

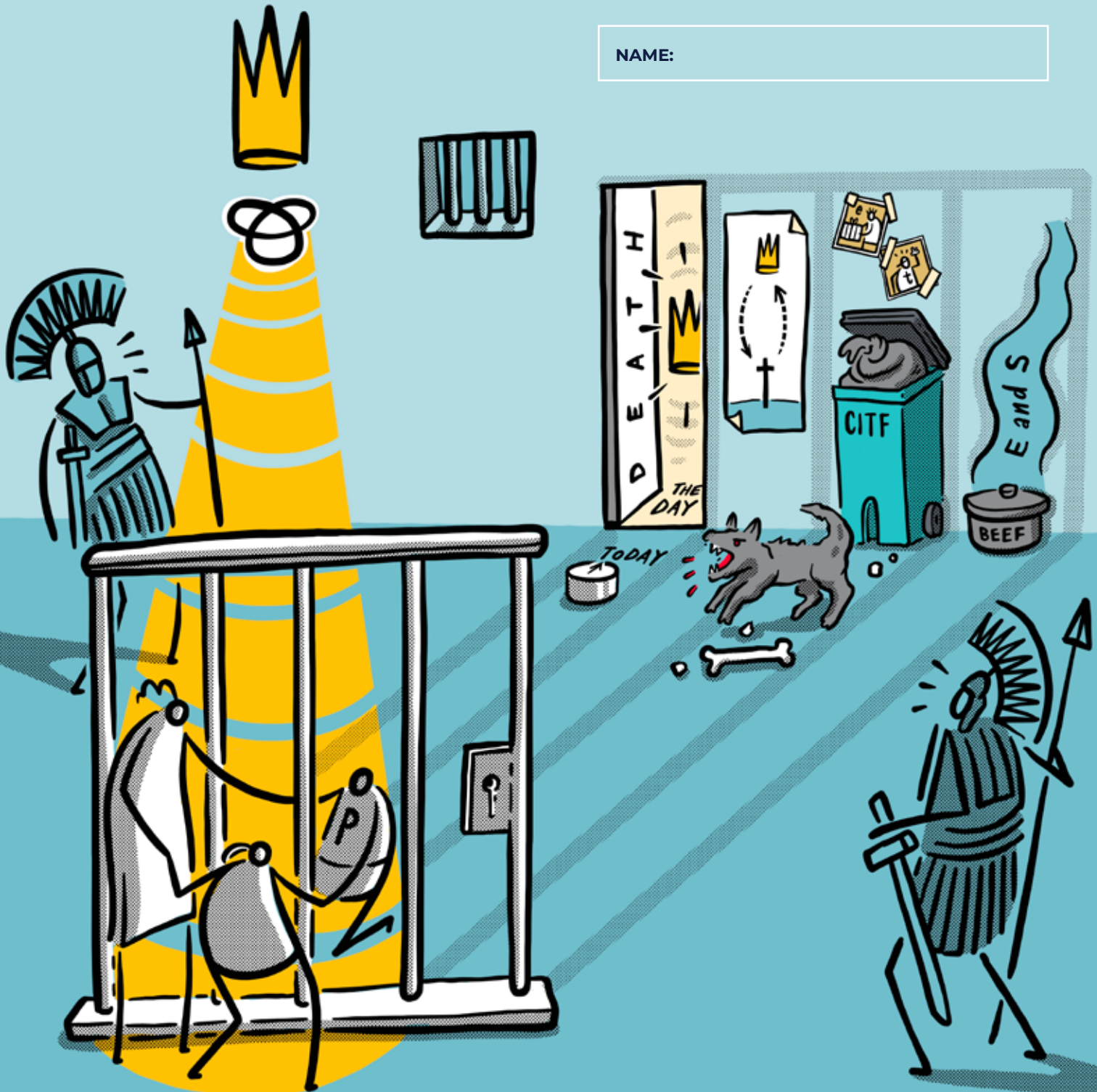
PORTRAITS FROM A PRISON CELL

YOUTH
BOOK

WRITTEN BY
TREVOR PEARCE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JASON RAMASAMI

NAME:



CONTENTS

PHILIPPIANS IN ELEVEN SESSIONS

SESSION ONE

Who are yer? (1:1–11)

P3

SESSION TWO

Everywhere a mission field
(1:12–30)

P6

SESSION THREE

True joy (2:1–5)

P9

SESSION FOUR

Serving like the son (2:5–11)

P12

SESSION FIVE

Exalting like the Father
(2:1–5, 8–11)

P15

SESSION SIX

God at work (2:12–18)

P18

SESSION SEVEN

Sketches of a gospel partner
(2:19–30)

P22

SESSION EIGHT

Jesus muzzles the
dangerous dogs (3:1–14)

P25

SESSION NINE

Your examples & your
enemies (3:13–21)

P29

SESSION TEN

Gospel joy destroys
disunity (4:1–9)

