g., “Not that I have already obtained it ... but I press on” in 3:13).

PURPOSE: indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: that, so that, in order that (e.g., “I press on so that I may lay hold” in 3:12).

RESULT: very similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: that, so that, as a result, with the result that (e.g., “my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment ... has become well known” in 3:12-13).

1. Box all connecting words.
2. As you underline every verb, distinguish the tenses of each verb as past, present, or future.
3. What is the mood of this passage?
4. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions.

2. In verses 12-14, what is Paul hoping to attain or laid hold of? In other words, what is the prize of the upward call of God?

3. The Greek word for “attitude” is used throughout this book translated elsewhere as “mindset,” “feel”, in 1:7; 2:2, 2:5; 3:19; 4:2, 4:10. Specifically in verse 15, what is the “attitude” (or mindset) that Paul wants the Philippians to imitate?

4. In addition to “attitude,” what else are the Philippians to imitate according to verses 17-19? (See Ephesians 5:1-2)

5. What is the significance of our “citizenship” being in heaven in verses 20-21? Specifically, how does citizenship impact our perspective on life and our behavior today? (See 1:27)

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. What are some goals that you are pursuing? How do they reflect your identity as a citizen of heaven?

2. Do you have people in your life whom you can observe and follow their godly pattern? Furthermore, is your life a worthy pattern to be followed?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARE THE GOSPEL - 3 CIRCLES

As we pray, ask questions and listen to people with a heart of compassion, the Holy Spirit may lead us into sharing with someone how they can turn from trusting in themselves to trusting in Jesus. This simple tool using a diagram of three circles is really helpful to share the good news of the gospel with people.

Turn to page 128 and practice sharing the gospel this week. Pray for opportunities to share with non-believing friends. See a demonstration video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week? Were you able to share your story with friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What is the main goal of our group?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 3:12-4:1. Share some of your observations.
2. What is the mood of this passage?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. What are some goals that you are pursuing? How do they reflect your identity as a citizen of heaven?
2. Do you have people in your life whom you can observe and follow their godly pattern? Is your life a worthy pattern to be followed?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Share the Gospels: 3 Circles (p. 128)**

Read over and discuss the 3 Circles Gospel tool. Practice sharing it in groups of 2-3.

GOALS

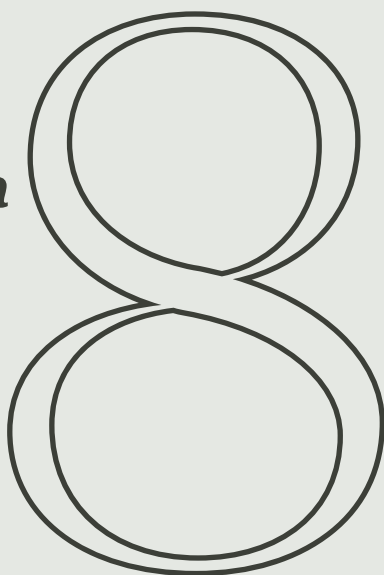
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

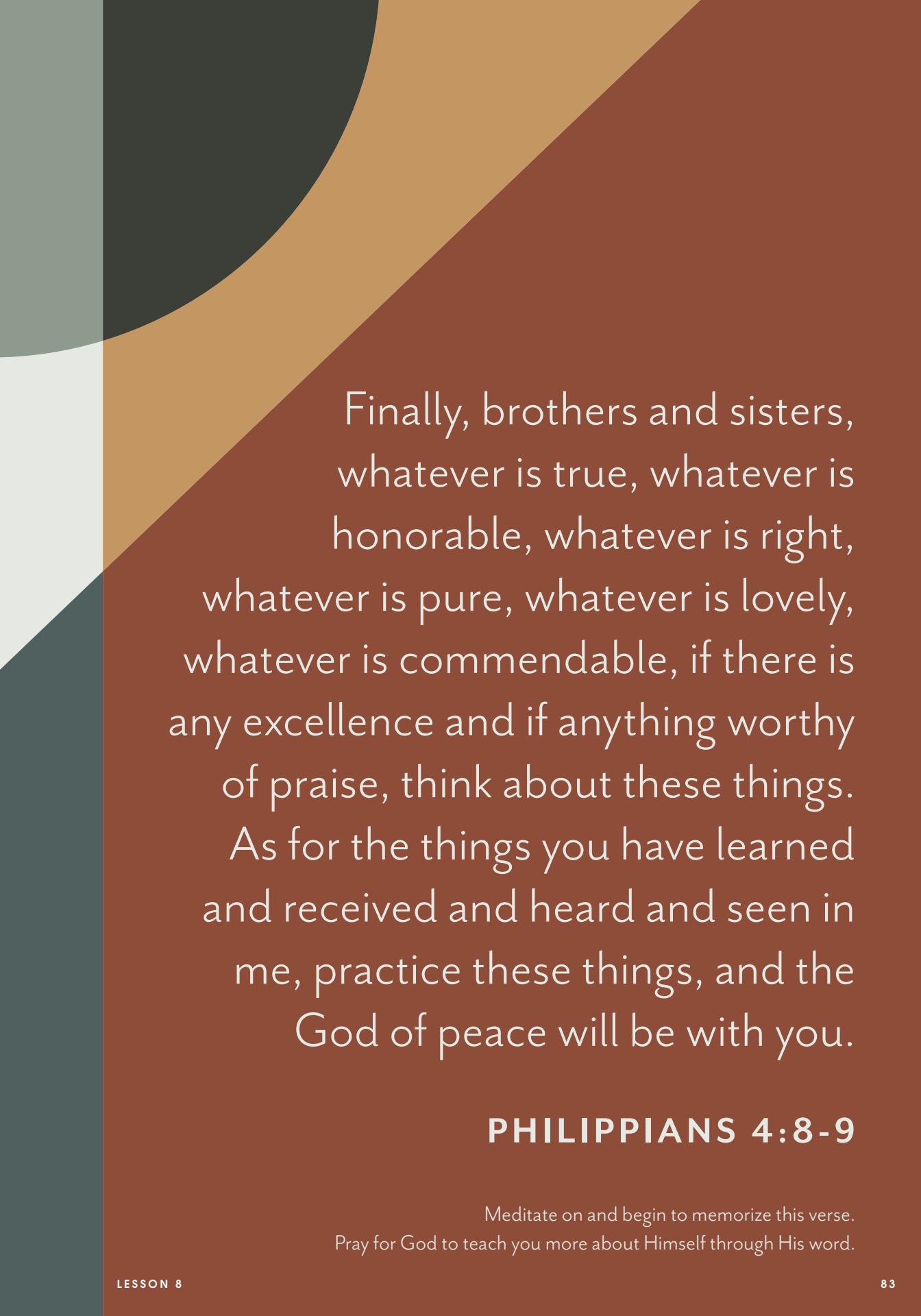
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

