

Small Group Discussion Guide

Philippians 2:14-15

“Shining as Lights”

Background

These verses come right after what many believe was an early Christian hymn (Phil. 2:6–11), which celebrates Jesus’ humility and exaltation. Verses 12–13 urge believers to “work out your own salvation,” and verses 14–15 show what that looks like in daily life. Salvation is not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9), so working out our salvation is not talking about that. It is speaking of living out this new life that we now have in Christ as we move from justification (salvation) to sanctification (growing spiritually).

Discussion Questions

Icebreaker

1. It has been 24 years since the 9/11 terrorist attack. Where were you when that took place? Discuss the impact it has had on your life or the life of others you know.

Observation

1. Read Philippians 2:14-15. What commands are given to believers in this passage?
2. What do we learn about the times in which we live?
3. What are the hindrances to shining as lights that this passage explains to the readers of Philippians?

Interpretation

4. Often in the Bible God's people are called to be lights. (Read Matt. 5:14-16; Eph. 5:8) What is the meaning behind this metaphor?
5. How is this generation crooked and twisted? (Read Jeremiah 17:9 and 2 Timothy 3:1-5)
6. No one is perfect, yet we are called to be blameless, innocent, and without blemish. What does that mean? (Hint: Christ was the only true sacrifice without blemish – Read 1 Peter 1:19 and 2 Cor. 5:21)

Application

7. What does “shining as lights in the world” look like according to Acts 4:29-31?
8. Read Matthew 24:42-44. Christ talks about being “ready” in this passage. How does that apply to Philippians 2:14-15?
9. Read James 4:13-17. The Bible is clear that we do not know what tomorrow will bring. What have you planned to do for the cause of Christ that you have been putting off? Make Christ and serving Him priority one in your life today.