P32

SESSION ELEVEN

Joyful gospel
contentment (4:10–23)

P36

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

SESSION ONE

Who are yer? (1:1–11)

P5

SESSION TWO

Everywhere
a mission field (1:12–30)

P8

SESSION THREE

True joy (2:1–5)

P11

SESSION FOUR

Serving like the son (2:5–11)

P14

SESSION FIVE

Exalting like the Father
(2:1–5, 8–11)

P17

SESSION SIX

God at work (2:12–18)

P20

SESSION SEVEN

Sketches of a gospel partner
(2:19–30)

P24

SESSION EIGHT

Jesus muzzles the
dangerous dogs (3:1–14)

P28

SESSION NINE

Your examples & your
enemies (3:13–21)

P31

SESSION TEN

Gospel joy destroys
disunity (4:1–9)

P35

SESSION ELEVEN

Joyful gospel
contentment (4:10–23)

P38

WHO ARE YER? (1:1-11)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

1:1 Servants = One who gives their complete obedience and all that they are to Jesus.

1:1 God's holy people = Separation not segregation. Separated by obedience to God.

1:4 Joy = An attitude that judges the reality of God's love, by what he's promised, instead of life's current circumstance.

1:5 Partnership = Joint ownership and commitment to each other, whatever the result or opposition.

1:5 Gospel = God's good news.

1:6 Good work = God's sovereign initiative in saving us.

1:6 Day of Christ Jesus = The day when Jesus returns to judge.

1:7 Feel = "The sympathetic interest and concern, expressing as it does the action of the heart as well as the intellect" *M. F. Bird*

1:7 I have you in my heart = Sense of oneness.

1:8 I long for all of you with the affection = "A longing love that moves your whole being." *A. Motyer*

"His pulse beats with the pulse of Christ; his heart throbs with the heart of Christ' as though Christ were expressing his love through the personality of his servant." *J. B. Lightfoot*

1:9 Knowledge and depth of insight = Knowing what God has said, so that you can make the right moral choices.

1:10 Discern = To test something, so as to make sure it's the real thing.

1:10 Pure = Unmixed, a life without compromise.

1:10 Blameless = A life of integrity, leaving people with no opportunity to point the finger.

1:11 Fruit of righteousness = The enjoyment of being in a right relationship with God, that leads to obedience.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Paul introduces to us the three major themes, as he links our identity to the portrait of Jesus and himself.

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Paul links our identity to two portraits, his own and then Jesus.

Handwriting practice area with 15 horizontal red lines.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

1. Read Philippians 1:1-12

See how many different ways Paul describes our identity as Christians.

What matters to Paul and what doesn't matter to him?

How does Paul avoid any self-pity?

How does this challenge you?

2. How do these titles clash with our culture?

1:1 SERVANTS = One who gives their complete obedience to Jesus.

1:1 GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE = Separation not segregation. Separated by obedience to God

3. What should attract a Christian to being a servant and holy? Look up 2:5-11 & 1 Corinthians 6:20

4. Why is partnership so important? Read 1:5, 2:15.

5. In what way is Paul an example of the character a gospel partner should have. Look up 1:3, 7-8.

6. What is at the heart of Paul's prayer for the Philippian church Read 1:9-11?

Spend time in praying Paul's prayer for each other.

EVERYWHERE A MISSION FIELD (1:12-30)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

1:13 Palace Guard = Elite group of Roman soldiers.

1:15 Envy, rivalry, selfish ambition = An attitude towards Paul that symbolises “friction, a vivid image of the painful rubbing of iron chains on a prisoners’ legs and hands”. *R. P. Martin*

1:20 Eagerly expect and hope = “The craning of the neck to catch a glimpse of what lies ahead” *R. P. Martin*

Focus on one thing to the exclusion of all else.

1:21 To live is Christ and to die is gain = Whatever happens to me, Christ is glorified therefore I am a winner.

1:23 Depart = A military term for leaving base camp.

1:25 Joy = An attitude that judges the reality of God’s love by what he’s promised, and not by life’s current circumstances.

1:27 Worthy of the gospel = Living together as gospel partners.

1:27 Stand firm = Unity in action.

1:27 Striving together as one = “A word used to describe fighters in the gladiatorial struggle of life and death.” *R. P. Martin*.

Trained spearmen who fought side by side.

1:27 As one for the faith = “As one man with one mind.” *R. P. Martin*

1:28 Frightened = “The word Paul uses describes an uncontrollable stampede of horses.” *R. P. Martin*

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Last session Paul introduced to us the dominant theme of his book ‘joyful partnership’. Paul calls the Philippian Christians to understand three essential truths about themselves.

Your Identity – 1:1-2, 5-6

Understand who you belong to.

Your Saviour – 1:3, 7

Understand that endurance is only possible through developing a close relationship with Jesus.

