



sanctified

A LIFESTYLE

CSLD 

centre for spiritual life development

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Introduction

Sanctified – a Lifestyle is inspired by a short series of studies on the book of Philippians (written by Lieut-Colonel Karen Shakespeare in 2010) with the desire to create a resource written by young adult Salvationists for young adult Salvationists.

The nine contributors to this study come from all over the world and are passionate about living holy lives in every circumstance. This is evident as they share their thoughts using expressions from the life of Paul and the book of Philippians. Salvationist Lindsey Fleeman (USA Southern Territory) has generously created the layout, which contributes to the international character of the studies.

Each Bible study follows a simple pattern beginning with a biblical exploration of the text (*biblical perspective*) with questions; a more personal approach relating the passage to daily life, with further questions for discussion (*lifestyle perspective*) and concludes with some very practical points that can be carried out (*act!*).

It is hoped and prayed that this material will teach, encourage and inspire young adults as they study this letter and put it into practice. As Paul himself wrote: ‘continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose...so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation”. Then you will shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life...’ (Philippians 2:12, 13; 15, 16 NIV 2011).

*Centre for Spiritual Life Development
International Headquarters*

Access Sanctified -
A Lifestyle’s website
for further information
related to the studies -

www.salvationarmy.org/csld/sanctified



#CSLDSanctified

1 the life OF PAUL

Acts 22:1-21

ASHLEE SHEPPARD

biblical perspective

“Saul, who was also called Paul” (Acts 13:9) was the leading persecutor of Christians before his conversion. He wrote 13 letters in the New Testament, including Philippians and he went on to do more to shape Christianity than any other individual except Jesus himself.

In Acts 22:1-21 we read about Paul’s testimony before and after his conversion, where he testified to the crowd that the transforming work of Jesus was alive in him. This happened right after he was arrested for proclaiming Jesus as Saviour and Lord when he said “May I have a word with you” and he went on to share his freedom story.

Paul went from being the persecutor of Christians and of the church to being persecuted and put in prison for his faith. As Paul was being arrested he testified that when the blood of the martyr Stephen was shed, he stood there giving his approval and was guarding the clothes of those who were killing him (Acts 22:20). After his conversion Paul came to the realisation that everything is worthless compared to the value of what Christ has done for us (Phil 3:7). He developed such an immense love and devotion to serving Jesus that he desired to suffer as Christ suffered and also to die as Christ died (Phil 3:10).

How could he have had such a dramatic change in his life? During his word to the crowd as he was being arrested he retold his moment of transformation. He said “About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?’” (v 6-7). From this moment on he was completely sold out for Christ, he was a new person.

questions

1. When you were a child, what was the one thing that was the most valuable to you?
2. Can you relate to Philippians 3:7? What is something that you used to consider of value but has now become worthless because of what Christ has done?
3. What can we learn from Paul? How does his testimony encourage or challenge you in your faith walk?

lifestyle perspective

As I read stories in the Bible I often find it very hard to believe that transformations and the miracles of Jesus and his followers can still happen today. I sometimes find myself thinking of the miraculous things Jesus did on earth as something that happened during his ministry on earth and forget that we as his church are called to continue his mission.

Throughout the New Testament we see the absolute transformation in the life of Paul. The change in him was so great that he had become a new person in almost every way except his physical form. It’s easy to look at something like this and think that such extreme transformation could not occur today. We may have seen lives transformed in some way but maybe not to this extent.

The exciting thing is that although Jesus may not physically be walking on the earth with us now, that same power is living within us today. Paul said “The Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you” (Romans 8:11).

The transforming and miraculous work of Jesus is available for us all today just as it was thousands of years ago.

One of the most effective forms of power evangelism is allowing people to witness a transformed life. In Ezekiel 36:23 God says to the Israelites “When I reveal my holiness through you before their very eyes... then the nations will know that I am the Lord.” For those who witnessed Paul’s transformation, how could they not believe? It’s the same for us today; those we come in contact with can know that Jesus has transforming power in our lives today.

questions

1. Share about either yourself or someone you know that has experienced transformation in their life? What changed within?
2. Do you ever find yourself doubting that the incredible power of God that raised Jesus from the dead is alive in you today? In what ways?
3. Are you doubting the powerful work of God in any area of your life instead of faithfully believing? In what areas do you need to trust and believe?

act!

