



Part 1: Problems

I wish that God would fix all of my problems, and do it quickly. Sometimes that doesn't happen but maybe right in the middle of our problems are some powerful opportunities.

Scripture: Philippians 1:1-26

Bottom Line: If you're not looking for God in your problems, you're missing an opportunity.

Discussion Questions

1. When was the last time you got actual mail (an actual letter or card that wasn't a bill)? How did you feel about it? How is the experience of getting mail different than receiving a text or email?
2. What do you know about the reason why the letter of Philippians was written, and the people to whom it was written? (A good Study Bible is a good place to find some basic information) How does that context help you read this letter?
3. Read Philippians 1 together. Paul refers to the Philippians as 'partners.' Have you ever thought of yourself as a partner in the gospel? What does this term tell us about the kind of relationship these people had to their church and to Paul? How does the idea of being a partner differ from some of the other terms we might use to describe our role as Christians (ex: members, attendees, disciples, etc.)?
4. Paul is in prison when he writes this letter. What does this chapter tell us about Paul's perspective on his circumstances and purpose in life?
5. What is his hope for the people he's writing to? What does he say really matters that he wants them to understand? If you received a letter like this from a friend who was imprisoned, what thoughts and emotions would you have? How would you want to respond? Are there things about Paul's perspective here that you find challenging? Difficult to accept? Encouraging?
6. On Sunday, Pastor Dave said that if you aren't looking for God in your problems you're missing an opportunity. Have you ever realized that in the middle of a challenging situation you found a real opportunity to share your faith (in words or actions) with someone? Tell the group what that was like.

Moving Forward

Is there a problem or challenge in your life right now that you could infuse with an opportunity? How could a change in perspective help you use your struggle for God and for the good of others?