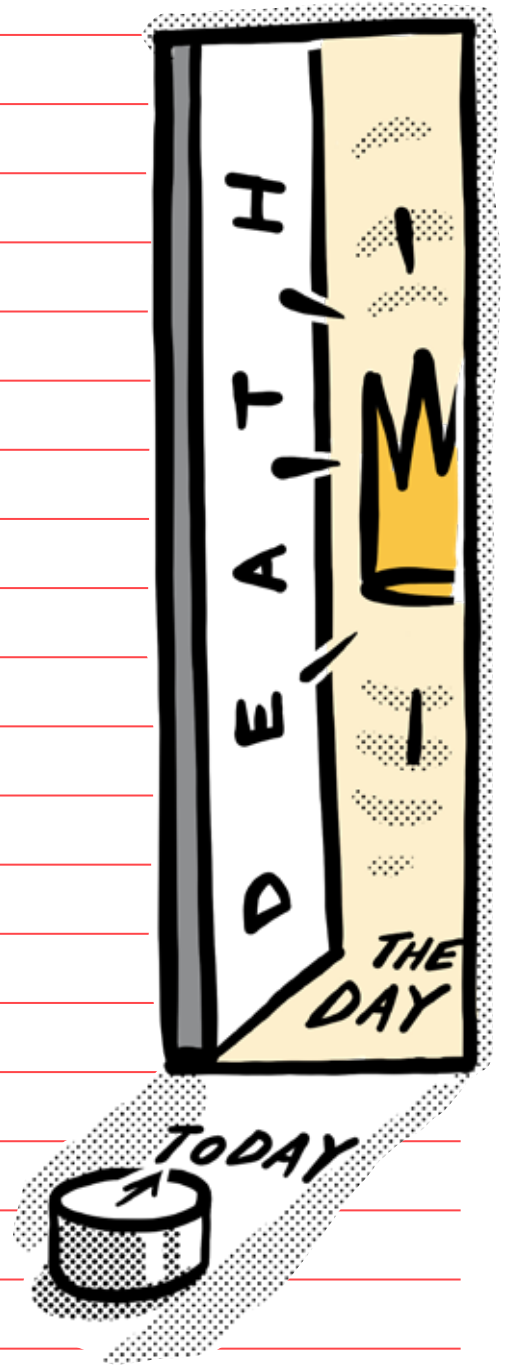
Your Prayers – 1:9-11

Understand that joyful gospel partners learn to trust that God will give them wisdom to make right choices.

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Fear will not stop Paul from shining like a star, and holding out the word of truth.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

1. Read Philippians 1:12–14

Why did Paul want the Philippians (and then us) to know about his prison experience?

What matters to Paul and what doesn't matter to him?

How does Paul avoid any self-pity?

How does this challenge you?

2. Read Philippians 1:15–18

Who is opposing Paul here? What is it that motivates them?

3. What stops Paul from becoming bitter?

What keeps him rejoicing?

4. Read Philippians 1:19–26

Paul imagines two possible outcomes for himself. What are they? Which does he “choose” and why?

5. What gives Paul such deep confidence?

6. What would it mean for you to go on living? How could God use you?

7. Can you say with Paul, “to die is gain”? Why?

8. Do you know the stories of Christians in the past who faced death for the sake of Christ?

9. Read Philippians 1:27–30

Can you think of examples of opposition to Christians or the gospel or the church that would make you afraid?

10. Paul is talking here specifically about suffering for the gospel. What issues or set of beliefs might lead to Christians being disliked, persecuted or even hated?

TRUE JOY (2:1–5)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

2:1 United with Christ = Every blessing from the life of Jesus is given to me.

2:1 Tenderness & compassion = Inner source of emotions.

2:2 Being like-minded = Thinking the same things about God's truth.

2:3 Selfish ambition = Acting like a gospel enemy.

2:3 Vain conceit = Empty self-seeking glory.

2:3 Humility = Maintaining a right view of God, yourself and others.

2:5 Same mindset as Christ Jesus = Refusing to hold onto life, but instead being ready to sacrifice it for others.

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

In 2:1–11, Paul wants us to move from his self-portrait, to Jesus. He is convinced that when we look at Jesus we will be encouraged and changed.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Last session Paul encouraged the Philippian Christians not to be fearful of the opposition they faced (1:28). The colourful image Paul used to describe fear, was a stampede of wild horses. When those wild horses appear on the horizon, Paul wants the Christians in Philippi to respond in three ways, to live worthy, stand firm, and stay united (1:27). Last session Paul tried to show us how to live this out practically (1:12–26).

Portrait 1 – 1:12–14

Paul wants the Philippian Christians to know that nothing will prevent the gospel moving forward, not even his imprisonment. Paul shows that 'whatever happens' (1:17), the gospel will spread (1:12–13), and fellow gospel partners will be encouraged (1:14).

Portrait 2 – 1:15–18

In the next portrait Paul models how to deal with opposition from the inside. Instead of focusing upon his own pain, he trains himself to see the bigness of God's gospel (1:15–18). As long as the gospel is preached by his opponents, Paul rejoices (1:18), and continues to live worthy, stand firm and stay united.