“To get a man soundly saved is not enough to put on him a pair of new breeches, to give him regular work, or even to give him a University education. These things are all outside a man, and if the inside remains unchanged you have wasted your labour. You must in some way or other graft upon the man’s nature a new nature, which has in it the element of the Divine” (William Booth). Just like caterpillars are transformed into butterflies, so we are transformed into Holy people by the power of God’s spirit within us. “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” 2 Corinthians 3:18

1. Think about people in your life who are not yet Christians. Write their names on a butterfly. Commit to praying for these people regularly and use the paper butterfly as a reminder to do this.
2. Ask God to reveal to you areas in your life that he wants to transform. Write a personal prayer on a butterfly asking for the transforming power of Jesus to shape your life.



Ashlee Sheppard (Australia Eastern Territory)

*I'm currently working as a registered nurse.
I'm passionate about seeing every member of the Church
pursuing spiritual growth and experiencing the power of the
Holy Spirit in all its fullness*

2 the PHILIPPIANS

Acts 16:6-40

STEPHANIE PARKER CHAGAS

biblical perspective

On arrival in Philippi Paul and his companions ‘... sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there’ (Acts 16:13). This simple act of communication sets the tone of Paul’s future letter to the Philippians, giving a good picture of how the church in Philippi began – based on friendship.

It was a vision of a man from Macedonia begging Paul to come over and help them (v 12) that led Paul and his companions to travel to Philippi, introducing the gospel to what is now known as Europe.

Arriving there Luke tells us that Paul’s initial encounter was with women. One whose name is mentioned is Lydia, a Gentile and a cloth dealer. Though she feared God, down by the river, in the place of prayer, she met Paul and her heart responded to his message (v 14). Her household was baptised and she opened up her home to the believers.

It was not long before Paul faced his first difficulty in Philippi and he and Silas were unjustly thrown into prison (v 23). At midnight, however, while praying and singing to God an earthquake shook the foundations, the doors opened and the chains fell off! (v 26). The jailer’s consequent fear for his own life turned to belief and he was saved along with the rest of his family (v 34).

God revealed in the life of Paul through word, prayer and praise made these initial life-transforming encounters with the Philippians possible.

questions

1. Through the vision received, Paul was certain God wanted him to go to Philippi. How can we seek God’s guidance for our lives?
2. Read Acts 16:13-15 identifying the process of Lydia’s conversion. Are there similarities to your own conversion experience?
3. Think about what could happen if ‘we sat down and began to speak’ with people more often. How could this become a reality in our daily lives?
4. Describe significant moments in your life that God has acted through word, prayer and praise.

lifestyle perspective

Following Paul’s first visit to Philippi the congregation grew. Some years later Paul was imprisoned again and the church sent one of their members, Epaphroditus, to visit him with a gift (Philippians 4:18). Consequently, the book of Philippians is a beautiful letter of friendship Paul sent back to the saints expressing his gratitude for the present, but also frequently encouraging them to rejoice in what God had done for them in Christ.

In his letter Paul praises God and tells the Philippians how much he loves them and how special they are to him (1:7), encouraging them to grow in spiritual knowledge and insight (1:9). He calls the saints to unity and encourages them to have a Christlike attitude towards each other (2:5), preferring each other’s interests in love, obeying God and living pure and holy lives (2:15), rejoicing in the Lord always! (4:4).

He tells them how his struggles in prison have made him more courageous in sharing the good news and that he counts everything loss for the sake of knowing Christ and the 'power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing his sufferings' (3:10), as he presses on towards the goal to win the prize which is eternal life.

Due to his situation it would be expected that Paul would feel grumpy and hopeless. But his joyful and positive attitude towards his circumstances, his confidence in Christ and a continued life of holiness certainly makes me examine my own personal outlook on life. I am challenged as to how this moulds my relationship with God and consequently how this affects those around me.