lesson





Finally, brothers and sisters,
whatever is true, whatever is
honorable, whatever is right,
whatever is pure, whatever is lovely,
whatever is commendable, if there is
any excellence and if anything worthy
of praise, think about these things.
As for the things you have learned
and received and heard and seen in
me, practice these things, and the
God of peace will be with you.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 4:2-9

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also, help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement as well as the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all people. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 As for the things you have

learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of

peace will be with you.

OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART TWO)

CAUSE: expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: because, since, and sometimes for (e.g., “I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus ...because he was longing for you all” in 2:25-26).

EXPLANATION: what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the keyword for (e.g., “For our citizenship is in heaven” in 2:20).

INFERENCE: provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: therefore, for this reason (e.g., “Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly” in 2:28).

CONDITION: presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is if (e.g., “if in anything you have a different attitude” in 3:15).

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in the passage.

2. Box all connecting words in this passage.

3. Underline each of the commands in verses 4-9.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions:

2. Why does Paul address this conflict between these two named individuals? Why does the situation have such importance to him? In other words, what can conflict jeopardize within the Body of Christ? (See Acts 15:36-39)

3. Earlier you underlined a series of commands in verses 4-9. How do these commands relate to the process of conflict resolution?

4. Verses 6-7 are some of the most quoted and memorized verses of this book. How does the context of this passage clarify the exact promise being made to believers here through prayer?

5. How does 4:8-9 summarize the key concepts of Chapter 4?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. How do you typically handle conflict? Do you avoid it? Do you embrace it? Why?

2. Is there someone right now in your life with whom you have unresolved conflict with? Based on what you learned from this passage, how can you take beginning steps toward resolving this conflict?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARE THE GOSPEL: THE BRIDGE

Another gospel tool is The Bridge which illustrates how Jesus bridges the gap between God and mankind.

Turn to page 126-127 to read through this tool. Practice sharing it this week. A demonstration video can be found at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. What are you thankful for this week?
2. What are you asking God for currently?
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week? Were you able to share the gospel with any friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

If a friend asked you why you study the Bible in a group, what would you say?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 4:2-9. Share some of your observations.
2. What big ideas or themes did you see?
3. What key words or commands did you see in the passage?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. How do you typically handle conflict?
2. Based on what you learned this week, how can you take steps to resolve any conflict in your relationships?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Share the Gospel - The Bridge (p. 126-127)**

Practice sharing this gospel tool in groups of 2-3.

Pray for opportunities to have gospel conversations this week.

GOALS

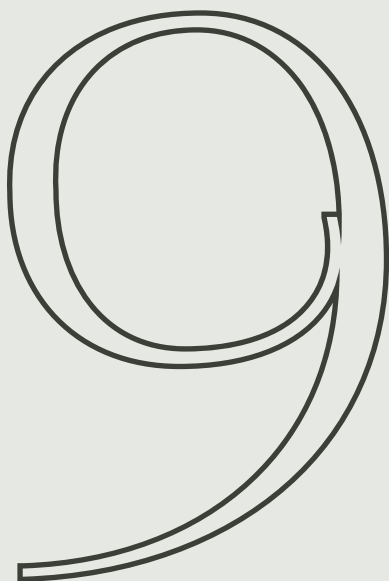
What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