Portrait 3 – 1:19–26

The final self-portrait concerns how Paul views his uncertain future. We know that Paul's already been beaten black and blue for sharing the 'good news' of Jesus. This kind of treatment will undoubtedly be repeated when Paul gets out of his prison cell. So how will he continue to live worthy, stand firm and stay united? The great apostle shows how his relationship with Jesus governs, directs and controls his uncertain future. If God chooses to keep him alive, then he will continue to live worthy, stand firm and stay united, as his saviour would (1:24–26).

SESSION THREE

Ruled lines for writing.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

READ PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30

1. What is Paul's number one aim when he paints this portrait of Jesus. Look up 1:1, 5, 27, 2:5
2. What is Paul's expectation of the Philippian Christians when they gaze at the portrait? Look up 2:1-2
3. Do you think that's a right expectation of you and your mates in your youth group?
4. What do you think Paul means by one mind and the same love? Look up 2:1-2
5. How is it possible for God's people to think and love in the same way, while not becoming like robots or clones?
6. Where do you see these attitudes and behaviours in the world today? What makes them so ugly to a gospel community? Look up 2:3-4
7. What's the difference between doing something out of duty, or doing something out of love and devotion?
8. What should it be for a Christian, duty or love?

SERVING LIKE THE SON (2:5–8)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

2:5 Same mindset as Christ Jesus
= Refusing to hold onto life, but instead being ready to sacrifice it for others.

2:6 Used to his own advantage =
“Total personal commitment, and complete subjection.” *A. Motyer*
Leaving everything on the pitch.

2:7 Human likeness = To live within the limits of a human body.

2:8 Obedient to death = Only the divine can choose to be obedient to death, everyone else has no choice.

2:9 Exalted to the highest place =
The reward for his obedience and sacrifice.

2:11 Glory = The greatness of God's character on public display.

2:11 To the glory of God the Father = “God the Father staking his whole reputation on his Son.”
A. Motyer

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

The secret to living worthy, standing firm and staying united (1:27), is to gaze at the portrait of Jesus. When we look at him our thinking changes (2:5), which leads to behaviour change (2:6–11).

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

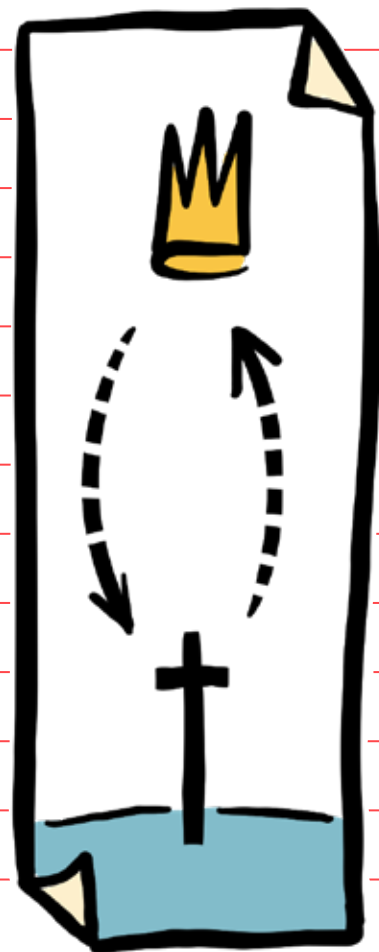
Thinking like Jesus (2:5) – leads to acting like Jesus (2:6–8).

DEFINING IMAGE

OR REPEATED PHRASE

A portrait of Christ.

A large white rectangular area with a red and white striped border at the top. Inside, there are 18 horizontal red lines for writing.



SUS GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

1. What is the purpose of Paul painting this portrait of Jesus 2:5?
2. What should right thinking about Jesus lead to?
3. What is shocking about Jesus becoming a human being 2:6, 8?
4. How do people use their power today?
5. How is that different to Jesus 2:7?
6. In which areas of your life is God calling you to sacrificially serve others 2:8?

EXALTING LIKE THE FATHER (2:1-5, 9-11)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

2:5 Same mindset as Christ Jesus
= Refusing to hold onto life, but instead being ready to sacrifice it for others.

2:6 Used to his own advantage =
“Total personal commitment, and complete subjection.” *A. Motyer*
Leaving everything on the pitch.

2:7 Human likeness = To live within the limits of a human body.

2:8 Obedient to death = Only the divine can choose to be obedient to death, everyone else has no choice.

2:9 Exalted to the highest place =
The reward for his obedience and sacrifice.

2:11 Glory = The greatness of God's character on public display.

2:11 To the glory of God the Father = “God the Father staking his whole reputation on his Son.”
A. Motyer

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

This morning we looked at the mind of Jesus (2:5-8), today Paul wants to shift our focus to the Father's mind.