I recently read a book called One Thousand Gifts by Canadian author Ann Voskamp who sets herself the task of writing down, over a period of time, 1,000 things that she sees as daily blessings in her life. Inspired by this initiative and eager to live out Philippians 4:4-7 in a very practical way, my family and I have recently started exchanging daily emails writing down the things that we are grateful for.

We all live far away from each other so it's been great to read what has blessed us each day – our bed, food, a good night's sleep, someone who has made us laugh – are just some examples of things that have helped us see above and beyond the circumstances of our daily lives, acknowledging in everything God's goodness, what he has given to us and what he has done for us.

questions

1. How do we tend to react in challenging situations?
2. What does Paul's attitude teach us about the way we should approach difficult situations in our own lives?

act!

1. There is a Chinese saying, 'A journey of a 1,000 miles begins with a single step'. In Paul's case his first step was his obedience to the vision he had received and the church in Philippi began. In light of the events described in Acts 16:6-40 what single daily step can we take that could lead to something significant?
2. Remember handwritten letters?! Write a letter to someone who is going through a difficult time. Deliver it in person or post it to them. Include one or more verses from Philippians.
3. Access the website www.opendoors.org and find out more about Christians who, like Paul, are still persecuted because of their faith. Commit to praying for them daily for a chosen period of time.

(Scan QR code for opendoors.org link:)



Stephanie Parker Chagas
(Centre for Spiritual Life Development)

I was born in Brazil and have been working for The Salvation Army in London since 2011. I love spending time with God, family and close friends, travelling and exercising. I desire to be more like Jesus, helping others along the way.

3 called TO BE A SAINT

Philippians 1:1

DEVA SUKANYA PARTHIPATI

biblical perspective

In his initial greetings Paul addresses the Philippians as saints. The Greek word for saints, *hagios*, can also be translated as pure, righteous, holy, clean, moral purity. Individuals are cleansed of sin and made pure, holy, righteous and set apart for God's purposes as they obey his Word. The idea of one being 'in Christ Jesus' is a recurring theme in the book of Philippians. The saints in any given locality are the saved (i.e. the members of the Body of Christ including the preacher, elders, and deacons). We are all called to be saints, God's holy people (1 Peter 1:15, 16) in the confidence that God has promised to make us holy.

questions

1. Did you have a different perspective about who saints are? What qualities do you associate with a person who is called a saint?
2. If you are called a saint, does it change the way you look at yourself?

lifestyle perspective

God's Word was written primarily for his people. This means that the Bible was intended for all believers. All of God's saints are therefore empowered with the Holy Spirit, who enables them to read and understand the Bible and live out a life that is 'clean in thought, word and deed' as we read in the Salvation Army's Junior Soldier's Promise.

As Christians in a relationship with other people and, most importantly, with God, it is very important to live holy lives. God never intended for us not to befriend non-believers or live life in isolation so that we are not affected by worldly or unholy situations. Rather, we have a more responsible role to play, not only for others but also for ourselves; we need to keep a check on whether we are putting our Christian beliefs into practice in our daily lives.

And even when it is not easy to live a righteous life amongst non-righteous people (though we should never judge anyone), we are strengthened by God in every step of our life. Being holy, pure, righteous and clean may not be such a superhuman task after all when we are in constant fellowship with him.

questions

1. Have you been in situations where peer pressure has hindered you in leading a saintly life?
2. Do you trust God to carry you through all situations where being morally pure and holy is something you thought was never possible?
3. Are there situations which you can now handle better, knowing that it is possible and that the choices you make are as important to God as those of anyone else?

act!

1. Take a few moments to analyse your daily life and your reaction to situations done unconsciously. Try to identify places where you feel you could have been more pure in your approach.
2. Try to read about different biblical characters where the most insignificant people according to others could do righteous and significant things in the eyes of God, e.g. David, Samuel, Daniel, Jeremiah, Joseph etc.
3. Make a diary where you can jot down how you approached some situations differently because you thought more about living like a saint! How hard was this change for you?



Deva Sukanya Parthipati (India Northern Territory)

I met Jesus at a very young age and he has been my constant companion ever since. I love to participate in my corps activities such as the choir, band, choreography and dance groups. I enjoy travelling and making new friends.

