

Philippians: To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain

Session One: Odd Beginnings

Matt Chandler's study of Philippians is one that will consider the book's four chapters and Paul's intent as a church planter. Chandler focuses on what it means to truly live by following Jesus Christ, how we can go about a Christ-like life, what is the surpassing greatness of Jesus Christ, and how being a follower of Jesus Christ and knowing him makes salvation possible. As Chandler dives into Philippians while hosting members of his church, he aims to paint a portrait of a maturing believer.

Part A) Chandler opens with reading the early verses of Chapter 1 of the Book of Philippians. At one point he draws special attention to Paul's letter, verses 9-11: *9 I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. 10 For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. 11 May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God* (NIV Translation).

How do these verses seem to be addressing a mature believer?

Of what does Paul remind the Philippians so they might best keep their tenets of faith, grow their church, and find salvation?

Part B) Chandler reads the Book of Acts, Chapter 16 with a focus on three distinctly different conversion stories: Paul's conversion of Lydia by appealing to her intellect, Paul's conversion of a young slave girl through the power of the holy spirit, and Paul's conversion of a jailer by example and encouragement of duty.

How must mature believers go about discipling?

How can you go about discipling by appealing to the intellect, heart, or dutiful mindset of another?

Chandler closes his sermon with a powerful idea: the community begun by Jesus Christ is not one that should be confined or limited to those of a specific race, socio-economic status, or role. The Gospel breaks down barriers - the Good News will not be jailed or kept secret.

As a believer, when have you felt someone - because of one trait or another - was incapable of coming to Christ?

How might Paul's story be one that takes away these feelings? What might you do differently in the future?