What does the Father think about the Son's servant nature and obedience to the cross?

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

If we think like Jesus, we will serve like Jesus.

If we think like the Father, we exalt Jesus

A large white rectangular area with a red and white striped border at the top, containing horizontal red lines for writing.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

1. What do you think is meant by the word glory?
Look up Isaiah 42:8, 48:11
2. How much importance do names have in our culture? How is this different from Bible times?
Look up Isaiah 12:4-5, 7-9, 50:9-11
3. How is the way the Father rewards the Son 2:9, linked to his character and obedience 2:6-8, Acts 2:33, 5:31?
4. How does God's exaltation of Jesus change the way you understand and respond to Jesus' servant character and sacrificial obedience?
5. Think back to what Isaiah said about God's name. How does this apply to 2:9-10? Also look up Isaiah 42:23
6. How does the name the Father gives the Son change the way you understand and respond to Jesus' servant character and sacrificial obedience?

GOD AT WORK (2:12-18)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

2:12 Continue to work out your salvation = God's people together gazing at the portrait of Jesus and then working out what it looks like in daily life.

2:12 Fear & trembling
= Humble reliance

2:14 Grumbling = Selfish complaining in public.

2:15 Blameless = A life of integrity, leaving people with no opportunity to point the finger.

2:15 Pure = Unmixed, a life without compromise.

2:15 Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky = The result of a blameless & pure life.

2:15 Warped and crooked generation = Inwardly twisted outwardly distorted.

2:16 'As you hold out the word of life' = Can mean two things or both; Holding onto the Word of God – Personal loyalty and obedience to the Word of God. Holding out – The word that saved you, is the word you offer to the world.

2:16 I will be able to boast on the day of Christ = Rejoicing that he's got the Philippian Christians over the finishing line.

2:17 Poured out like a drink offering = The violent martyrdom that Paul would soon face.

THE LINK CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Two Portraits

In the last two sessions Paul has painted two stunning portraits.

Portrait One (2:5)

As Paul's brushes hit the canvas, we saw three great truths that marked the Lord Jesus.

2:6-8 – His nature is both human and divine

2:6 – He chooses to be a servant

2:8 – He chooses obedience, and that means dying upon a cross

Portrait Two

The second portrait put the spotlight firmly on how the Father responds to the Son's servant hearted obedience.

The Father's response is one of praise and glory. As he watches His Son's servant hearted obedience, he rewards him with two things.

2:9 – The greatest place

2:9 – The greatest name

Our Responsibility

The Son is so great that one day every human being will confess his name, and bow their knee (2:10-11).

Today's portrait focuses upon our response (2:3-4, 12-18).

THE TRUTH THE SEAT BELT TEST

God's work and our work combine, leading to lives that are pure and blameless.

SUS GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:12–18

1. A Christian is to follow the example of the Lord Jesus in being a humble servant 2:5–8. Why are these verses a huge encouragement to every Christian? Please look up Phil 1:6, 19, 29, 2:13

When are you tempted to argue and grumble? What about? Why? What is going on in your heart?

2. Thinking about the letter so far, what sorts of attitudes and actions will be involved in “working out your own salvation”? Think back to 1:18, 2:1–4.

3. What areas of your own life, and in the public domain, do you see these two things present:

Arguing – Inward thought that leads to outward disputing and discussion. An example of vain glory 2:4

Grumbling – Selfish complaining in public. An example of selfish ambition and not considering others above yourself 2:3–4

4. Write yourself a ‘post-it note from Paul’ explaining why you should not argue or grumble.

A large white rectangular area with a red and white striped border at the top, containing ten horizontal red lines for writing a post-it note.

5. Read again Phil 2:3–4, 5–8.
What is attractive when a follower of Jesus lives like this?

7. What did it cost Paul to see the Philippian church born and then grow?
Read 2:16–18, & Acts 16:11–40

What will offend people when a follower of Jesus lives like this?

Blameless – A life of integrity, leaving people with no opportunity to point the finger

Pure – Unmixed, a life without compromise

8. What might it cost you?

6. Read 2:14–16
Why is living like this so important?

SKETCHES OF A GOSPEL PARTNER (2:19–30)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

2:19 I hope in the Lord Jesus = Solid trust in God, even if present circumstances point to something different.

2:20 Genuine concern for your welfare = Deep concern for their needs above his own.

2:20 No one else like him = Key man that Paul depended upon. Close human friendship.

2:22 Proved himself = Tested and approved.

2:22 As a son with his father he served with me = Following Paul's example of dedication and submitting all your talents and energy to spread of the gospel.

2:25 Epaphroditus = Charming.

2:26 Distressed = "Confused, restless, half distracted."
J. B. Lightfoot

2:29 Honour = Look up to.

2:30 Risked his life = 'He threw down his life like a gambler's stake' 'He staked all on Jesus, knowing he could not fail'.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Paul reflects the Father

The dominant theme in chapter two has been the portrait of the Father and Son (2:6–11). Either side of the portrait, Paul has called gospel partners to follow Jesus' example (2:1–4), (12–18).

