



# Connect: discussion guide

Joy in humility

9<sup>th</sup> November 2025

**WELCOME:** We are part way through a series based on the apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians, a church Paul planted on his "second missionary journey" probably 49-52AD and he sends the letter we have in the New Testament, from a time of being in jail probably in Rome in 60-62AD. The questions are based most on the New Living Translation, but using a variety of translations may help to give a broader perspective.

(NOTE: There is a lot of content in this passage, and you may not get through it all in one session – you could have a brief look first and decide which parts have priority for your group.)

- What do you recall so far from engaging with Paul's letter to the Philippians?
- In what ways are the lessons Paul teaches here relevant to the church in our context today?

## **Read Philippians 2:1**

Remember the apostle Paul is writing this letter having been imprisoned for his faith. Paul asks 4 opening questions – how would you answer them?

- Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ?
- Is there any comfort from the love of Christ?
- Is there any fellowship (koinonia) together in the Spirit?
- Are your hearts tender and compassionate?

## **Read Philippians 2:2**

Paul asks the church to "fill up his joy" in 4 ways – how should we do this today?

- "Agree wholeheartedly with one another" – what does that look like?
- "Love one another" – how do we demonstrate that in our church family?
- "Work together with one another" – in what ways can we work together as a church?
- "Have one mind and purpose" – what is the common mind & purpose of Connect?

## **Read Philippians 2:3-4**

- What forms of "selfish ambition" threaten unity today?
- How does biblical humility differ from low self-esteem?
- How can valuing others reshape community life?

## **Read Philippians 2:5**

- How would you describe someone who has the same attitude that Christ Jesus had?
- Go around the group and name some aspects of Jesus' attitude that you can recall.
- What practical habits could help you to cultivate "the attitude of Christ" in your life?

## **Read Philippians 2:6-8**

- What do you think it means that Christ "emptied himself" (*the concept of kenosis*)?
- In what ways do you think this challenges views of power and status in our world?
- How do you think believers could practice "kenotic" (self-emptying) love?

### ***Read Philippians 2:9-11***

- In what ways do these verses identify the “inverted” nature of God’s Kingdom values?
- In Paul’s context, chained up in jail for his faith, what impact do you think this attitude and declaration might have had on the guards and other prisoners?

### ***Read Philippians 2:12-13***

- What do you think it means to “work out your salvation in fear and trembling?”
- In what ways do you think God is at work in your life?
- In what ways can you see God has “given you the desire and power to do what pleases God?”

### ***Read Philippians 2:14-15***

- How does gratitude reflect spiritual maturity?
- Why is an attitude of constant complaining incompatible with gospel witness?
- In what ways can your group “shine as lights” in your community?

### **Practical Application**

The passage was summed up in five intentional ways of behaving as followers of Jesus.

- 1. Active partnership in faith, not just being a Christian consumer.**
- 2. Active partnership with God, not trying to control people or events.**
- 3. Active intent to be countercultural, choosing not to whinge about things.**
- 4. Active attitude of humility, demonstrated in unity in Christ.**
- 5. Active JOY in suffering, service & sacrifice – always choosing JOY regardless.**

Pick one of the five to act on in this coming week – share with your group what you have chosen

### **Pray together:**

Father God, we thank You that You can use obstacles, challenges and pain that comes our way to help us to remain humble and to create opportunities for us to choose Joy. We thank you for the example of the apostle Paul, and the example of Jesus that he teaches from this week, teaching us how to remain faithful and find joy though the inevitable ups and downs we will experience in life. Help us to be sensitive to others and to seek to be a bringer of joy to people around us, whether they are in a good season or a challenging one. Help us to be a blessing to others and for the good things we do to bring praise to you our Father in heaven.

We pray that we might hear more clearly the voice of the Holy Spirit and have the spiritual capacity to perceive what you are already doing, that we might join in with You. We pray for the leaders of our church and the leaders in our world, for our neighbourhood, our city, our nation, and the nations and for clarity about our part in taking the good news of Jesus to our world. Amen