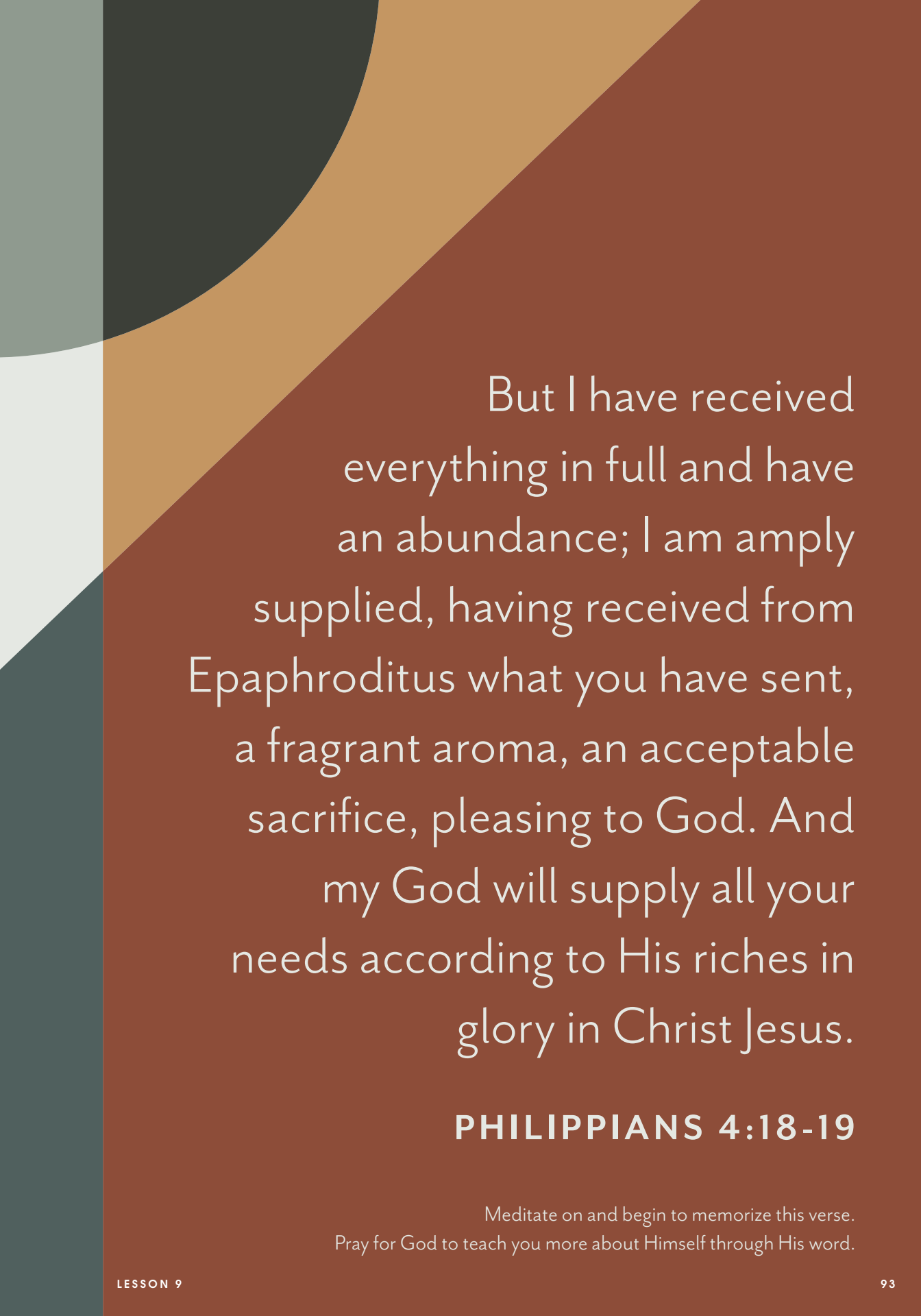
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

lesson





But I have received
everything in full and have
an abundance; I am amply
supplied, having received from
Epaphroditus what you have sent,
a fragrant aroma, an acceptable
sacrifice, pleasing to God. And
my God will supply all your
needs according to His riches in
glory in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:18-19

Meditate on and begin to memorize this verse.
Pray for God to teach you more about Himself through His word.

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-23

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked an opportunity to act. 11 Not that I speak from need, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with little, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. 14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my difficulty.

15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek the profit which increases to your account.

18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable

sacrifice, pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20 Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in the passage.
2. Highlight descriptions of contentment in this passage.
3. Underline words and phrases that have to do with accounting or finances.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

COMPARE MULTIPLE TRANSLATIONS

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at netbible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions.

2. Why does Paul conclude this book on the topic of giving? Why is it of such importance to him? (See 4:18b; Matthew 6:21, 24; 2 Corinthians 9:5-8)

3. How does contentment impact our perspective and use of money? (See 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-18)
According to verse 12, what was the “secret” that Paul had learned no matter his circumstances?

4. Similar to 4:6-7, verse 13 is one of the most frequently quoted verses in the whole Bible.
Considering the context, what exactly is the promise to lay hold of here?

5. Look up verse 17 in multiple translations. What is the “profit which increases” for one’s faithful giving financially? (See 4:19; 1 Timothy 6:19; Luke 14:13-14; 2 Corinthians 9:6-9, 11) Specifically, does this reward come now or later?

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. What are some areas in your life that you struggle to be content with God's provision? What does this discontent reveal regarding your belief about God in this area of your life?

2. In this passage, Paul thanks the Philippians for their gift toward his ministry. In the same manner, who can you thank this week for their support of you whether financial or otherwise?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Share a highlight or struggle you experienced.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Have we accomplished our purpose for this study?

Pray for your time together.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Philippians 4:10-23. Share some of your observations.
2. What are some of the themes and big ideas in this passage?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss the benefits from comparing multiple translations of a passage.

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. What are some areas in your life that you struggle to be content with God's provision? What are you believing about God in these areas?
2. Who can you thank this week for their support of you whether financial or otherwise?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SYNTHESIS



PUT IT BACK TOGETHER

MEMORIZE

Review your memory verses for each of the previous lessons.

1:6

1:18a

2:5-7

2:12-13

2:22

3:8

3:13-14

4:8-9

4:18-19

Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement ... please realize how much you have grown as a student of God's Word through your study of Philippians! Each week, you've learned how to better observe, interpret, and apply the stories of Scripture. Those same three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God's story throughout the Bible. Continue to practice and refine these skills so that you become, "a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Now that you have studied the book of Philippians in detail, answer the following questions:

1. What challenges faced this early church in Philippi?
2. What solutions did Paul present to handle each of these challenges?

During the past nine lessons, we have observed, interpreted, and applied the entire book of Philippians . That is no small task! Now it is time to draw our detailed study to a useful conclusion, a process known as synthesis. Our goal is to created an overall summary of the book of Philippians that we can quickly review any time in the future to remind us of the flow and content of the book.