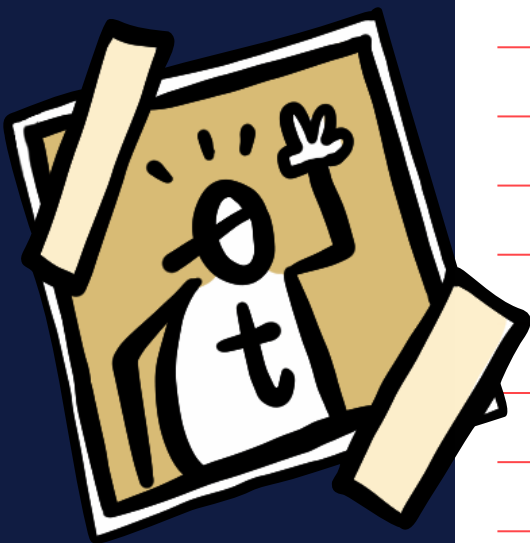
Today, Paul wants to show us two sketches of gospel partners who thought (2:5) and lived like Jesus.

THE TRUTH

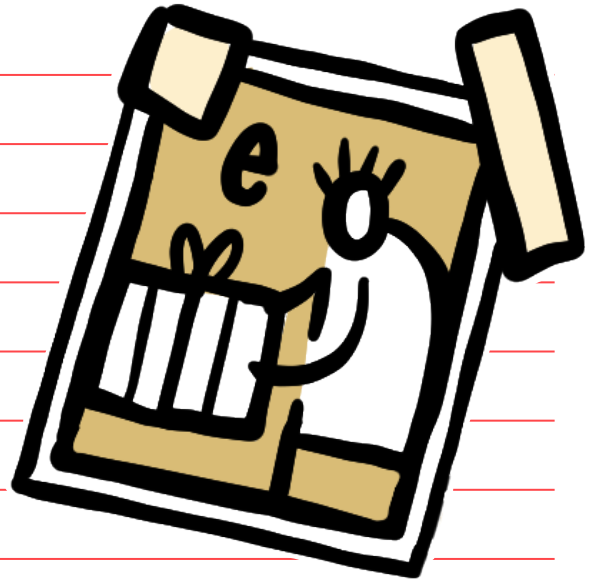
THE SEAT BELT TEST

Two examples of what it means to live worthy, stand firm, and stay united (1:27).

Two examples of what it means to be a servant like Jesus (2:1–5).



A large white rectangular area with a red and white diagonal striped border at the top. It contains ten horizontal red lines, providing space for writing or drawing.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

PORTRAIT ONE – TIMOTHY MY SON (2:19–30)

1. In the portrait, what kind of relationship does Paul have with Timothy?

Why are these verses a huge encouragement to every Christian?

Please look up Phil 1:6, 19, 29, 2:13
2. What did it mean to be a servant of the gospel with Paul 2:22?

Read the story of how the church at Philippi was born Acts 16:11-40

It's the gospel that leads to Paul being in prison 1:13, 17

Serving the gospel with Paul = suffering (Phil 1:29)
3. What is it about Timothy that Paul values?

'No one else like him'

'Who shows genuine concern for your welfare'

'Proved himself in loving others before himself'
4. What are the similarities between this portrait and that of Jesus?

PORTRAIT 2 – EPAPHRODITUS THE RISK TAKER (2:25–30)

5. How does Paul describe Epaphroditus?

Brother
Co-worker
Fellow soldier
6. What caused Epaphroditus distress, and what does that show about how he viewed God's people at Philippi??

Distress = Describes Jesus' emotion in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33, Matthew 26:37)
7. In what ways does this quote from C. S. Lewis describe Epaphroditus' relationship with Paul and the Christians at Philippi?

"To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable."
8. What would it look like for you to follow Epaphroditus' example?
9. What might it cost you?

JESUS MUZZLES THE DANGEROUS DOGS (3:1-14)

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Today's passage helps us understand how Paul deals with those who seek to offer something other than God's truth. The primary way Paul deals with this is to contrast what they say with the portrait of Jesus (2:5-11). The 'glory of Christ' has been Paul's theme all the way through his book so far.

Here's six crucial truths Paul has highlighted:

1:1 = Jesus = Identity

The one from whom we get our identity

1:6 = Jesus = Salvation

The guarantor of our salvation

1:11 = Jesus = Change

The means of our fruitfulness

1:18 = Jesus = The Gospel

He is our message

1:20 = Jesus = Passion

The one who deserves our devotion

2:5-8 = Jesus = Our Example

The one we must think and act like

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

The "righteousness of Christ" outshines what the 'dangerous dogs' offer.

