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DISCIPLINE SHIP EXPLORED

WHAT'S THE BEST LOVE
YOU'VE EVER KNOWN?

HANDBOOK

Discipleship Explored Handbook (3rd Edition)

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WELCOME TO DISCIPLESHIP | **EXPLORED**

The word “disciple” means “follower” or “learner.”

A disciple of Jesus isn’t some kind of super-Christian. In fact, Jesus assumes that all of his followers are disciples.

Over the next eight sessions, we’ll be exploring a letter written to some of the earliest Christian disciples by one of the earliest Christian leaders: Paul. He was in chains at the time, guarded day and night by a Roman soldier – and yet, as he keeps telling them, he’s overflowing with joy.

We’re about to discover why.



Key

 Discuss

 Watch a film

 Read a Bible passage

 Pray

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SESSION 1

CONFIDENT IN CHRIST

▶ **Confident in Christ** (Philippians 1:1-11)

How can I be confident that I really am a follower of Jesus?

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▶ Confident in Christ

- God in his goodness is completely in control of everything – not just when things are going the way we want, but also when they aren't.
- We see this played out as Jesus was dying on the cross: the greatest imaginable good was being achieved by God even when human beings were doing their very worst.
- Because God is in control, we can be confident that nothing can prevent him from completing the good work he has begun in every believer (Philippians 1:6).

We can be confident that God is working to change us internally if our lives start to reflect this externally.

- Because God is at work in us, we won't be passive. We'll want to respond by growing in our knowledge and love of him (Philippians 1:9-11).

Christ (v 1) | A title meaning "God's anointed one." Sometimes translated as Messiah.

God's holy people (v 1) | Those who God has set apart for himself. This is often translated as "saints." Every follower of Jesus is a saint. The collective description for God's holy people is the "church" (see Philippians 3:6 and 4:15).

Overseers and deacons (v 1) | Church leaders (1 Timothy 3:1-13).

Grace (v 2) | God's goodness to people who do not deserve it.

Gospel (v 5, 7) | The good news that Jesus Christ lived, died, was resurrected, and ascended so that we can be reconciled to God and enjoy him forever.



Day of Christ (v 6, 10) | The day when Jesus Christ will return to judge the world.

Righteousness (v 11) | Perfect goodness. To be righteous is to be “pure and blameless” (v 10).

Righteousness can only come “through Jesus Christ” because only he – as God come to earth – has lived a perfectly pure and blameless life.

 **Philippians 1:1-11**

 **1. According to Philippians 1:6, what is Paul confident about?**

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2. How can he be so confident? (See verse 5.)

3. What do you think that phrase means, in practical terms? (See Philippians 2:25 and 4:14-16.)



4. So how can we be confident that God is working in us? What might that look like in your life and in your day-to-day relationships?

5. Someone might say, "If God will finish this work he started, why do I need to do anything?" What would you say to them?

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6. A Christian friend is going through a tough time. They don't feel confident that God loves them and is in control of what is happening to them. Is there something from the film or our discussion that might encourage them?

7. (If time) What has been most striking for you during this session?



→ **Follow Up:** Paul is confident in Philippians 1:6 that God will complete the “good work” that he began in the Philippians. This “good work” is salvation. The Follow Up activities this week focus on how we can be confident of salvation.

☰ **Sunday:** Think over what you heard in church this week. What did you find most helpful?

📖 **Day 1: Philippians 1:1-11** (Most Bibles have a contents page at the start to help you find particular books.)

If you can, memorize this key verse:

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

📖 **Day 2: Ephesians 2:8-10**

1. Look at verse 8. How are Christians saved?



2. Can Christians save themselves? Why or why not? (See verses 8 and 9.)

3. What cannot save us? (See verse 9.)


4. Are "good works" (i.e. doing good things / not doing bad things) still important for us to do? (See verse 10.)

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If you're a Christian, thank God that he has given you the "gift" of faith (verse 8). Praise him for his amazing grace. Ask your Father for growing confidence in him, rather than in your own "works."

When you pray, one helpful model to have in mind is ACTS: **Adoration** (praising God for who he is), **Confession** (speaking honestly about what we've done wrong), **Thanksgiving** (expressing gratitude for all God is doing in your life), and **Supplication** (this is what Paul means in Philippians 4:6 when he says, "Present your requests to God").



 **Day 3:** *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (Jesus, speaking in John 14:6)

Think about what this verse means for you. Try to memorize it if you can.

 **Day 4: Read Jesus' words in John 10:27-28.**

In this part of John's Gospel, Jesus describes himself as "the good shepherd," and his followers are described as his "sheep."

1. In verse 27, how do "sheep" respond to Jesus?

2. Look at verse 28. What will Jesus give to those who follow him?



3. How confident can we be of salvation, if we follow Jesus?
(See verse 28.)

4. Look at verse 27. What is it about us that shows we are
followers of Jesus?

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Thank God for this stunning promise: “No one will snatch them out of my hand” (verse 28). If we belong to Christ, we can be sure of our salvation. We can trust him completely. He is stronger than anything or anyone else, and he will not let us go.



Day 5: Re-read the passages you’ve read this week. Pick a verse you found particularly helpful and write it down below.



Day 6: Get ready for *Discipleship Explored* by reading Philippians 1:12-26.