The first step of this synthesis is to create your own outline of the book. Review the work you completed each week, then create your own brief outline on the next page. Feel free to use any outlining style, but here is an example of how you might start.

- 1) Greeting (1:1-2)
- 2) Introduction (1:3-26)
 - a. Praise for the Philippians (1:3-8)
 - b. Prayer for the Philippians (1:9-11)
 - c. Progress Report (1:12-26)

[illegible]

The second step of this synthesis is to record what you learned or were reminded of. This is more personal than your outline. Create a list of the theological truths and life lessons you have either learned for the first time or been reminded of from your study of Philippians.

As an example of a theological truth, you might write:

I was taught that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Jesus.

An example of a life lesson would be:

This book reminded me that the church's goal is to present every man complete in Christ through a process that comes with great cost and struggle.

List some theological truths and ten life lessons on this page that you learned from your study of Philippians, and record the verses where each is addressed.

THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS I'VE LEARNED

LIFE LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

The final step of this synthesis is to prayerfully choose two applications to practice. These can be applications that you developed and began to practice during previous lessons, or you can create entirely new applications. Whatever your choice, two things must be true about them:

1. Both applications should touch on areas of your life where you are currently in need of growth. Do not choose “be kind to others” if this is already something you do very well.
2. Both should be specific with a clear plan for growth and the name of someone who will hold you accountable. “Study the Word more” is not sufficiently detailed. Instead, develop a specific plan such “I will read through Romans this next month and write down my observations, interpretive questions, and applications in a journal. Steve will hold me accountable weekly.”

APPLICATION #1

Principle from Philippians:

Verses where it’s discussed:

Plan of Action: I will ...

APPLICATION #2

Principle from Philippians:

Verses where it’s discussed:

Plan of Action: I will ...

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

APPENDIX

112 LEADER HELPS

114 BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

119 ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

120 NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

122 ENGAGE TOOLS

LEADER HELPS

WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

The best preparation for leading a Bible study is following Jesus closely yourself.

- Spend time with God daily to keep your relationship with Him fresh and growing! Healthy leadership is ultimately an overflow of your personal relationship with God.
- Spend time in the passage throughout the week.
- Pray regularly with your co-leader for each person in your group.
- Prepare ahead of time and make a plan (see below) for your group time. Discuss with your co-leader.
- As a facilitator of discussion rather than a teacher, you are encouraged to be a co-learner with your group. Your job is not to know “everything.” It is acceptable to leave some questions partially answered or unresolved, trusting for clarity at a later time. Reach out to ministry leaders and pastors at your church for clarification as needed.
- Lead and walk by faith in the Holy Spirit’s work in your life and in the lives of your group members.

LEADING WELL

- Set a regular meeting place and time. Consistency helps avoid obstacles that will keep people from being there and a plan helps people know what to expect.
- Create a welcoming environment! Learn people’s names and make sure everyone is introduced to each other. Possibly have a snack each week, alternating between healthy and “less healthy.” Everyone likes a snack!
- Regularly remind people of the group’s purpose to:

CONNECT Relationally

GROW Biblically

ENGAGE Missionally

- Regularly break up into smaller groups of 2-3, starting from the very first meeting. Smaller groups help people feel known. Keep the groups no bigger than 3. This will pay off in the long run.
- Stress confidentiality about what is shared in the group.
- Try reaching out to different people each week to grab lunch or coffee outside of group time as your schedule allows.

MAKE A PLAN EACH WEEK

Use the Group Discussion Guide (located at the end of each lesson). Divide your time into three relatively equal thirds that focus on **CONNECT**, **GROW**, **ENGAGE**.

| | |
|------|--|
| 7:00 | <p>Build community in your group using the CONNECT suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Depending on your group size, you could get into groups of 2-3 (but no more than 3) with a question to discuss for getting to know one another, to check on how application from last week went and for prayer. Sometimes the question could be for fun and other times more serious. For example: “What was a highlight and lowlight of your week?” or “How did you apply last week’s lesson?”</p> <p>Pray in the small groups. (Prayer at the beginning is a good way to help make it an emphasis.) Suggest something for them to pray for as a group- that is bigger than themselves and the group. Some ideas: For our community and people who do not know Jesus; family members, friends, and classmates who they would like to point to Jesus; a missionary; a country/people group in need of the gospel.</p> |
| 7:30 | <p>Gather back as one group and have one person pray for the time. Discuss the passage using the GROW section questions in the Group Discussion Guide. Summarize or read aloud the passage together.</p> |
| 8:00 | <p>Discuss the ENGAGE tool or spiritual practice in the lesson. Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week. Create a plan of action to apply what you have learned.</p> <p>Gather in small groups (of 2-3) again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.</p> |

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

OBSERVE

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below. All examples are taken from the book of Galatians.

OBSERVATION TASK 1

Mark up the passage by visually identifying the following specific elements:

Underline all verbs. A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place (“we will reign with Him”) or that a state or condition exists (“we are faithless”). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.

Circle key words or phrases. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “gospel” in 1:6) or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage, such as “approved” and “works of the law” in 3:2,5,10).

