



Week 42: Philippians & Colossians

Study Guide for the week of Oct. 12-18

Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week, meditate on Phil 4:8-9

How do you spend your time? This week, make an unflinching inventory of how you spend each day. Pull out a sheet of paper and divide it into 15-minute intervals, starting with when you get up and ending with when you go to bed; do this for each day of the week. Now fill in all your activities – don't forget commuting or your drive time, time on the phone or computer, time for your hobbies and chores.

Now look at all the time you spend sleeping (adults need 7-8+ hours a night), at work, caring for family and friends, exercising, leisure activities and hobbies, etc. Where are you spending time with those things that are excellent, worthy of praise, whether great art, music, literature, God's creation, honorable friends, pleasing activities? How are you occupying your mind during those "mindless tasks" like mowing the lawn, folding clothes, your commute to work? Do you need to shift so you can intentionally and regularly "set your minds on things that are above" (Col 3:2)?

Ask God to show you where you need to rework the way you spend your time and occupy your mind.

Discussion starters

1. The overarching theme of Philippians is joy. How do you define joy? Happiness? Compare your definitions to those you find in a dictionary. Can you be happy despite difficult circumstances? Joyful? How would Paul answer that question?
2. Are you an optimist or pessimist? Introvert or extrovert? Anxious or laid-back? Do you see the world through rose-colored glasses or not? How do you approach life, tentatively or with boldness? What is Paul's prescription for an attitude toward life (Phil 4:4-7)?
3. What is your experience of baptism, either your own or that of your family or friends? Did you ever consider baptism a death? Reread Col 2:11-12. How would you feel about physical death if you understood baptism as the only death that really mattered?
4. What does it mean to have your speech seasoned with salt (Col 4:6)? Read Ex 30:34-35. In this passage in Exodus, Moses is given instructions for this incense which is offered as a thank offering. Is all your speech a thank offering before God? How would your speech change if you considered your words as "seasoned with salt" for God?

Bible verse to memorize: Phil 1:6