DEFINING IMAGE

OR REPEATED PHRASE

Wild scavenging dogs



DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

3:1 Rejoice in the Lord = "Let him alone make you happy." *A. Motyer*

3:2 Dogs = Wild scavenger, who feeds off other people's rubbish.

3:2 Evildoers = A person who takes a stand against what God says is ethically and morally right.

3:2 Mutilators of the flesh = False teachers who claim that circumcision needs to be added to the perfect work of Jesus upon the cross.

3:3 We who are the circumcision = The true, chosen people of God, who have his seal upon them.

3:3 Confidence in the flesh = To put your trust in your own achievement instead of Jesus' death upon the cross.

3:5 Circumcised on the eighth day = Requirement of an Old Testament law.

3:5 Law = The Torah, God's Word to His people in the Old Testament.

3:5 Pharisee = Israel's religious leader.

3:6 Faultless = A declaration that God's law had been kept.

3:7 Loss for the sake of Christ = Judging all I have in the light of Jesus' portrait (2:5-11)

3:8 Surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord = Approaching all suffering in the light of Jesus' portrait (2:5-11)

3:8 Garbage = Food waste, no good to anyone.

3:9 Righteousness = Two different 'righteousness' are presented here:
a. A complete trust in Christ's death.
b. Trust in your own achievements

3:12 Mature = Not the finished article but someone who's seeking to live out 3:12. The word mature used in 3:15 is taken from the athletics track.

3:12 I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me = "The more a person is satisfied with Christ, the more they will find their satisfaction in satisfying him." *A. Motyer*

3:13 Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead = Refusing to let your past life affect how you see the present or the future.

SUS GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

READ PHILIPPIANS 3:1-14

Paul uses really strong language to describe certain people, and difficult phrases to describe what they believe.

Read the definitions below, which will help:

Joy = A conviction that only Jesus can meet your deepest needs, in this life and the next.

Dogs = A wild scavenger, who feeds off other people's rubbish

Evildoers = A person who takes a stand against what God says is ethically and morally right

Mutilators of the flesh = False teachers who offer a different identity

Confidence in the flesh = To put your trust in your own achievement instead of the cross.

-
1. What warning does Paul give in these verses?
 2. What are the dogs, evildoers and mutilators of the flesh offering?
 3. Who are our modern-day dogs, who offer a different lifestyle and identity?
 4. If we were to write our own list like Paul does in verse 5-6 what would be in it? Why are those "good things" actually rubbish?
 5. How does living for those things steal your joy in following Jesus?
 6. How does the Holy Spirit help us muzzle the dogs? Read 2:5-8, 3:3
 7. Why do you think Paul shares his CV. Read 3:4-7?
 8. How is Jesus better than what the dogs offer? Look up 2:5-8, 3:7-14

YOUR EXAMPLES & YOUR ENEMIES (3:13–21)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

3:15 Mature = Not the finished article, but someone who's seeking to live out 3:12. The word mature used in 3:15 is taken from the athletics track. Fit, training, crowned as a victor, having attained the prize.

3:18 Enemies of the cross = A person who teaches that salvation is based on personal achievement rather than the cross of Jesus.

3:19 God is their stomach = A way of living where your appetites and not Jesus dictate how you live and the choices you make.

3:19 Glory is in their shame = A way of living where your appetites and not Jesus dictate how you live and the choices you make.

3:19 Earthly things = Your identity fixed to this world and all that it offers.

3:20 Citizenship is in heaven = Living now in the light of eternity. Your heavenly identity controlling how you live now

3:21 Lowly bodies = Our earthly fallen decaying body.

3:21 Glorious body = Our eternal, resurrected, therefore Christlike body.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Last time Paul warned us about 'dangerous dogs'; now he warns us about 'enemies of the cross'. When considering 'dangerous dogs', Paul wanted us to compare and contrast their message with the portrait of Jesus. Today, Paul's strategy is slightly different, as he calls us to follow his example (3:17).

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Paul calls us to follow his example. Paul explains the world view of the enemies of the cross. Paul explains the world view of those who love the cross.

A large white rectangular area with a red and white striped border at the top. It contains 18 horizontal red lines for writing.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

As an apostle, Paul calls all Christians to follow his example 3:17, 4:9

1. How has Paul been a role model to the church at Philippi? Read 1:7-8, 15-18, 4:2-3

1:7-8	Paul models how to love God's people
1:15-18	Paul models how to deal with opposition from within
4:2-3	Paul models how to help Christians when they disagree

4. What are the marks of the worldview owned by the 'enemies of the cross'? Read 3:17-19

Where do you see this kind of thinking today?

Where do you find yourself being influenced by this worldview?

2. Why are role models so important to our Christian life? Read 2:19-30

5. What are the marks of the worldview owned by followers of Jesus? 3:18-21

What people do you know who reflect this worldview?

3. In the next five years, how might you be a role model to others?

What is it that attracts you to their example?