Highlight repeated words or phrases. Also, include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “suffer hardship” and “endure suffering”). You’ll also want to highlight things that are repeated from previous passages (such as “son” in 4:23 and 4:30)

Box connecting words. These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:

1. Comparison either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so (e.g., “like the Gentiles” in 2:14).
2. Contrast points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: but, rather, yet, however (e.g., “No longer I... but Christ” in 2:20).
3. Purpose indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: that, so that, in order that (e.g., “Christ redeemed us... in order that in Christ Jesus...” in 3:13-14).
4. Result is similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: that, so that, as a result, with the result that (e.g., “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.” in 2:13).
5. Cause expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: because, since, and sometimes for. (e.g., “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions” in 3:19)
6. Explanation is what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word “for.” (e.g., “For prior to the coming of certain men from James” in 2:12).
7. Inference provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: therefore, for this reason. (e.g., “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.” in 3:7)
8. Condition presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is “if.” (e.g., “For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise...” in 3:18)

OBSERVATION TASK 2

List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week.
A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “humility” in 5:16-26. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

OBSERVATION TASK 3

Write two or more observations per verse.
Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

OBSERVATION TASK 4

Ask your own interpretive questions.

Here are a few examples:

| WHO IS... | WHAT IS THE... | WHY DID THE AUTHOR... | HOW... |
|---|---|--|---|
| Paul talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action? | meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases? | choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____ ? | was this action accomplished? will this situation occur? |

INTERPRET

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions. Also, make sure to familiarize yourself with the three “Principles of Interpretation” that appear in the Appendix at the end of this study.

INTERPRETATION METHODS

Interpretation Method 1 | Use the context.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead in the book for clues.

Interpretation Method 2 | Study cross-references.

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a “Word Search” that will provide all Biblical references that use the English term.

Interpretation Method 3 | Look up key words.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as net.bible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. For even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a “Word Search,” “Strong’s Search,” or “Word Study.” The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books & many hours now takes one internet browser & a few seconds!

Interpretation Method 4 | Look up background information.

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Notes” on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

Interpretation Method 5 | Tackle tough questions step-by-step.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

1. List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
2. List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.
3. Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.
4. Decide on your certainty level. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

Interpretation Method 6 | Compare multiple translations.

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible,

which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at netbible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

INTERPRETATION PRINCIPLES

There are three fundamental principles of interpretation that help us to use our interpretive skills accurately.

Interpretation Principle 1 | Discern the author's intended meaning.

Your goal is to discern the author's intended meaning to the original audience. Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, "What does this passage mean to me?" While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning, the author's intended meaning; and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps:

1. Always start your study with prayer, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
2. Avoid inserting your 21st century circumstances and theological issues into the text as they can skew understanding.
3. Work diligently to see the text from the point of view of the original readers. To do this: (a) dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and (b) spend a few moments thinking about the original audience's religious understanding by asking, "What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? About Jesus? About salvation? etc."

Interpretation Principle 2 | Assume a "Normal" Use of Language

The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for "hidden" meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the "normal" techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

1. Study the grammar. Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
2. Remember that chapter divisions came later. When Paul wrote Corinthians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

Interpretation Principle 3 | Let Scripture Interpret Scripture

This is the third and last principle of interpretation. Because God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word. This has two practical applications:

1. Check your conclusions. Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of scripture as a whole. If you find your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
2. Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages. Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.

One last caution: remember that God revealed scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the New Testament era, we must believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

APPLY

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And lest we underestimate the value of this last step, remember that in God's eyes it is the person who does not just know His Word, but also obeys His Word that truly loves Him (see John 14:21). So how do we apply a passage to our lives? Application involves the following two tasks:

APPLICATION TASK 1

List potential principles from your passage.

A "principle" is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g., "do not leave Jerusalem" in Acts 1:4). It is often helpful when listing principles to consider the following questions:

- Is there something to worship or thank God for?
- Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?
- Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?
- Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?
- Is there any relationship I need to work on?

APPLICATION TASK 2

Choose one principle, and create a plan to apply it to your life this week.

Once you complete your principle list, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on (Do not just choose the easiest to apply!). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

1. What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.
2. Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

ONLINE RESOURCES

netbible.org | cross references, word studies
biblestudytools.net | word studies
blueletterbible.org | word studies
planobiblechapel.org/soniclight | commentary
bestcommentaries.com | commentary database

Grace Bible Church does not always agree with the views of these commentaries. These are good tools to help understand hard passages, but the particular theological views reflect the author of the commentary and not those of Grace Bible Church.

DISCIPLESHIP/BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

Living By the Book by Howard Hendricks and Charles Swindoll
A more in-depth book on how to study the Bible using the tools discussed in this packet.

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman
A highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making by Leroy Eims
This practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

A Survey of Bible Doctrine by Charles Ryrie
An easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

Rooted by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX
Nine conversations that establish a new believer with foundational truths and practices to follow Jesus for a lifetime. **<https://www.grace-bible.org/resources/bible-study/46/rooted>**

NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

| EVENT | APPROXIMATE DATE |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Crucifixion of Jesus | April 33 |
| Pentecost (Acts 2) | May 33 |
| Paul's conversion (Acts 9) | Summer 35 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, 1st visit (Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20) | 35-43 |
| Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26) | Spring 43 |
| Epistle of James written | 45 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, relief visit (Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10) | Autumn 47 |
| Paul to Antioch (Acts 12:25-13:1) | Autumn 47 – Spring 48 |
| Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14) | April 48 – September 49 |
| Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-16) | Autumn 49 |
| Galatians written from Antioch | Autumn 49 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, Jerusalem council (Acts 15) | Autumn 49 |
| Paul in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35) | Winter 49/50 |
| Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22) | April 50 – September 52 |
| 1 & 2 Thessalonians written | Spring – Summer 51 |
| Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch | End of September 52; Winter 52/53 |
| Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:16) | Spring 53 – May 57 |
| 1 & 2 Corinthians written | Spring – Fall 56 |
| Romans written | Winter 56/57 |
| Ephesian elders visit Paul at Miletus (Acts 20) | May 57 |
| Paul in Jerusalem | Eve of Pentecost, May 27, 57 |
| Paul's arrest and trial before Felix (Acts 21:26-24:22) | June 57 |
| Paul's appearance before Felix ^ Drusilla (Acts 24:24-26) | June 57 |
| Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 24:27) | June 57 – Aug 59 |
| Paul's trial before Festus (Acts 25:7-12) & Agrippa (Acts 26) | July 59; Aug 59 |
| Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:29) | Aug 59 – Feb 60 |
| Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30) | Feb 60 – Mar 62 |
| Luke written | 60 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Acts Written | 60 |
| Ephesians written | Autumn 60 |
| Colossians and Philemon written | Autumn 61 |
| Philippians written | Spring 62 |
| Paul's release | Spring 62 |
| Mark Written | 62 |
| Paul in Ephesus and Colossae | Spring–Autumn 62 |
| Peter in Rome | 62 |
| Paul in Macedonia | Summer 62–Winter 62/63 |
| 1 Timothy Written | Autumn 62 |
| Paul in Asia Minor | Spring 62– |
| Peter martyred | Summer 64 (67?) |
| Paul in Spain and Crete | Spring 64–Spring 66; Summer 66 |
| Titus written | Summer 66 |
| Paul arrested and taken to Rome | Autumn 67 |
| 2 Timothy written | Autumn 67 |
| Paul's death | Spring 68 |
| Matthew written | 60's |
| Hebrews written | 60's |
| Destruction of Jerusalem | September 2, 70 |
| Jude written | 60's or 70's |
| John written | 80's or 90's |
| 1,2,3 John written | 80's or 90's |
| Revelation written | Early 90's |

Adapted from Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, Harold H. Hoehner, Zondervan, 1978.

ENGAGE TOOLS

Because God loves all people, He is constantly working to draw men and women to Himself. He invites believers to partner with Him in this great mission of redemption and restoration. We do this by helping people find and follow Jesus — this is disciple-making. Jesus summarized this calling in Matthew 28:18-20.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying,

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

On the following pages are some foundational tools, practices, and resources to engage in helping people find and follow Jesus.

Visit **grace-bible.org/disciplemaker** for more resources.

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Just as Jesus entered into a specific time and place, God has placed each of us into a unique context in which to share His love and to represent Him. Our context includes anyone that we commonly encounter on a regular basis which gives us the ability to have influence in their lives. Think about the people in your spheres of influence; the people with whom you live, learn, work, and play who are near to you but might be far from God. Also, think about people that are just beyond your normal spheres. Perhaps there is an acquaintance that you don't know well, or a neighbor who is different from you ethnically or socio-economically, or a community member that the Holy Spirit has put in your path but is more a stranger than friend. Be creative and think outside the box!

Pray Big - diligently pray for these friends to find and follow Jesus.

Map - write down at least three names in each of these spheres.

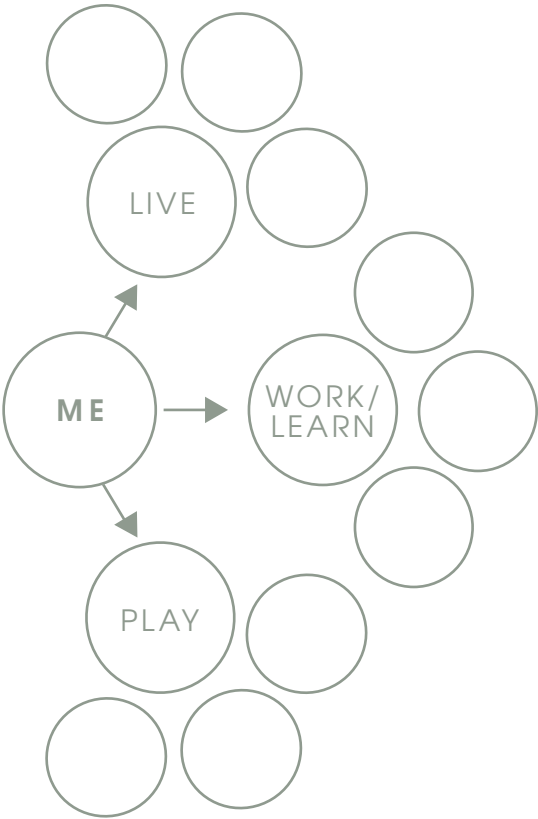
Ask God:

Who might be seeking Him or is asking hard questions about life?

Who needs acts of love and concern shown to them?

How to serve and share the love of Christ with them?

For opportunities to share your story and the gospel.



STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

During His life on earth, Jesus told stories using illustrations from everyday life that created an interest in His Kingdom. Jesus made His message accessible to those who would hear. Sadly, we have become conditioned to put on a filter and not speak of Jesus because we imagine that it is awkward, pushy, or politically incorrect. What would it be like to take off this filter and grow in boldness and love as we share stories about who He is and what He is about?

Marking ourselves as a “spiritual” person can help us gauge whether others are interested in God and His message. Some people will “lean in” as you speak about such topics, asking additional questions, sharing their own beliefs, telling about their own journey. Some will not; they will “lean back” and change the topic, become silent, or shut down altogether.

Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you as you initiate and let Him do the work of speaking to a person’s soul.

Practice talking about two or three of the following “interest creating” topics:

Recently, God/Jesus has been teaching me that...

I am realizing more and more that God has blessed me by...

I used to struggle with (insert fear, stronghold, idolatry) but now I see God wants me to believe...

I decided to follow Jesus because...

I’ve really been learning to pray more lately. Do you have anything in your life that I can commit to pray for?

Think of common topics that come up as you meet people, for example: career, living situation, family history, educational background. Pick one of these and tell how God changed your path in the past, or how He is guiding you in the present.