4 saints IN THE BIBLE

Exodus 19:3-8

LIEUTENANTS VANESSA AND XANDER COLEMAN

biblical perspective

'Dear Lord, so far today, I've done all right, I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or overindulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes, Lord, I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm probably going to need a lot more help. Amen.'

Does life ever feel like that for you? You might just get on okay with the call to be like Jesus, if it weren't for all those other people walking around, getting in the way. Do you ever feel the temptation to become a hermit, run away from it all and work out this God thing just you and him?

Have you ever heard someone say, 'you don't need to go to church to be a Christian', or 'going to McDonald's doesn't make you a hamburger'? True, the act of going into a particular building once a week will not make or keep you a Christian. However, there is something deeply, necessarily, intrinsically vital about being part of a community of faith. It is there that we find support, friendship, accountability, correction, opportunity for laughter and tears, service, food, security and honesty. We journey together in working out what it looks like to be followers of Jesus. When we look at Jesus' disciples, and their accounts of his life, the only lone wolf we see is Judas – not the best example of how to please Jesus or grow in holiness. John Wesley once said, 'there is no holiness but social holiness'; in other words, it's impossible to live to please Jesus on your own.

Paul, writing to the church in Philippi, encourages their community life together, but also challenges them to keep it up. His first words speak to the saints, the holy people, those who are in Christ – people trying to follow Jesus (Philippians 1:1) and he talks to them as a community – this is not

something that can be done alone. This understanding of a community of faith starts way back in the Old Testament. Read Exodus 19:3-8.

questions (based on Exodus 19:3-8)

1. Whom does God call to a life of holiness?
2. What is the response to God?
3. How would you respond to the challenge to obey God fully and to keep his covenant (v 5)? What does that look like in your life today?
4. What would it look like for your community to obey God fully and keep his covenant?
5. What does it mean for us today to be a 'kingdom of priests' (v 6)?

lifestyle perspective

Notice that this text refers to the nation of Israel. They are a community of saints and the people, as a community, are called to be holy. In the New Testament the new Israel consists of those people who are 'in Christ Jesus'.

The difference between the Old Testament and New Testament is Jesus. Saints are called and chosen by Jesus to live for Jesus. In the New Testament Paul never talks of one saint, but always 'saints'. Becoming holy is something that we do in the Christian community. We are saints together. Have you ever noticed how Christians are a bit like bees? Bees cannot survive independently of one another, they need the community of the hive to function and create. When Christians work together in pursuing holiness the result sweetens the world (see Proverbs 24:13).

I (Vanessa) used to live with a girl; we'll call her Becki, who previously had lived in a beautiful flat by the sea. She was passionate about following Jesus, and wanted to live alone, for quiet, space, contemplation, and opportunity to grow in Christ-likeness. But during the four years she lived there, God led Becki to move to inner-city London, to a shared flat where teenagers constantly drop in, homeless people knock on the door at all hours, friends of friends sleep on the couch, and 'service-users' become friends who share the journey of working out what it looks like to be like Jesus. Undoubtedly, Becki was trying to live out God's calling to a holy life in her seaside flat, but now God has supercharged her efforts by putting her in a context, a community where she had to come face to face with her weakness, other peoples' need, and God's power to bridge the gap between the two.

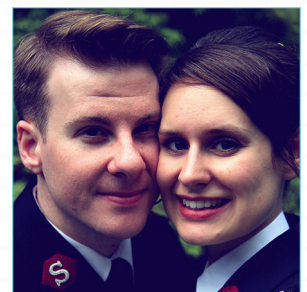
Phil Needham writes '... holiness must be seen as a personal journey only as part of a journey in fellowship with other believers. We are "citizens with the saints... and members of the household of God"' (Ephesians 2:19). The New Testament allows us a holiness which is both singular and plural.

questions

1. Do you experience growing in holiness as part of a community, or do you find it easier to encounter God on your own?
2. How are you intentionally engaging with community?
3. What people do you spend most of your time with?
4. Are you an influencer or influenced?
5. Do you find the people you spend most time with help you look more, or less like Jesus?
6. When community gets tough, when broken people break people, when it's easier to let people go than to work through your issues, when moving forward requires vulnerability, what then?

act!

