

ECC Group Questions
The Opportunities of Obstacles
Philippians 1:12-18

Opening: Tell about a time when you experienced hardship in your life. Did that situation provide an opportunity for you to do things you wouldn't have done otherwise? Were you able to use that hardship to bring glory to God? How?

Read Philippians 1:12-18

1. Where is Paul writing from? (verses 13-14)
How might Paul's situation be a discouragement to him?
How might the church in Philippi have been discouraged by his situation?
Can you relate to Paul? Do you have a "prison" that you deal with in your life that can lead to discouragement?
2. How does Paul refocus his hardship to help the Philippians? (verses 13,14,18)
How does God use difficult situations to bring about good and holy things in life?
How can we learn to refocus our hardships like Paul does here?
3. What is the "lens" that Paul uses to judge whether a situation is good or bad?
(verses 12, 18)
What kind of lenses do people typically use to judge a particular situation?
How can the type of lens Paul employs help people view a situation?
4. What types of situations might cause people to preach Christ out of envy, rivalry, or selfish ambition?
What is Paul's perspective on people who preach Christ from false motives?
5. How do you respond to the fact that the letter to the Philippians, full of words like rejoice and joy, was written from prison?

6. In what ways can God use seasons of “imprisonment” to produce joy in our lives?
Share a time when you have experienced this yourself.

7. Application: Think of three people to whom you can send words of encouragement the next time you are “confined” and have extra time.

Memory Verse

Philippians 1:18

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

Next Steps

- Even though I am not where I want to be in life, I will focus on proclaiming Christ.
- I have let the hard things in life consume me. I need God’s help redeeming those hardships in my life.
- The hardest thing in my life right now is _____.
I will ask God to redeem this situation for his glory.
- I need to give grace to those who are preaching the gospel of Christ, even if they do it in a different way.