As you practice talking about these things, try to end with a learning question such as:

Have you ever considered God in this way before?

Do you think God is teaching/blessing/asking you to believe anything right now?

Do you consider yourself on a spiritual journey? What is that like?

What does your tradition say about Jesus?

Your questions are to gauge a response and to allow space for them to interact with your story.

Now, be prayerful and alert as to who God brings across your path!

SHARING YOUR STORY

You have a unique story of how you came to know and follow Jesus. Your story is one of the most powerful tools you have for helping other people find and follow Jesus as well. As you begin to let people know that you are following Jesus, simply ask, “Can I share with you the story of my spiritual journey?” Those who are interested in spiritual things are likely to demonstrate their interest in one way or another (asking questions, making a comment) and that often provides an open door to share your story.

HOW TO BEGIN

Write out your thoughts on the following topics and questions. These ideas will help you share the story of your spiritual journey, sometimes called your “testimony.”

MY LIFE BEFORE JESUS

My life revolved around _____, and I found my identity, happiness and security from _____.

Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc.?

How did this disappoint me? How was this unfulfilling? How did I come to realize this?

What was I struggling with (if anything) just before I believed in Jesus?

Note: Some people trusted Jesus when they were very young, and don’t have clear memories of the time before they knew Him. If that is you, simply share this as part of your story.

HOW I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

This part of your story is where you came to a transition in your life.

When and how did I first hear about Jesus?

What did I learn about the life He offers all who believe in Him?

When and why did my perspective about Jesus begin to change?

Why did I decide to believe in Jesus?

Note: Some of us may be able to point to specific times or circumstances regarding how or when we believed. For others of us, we can only point to a time period or gradual understanding. Both are great. Everyone’s story is significant and the biggest point is that you now believe in Jesus.

MY LIFE SINCE I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude, and perspective on life.

How am I motivated differently now? What do I live for now?

How do I experience God now?

BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Think about your answers to the questions above, and ask yourself the following:

Is this a continuous story that makes sense?

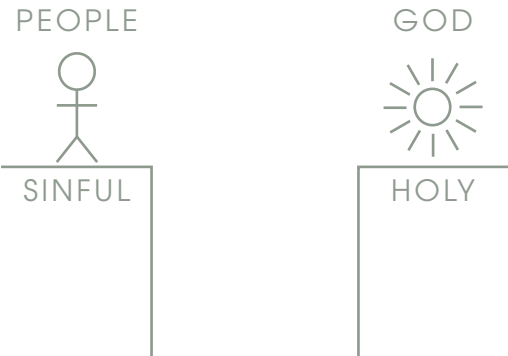
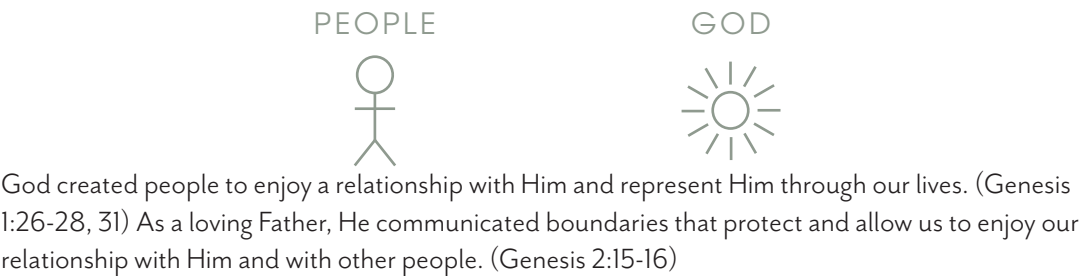
Are there any consistent themes in my story?

Can I share my story in 3-4 minutes?

Was I clear about what I believed about Jesus?

SHARING THE GOSPEL: THE BRIDGE

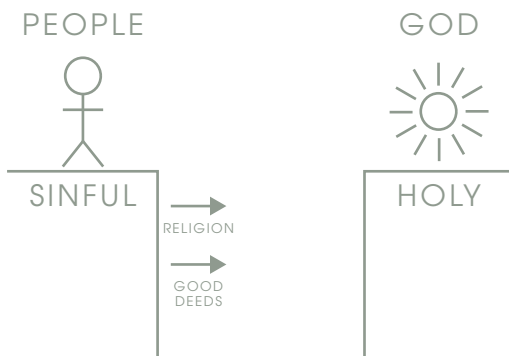
In the Christian faith, the word “gospel” simply means the “good news” about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed! Let’s look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.



Everyone has fallen short of God’s standards. The Bible calls that “sin.” Our sin results in our separation from God. Unless our sin is forgiven, we deserve eternal punishment, separated from God forever.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“For the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23a

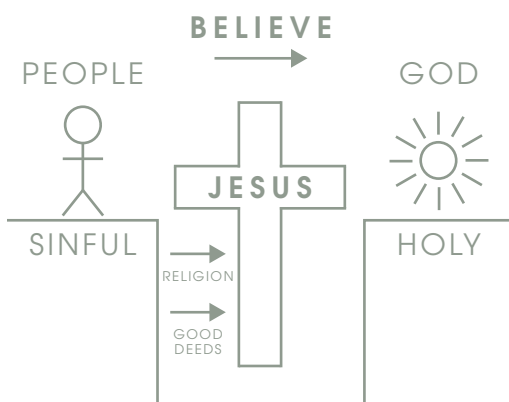
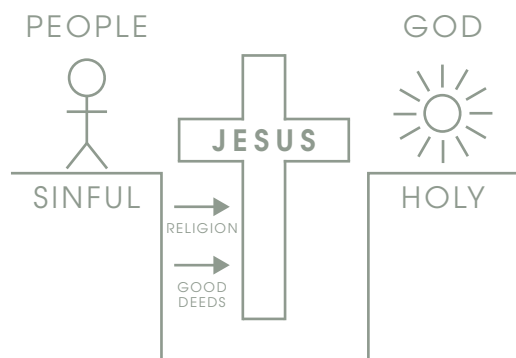


Some try to reach God through religion or by trying to be a good person. But the Bible tells us that there is only one way to God and that is through belief in His Son, Jesus Christ.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.’” John 14:6

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and freely give us eternal life. God’s only Son Jesus died in our place. He took on Himself the punishment that our sin deserves. Then, Jesus rose from the dead. He conquered sin and death forever.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8



Everyone who believes in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins receives eternal life. To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God’s approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and salvation. Instead, you accept God’s free gift of eternal life.

