

Philippians: To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain

Session **Four**: The One God Opposes

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) "He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts" (Luke 1, 51 - NIV Translation). In response to this verse, Chandler says, "Outside of the idea of Hell, there is no more terrifying idea in the scriptures than God Almighty setting you free to run wild in the imagination of your heart." Chandler explains that the imagination that festers and fosters pain in our hearts is often finding an author for this pain other than ourselves, resulting in arrogance, pride, and more.

How has such imagination fuelled discontent and pained your heart? Which truth have you been avoiding that has resulted in arrogance or pride?

How is a realistic understanding of self necessary in order to go to God with prayers and repentance (seeking forgiveness)? Can we seek forgiveness if we can't acknowledge our own shortcomings?

Part B) "The reason the rich go away empty is because everything they are trying to find fulfillment in...you were not meant to find fulfillment in." These words by Chandler echo those delivered by Mary in Luke 1, verse 53, which presents the idea that God will not satisfy those - in their hearts and minds - who look to define and fill their lives with material wealth, vanity, and otherwise.

When have you aimed to fill your life with goods or wealth and still felt unsatisfied? How might you still be doing so now?

Part C) Chandler's most stand out idea in this entire session comes with one question: "Are you using God to get something from him, or is God the goal?" In other words, Chandler asks us to think about if we go only to God when we need something, or do we stand in humility with every folly, fortune, and misfortune.

When was the last time you acknowledged and thanked God when you were having a bad day? Why is this so difficult to do when we are faced with misfortune?