GOSPEL JOY DESTROYS DISUNITY (4:1-9)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

- 4:1 My joy and crown** = The eternal reward for gospel faithfulness.
- 4:1 Stand firm in the Lord** = Unity in action.
- 4:2 Same mind in the Lord** = Joint thinking that reflects Jesus' portrait (2:5-11).
- 4:3 Book of life** = Assured salvation.
- 4:4 Rejoice** = "The essence of the matter is to so value Jesus Christ, and so long for the smile of his approval, that nothing else matters." *A. Motyer*
- 4:5 Gentleness** = "The attitude of a person who is charitable towards people's faults and merciful towards people's failings because he takes their whole situation into his reckoning." *R. P. Martin*
- 4:5 The Lord is near** = Living as if Jesus will soon knock on your door.
- 4:6 Anxious** = Lack of trust in God.
- 4:6 Prayer and petition** = Direct and specific requests that are based upon God's character and actions.
- 4:7 Peace of God** = The death of Jesus that brings salvation and assures us of victory.
- 4:7 Which transcends all understanding** = Something bigger than what our small minds can imagine.
- 4:7 Guard your hearts and minds** = God's protection over your heart and mind.
- 4:8 If anything is excellent or praiseworthy** = Thinking in a way that brings a smile to your Saviour's face.
- 4:8 Think about such things** = Reflect upon and let these virtues shape your conduct. Thinking that leads to life change.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

Right from session one we have seen the dominant theme of partnership, and Paul's two ways of illustrating it.

Partnership

The first theme is gospel partnership 1:5. The apostle's aim is to teach the Philippian church how to stand as one 1:27-29, as they hold out God's word, and shine like stars 2:12-16.

Portraits

The purpose of the portraits is to show us the character of a gospel partner:

1:1, 2:7: They are marked by being obedient servants

1:9-11: To make right choices, they seek God's wisdom

1:27: They live worthy, stand firm, stay united

2:15: They shine like stars in a dark world

2:16: They hold out the word of life

Prayer

Throughout the book, Paul has sought to model dependent prayer. Today's passage is the greatest example of that.

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Gospel joy destroys disunity

A large white rectangular area with a red and white striped border at the top, containing ten horizontal red lines for writing.



SUS GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

1. How does Paul view other gospel partners?

Read 1:1, 12, 2:20,25, 3:1,13,17, 4:1

2. What's the problem in the church that Paul is facing? (4:2–3, 2:1–5)

3. What's at stake if it's not dealt with? Read 2:14–16

4. Who is responsible for dealing with the problem. Read 4:1–3?

5. How do these three words help us understand how to deal with gospel disunity?

4:4 Rejoice – “The essence of the matter is to so value Jesus Christ, and so long for the smile of his approval, that nothing else matters”. *A. Motyer*

4:5 Gentleness – “The attitude of a person who is charitable towards people's faults and merciful towards people's failings because he takes their whole situation into his reckoning”. *R. P. Martin*

4:5 The Lord is near – Living as if Jesus will soon knock on your door

6. What practical difference would it make if you applied these words and their meaning to your life?

JOYFUL GOSPEL CONTENTMENT (4:10–23)

DIFFICULT WORDS & PHRASES

4:10 Rejoice = “The essence of the matter is to so value Jesus Christ, and so long for the smile of his approval, that nothing else matters.” *A. Motyer*

4:11 Learned to be content whatever the circumstances = Judging your present reality by God’s character and not my personal circumstances.

4:18 Received full payment = “Their generosity has more than enough covered his need.”
R. P. Martin

4:19 Meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus = Putting all our needs alongside the portrait of Jesus, and reacting in a way that honours Him.

THE LINK

CONNECTING THE JIGSAW

The secret to living worthy, standing firm and staying united (1:27), is to gaze at the portrait of Jesus. When we look at him our thinking changes (2:5), which leads to behaviour change (2:6–11).

THE TRUTH

THE SEAT BELT TEST

Thinking like Jesus (2:5) – leads to acting like Jesus (2:6–8).

**DEFINING IMAGE
OR REPEATED PHRASE**

A portrait of Christ.

A large white rectangular area with a red and white diagonal striped border at the top. Inside, there are 20 horizontal red lines for writing.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS: A TIME TO APPLY

As an apostle, Paul calls all Christians to follow his example 3:17, 4:9

1. How has Paul been a role model to the church at Philippi? Read 1:7-8, 15-18, 4:2-3

1:7-8	Paul models how to love God's people
1:15-18	Paul models how to deal with opposition from within
4:2-3	Paul models how to help Christians when they disagree

4. What are the marks of the worldview owned by the 'enemies of the cross'? Read 3:17-19

Where do you see this kind of thinking today?

Where do you find yourself being influenced by this worldview?

2. Why are role models so important to our Christian life? Read 2:19-30

5. What are the marks of the worldview owned by followers of Jesus? 3:18-21

What people do you know who reflect this worldview?

3. In the next five years, how might you be a role model to others?

What is it that attracts you to their example?