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” John 5:24

SHARING THE GOSPEL: THREE CIRCLES

In Christianity, the word “gospel” simply means the “good news” about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed!

Let’s look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.

These three circles help us explain the gospel according to the Bible.

Read each section and the scripture verses that follow.

GOD’S DESIGN

Out of God’s great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

BROKENNESS

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust. This is because we have rejected God’s design and chosen to follow our own way. Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23) Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a) Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

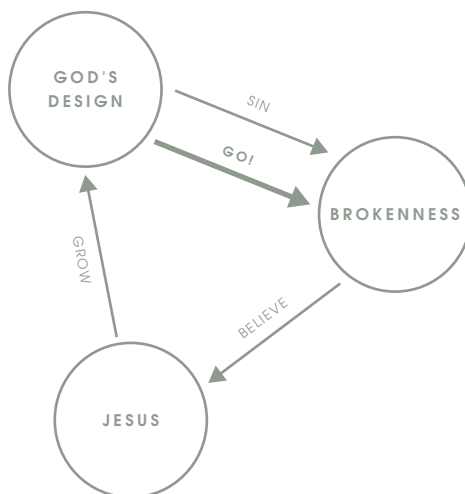
God’s only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God’s approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God’s free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live (John 3:16-17).



Which circle or arrow in the diagram best represents your life right now? Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS AND NEXT STEPS:

“Yes.”

Ask: “Tell me about that. When and how did that happen for you?”

Try to discern if the person is trusting in anything other than Christ alone.

Move to Grow and Go

“No, but I want to.”

Affirm their decision to believe and help them to tell God in prayer of their belief in Jesus.

Example: “Thank you God for loving me by sending your Son Jesus to die for me. I believe in His life, death and resurrection to rescue me from my sin and spiritual death. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me the free gift of eternal life.”

Welcome them to the Family of God!

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Move to Grow and Go

“Not Sure” / “Not Yet” / “No.”

Ask: “What is keeping you from trusting in Jesus?”

Try to discern their willingness or unwillingness to believe.

For those willing, help answer their questions if possible.

For those unwilling, offer to pray for them and talk further at another time.

GROW

Everyone who believes in Jesus should then grow in their relationship with God. We grow by knowing God more deeply and living more like Him personally.

We begin to know Him and we become like Him by following His way of living (Ephesians 4:15).

GO

Followers of Jesus have the great calling and opportunity to go into the broken world to share the love of God and the good news of the gospel message (Matthew 28:19-20).

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Discovery Bible Study is an easy and meaningful way to read the Bible with friends in your life who do not know Jesus. The simple practice consists of reading a section of scripture and answering five basic questions. The goal is to facilitate an encounter between God's truth and your friend's heart. Be praying for God to reveal Himself to your friend through His Word.

Choose a passage of scripture, read it aloud (1-2 times).

Ask someone to retell it in their own words.

Answer these five questions:

1. What does this passage teach about God?
2. What does this passage teach about people or myself?
3. What stands out most in this passage?
4. Since God's word is true, how should I change as a result? What will I do in response to this passage?

Consider the following:

- Is there an example for me to follow?
- Is there a sin for me to avoid?
- Is there a command for me to obey?
- Is there a promise for me to claim?
- Is there a challenge for me to face?

5. With whom am I going to share this passage and what I am learning from the Bible?

Suggested Passages

Read through these 4 Core Passages about Jesus:

- John 3:1-21 (You must be born again)
- Mark 2:1-12 (Jesus has authority to forgive)
- Luke 7:36-50 (Forgive much/Love much)
- Luke 18:7-14 (Self-righteous/irreligious)

Read through the book of John.

Creation to Christ

Read through these passages for bigger picture of the Biblical narrative.

- ☐ Genesis 1:1-25
- ☐ Genesis 2:4-24
- ☐ Genesis 3:1-13
- ☐ Genesis 3:14-24
- ☐ Genesis 6:5-8
- ☐ Genesis 6:9-8:14
- ☐ Genesis 8:15-9:17
- ☐ Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-7
- ☐ Genesis 22:1-19
- ☐ Exodus 12:1-28
- ☐ Exodus 20:1-21
- ☐ Leviticus 4:1-35
- ☐ Isaiah 53
- ☐ Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20
- ☐ Matthew 3; John 1:29-34
- ☐ Matthew 4:1-11
- ☐ John 3:1-21
- ☐ John 4:1-26, 39-42
- ☐ Luke 5:17-26
- ☐ Mark 4:35-41
- ☐ Mark 5:1-20
- ☐ John 11:1-44
- ☐ Matthew 26:17-30
- ☐ John 18:1-19:16
- ☐ Luke 23:32-56
- ☐ Luke 24:1-35
- ☐ Luke 24:36-53
- ☐ John 3:1-21

FIND MORE RESOURCES AT **GRACE-BIBLE.ORG**