1. Commit to finding and joining an accountability group, where you can pray together, be honest about your joys and struggles, and really share life together.
2. Make a checklist of the places in your life that are 'private', that you would never consider letting someone else in. Are these healthy and holy? Think about your possessions, friendship groups, struggles, vulnerabilities and personal space. Try looking at what it's like to let people in to some of those places. Think about intentionally engaging with community as a discipline, and see where that could lead you.



*Lieutenants Vanessa and Xander Coleman
(United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland Territory)*

We are currently corps officers at Banbury Salvation Army Prayer Beacon. We're passionate about prayer and community, and seeing transformation take place in people's lives as they come closer to Jesus.

5 modelling CHRIST

Philippians 3:7-8, 15-17

JUNJIE PABLO

biblical perspective

The apostle Paul feels strongly about establishing a life that will be an example for others. He makes this clear in the letter to the Philippians by recounting the irony of his personal principle of losing and gaining – losing all things for the sake of Christ leads to gaining everything in Christ. ‘Garbage’ (v 8) is the term used to describe how immaterial and irrelevant are all he previously considered ‘gains’, compared with the worthiness of knowing Jesus.

Further, Paul is a man who thirsts to see the Philippians becoming mature (or even ‘perfect’ NET) and viewing things magnified in the light of God and relying on the Lord’s revelation in times of confusion. Lastly, he encouraged them to follow his example of knowing Christ by being a model to others.

questions

1. How has Paul become a ‘model’ of Christ to the Philippians or to us today?
2. How is knowing Christ Jesus considered a ‘gain’ in your life? Which other things do you consider as ‘loss’?
3. Why is it important to keep our eyes on those who ‘live as we do’ (v 17) in relation to following Paul’s example?

lifestyle perspective

Sundays in Baguio Corps (Philippines) start with a prayer meeting at 8.30 in the morning. Mornings are special to me not only because scripturally, joy comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5), but also I get to wake up earlier and hear stories during the meeting. This one is my favourite.

‘There was once a blind man carrying a lamp as he crossed the dark road. A driver who was rushing got agitated on seeing the man, for he was walking slowly. On the second night he saw the blind man again, but he was late for his meeting so he ignored him. However, on the third night, the driver got out of his car and talked to him. “I want to know why you carry a lamp despite your condition. I mean, it won’t help at all.” The poor blind man replied in a meek voice, “This lamp is not for me to see the road, but for you to see me as I walk.”’

Like the blind man, we have to be someone who carries the torch for others. There are people who lose sight of what is essential in life because they drown themselves in an ocean of selfish desires. They believe that they are gaining a lot from too much work, technology, money and talking. They participate less in prayer, fellowship and church involvement, not realising that knowing God is considered gain.

As Christian young people we have a responsibility to bring these souls under the grace of God. We cannot just tell them to go to church, confess their sins and accept Jesus as Saviour if we are not living a life submissive to his love. Keep in mind that there are eyes looking at us – all around us. Therefore, we have to model Christ.

People might say that we are young in age and experience. But these are not issues for God, as seen in the Bible through the life of Jeremiah. Also, in 1 Timothy 4:12 we read, 'Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.'

Empowered by God and ignited by the fire of the Holy Spirit, young people can be mighty examples by the way they live their lives. Gone are the days of passivity. Today's young people can be the 'doers' and 'mirrors' of Christ everywhere.

questions

1. Who have been your personal role models? What traits do they have worth emulating? How did they impact your life?
2. Are you willing to commit yourself to becoming a torchbearer, a reflection of Christ for others?

act!

1. Read this verse prayerfully: '...but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity' (1 Timothy 4:12).

Contemplate how you can be a model in the different areas of your life:

- a. Home
- b. Place of education
- c. Workplace
- d. Corps
- e. Community

2. Spend time reading books on leadership, holiness and prayer such as:

Army on its Knees

by Colonel Janet Munn and Major Stephen Court

Helps to Holiness

by Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle

New Love –

Thinking Aloud about Practical Holiness

by General Shaw Clifton

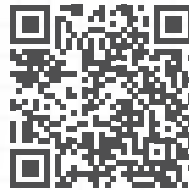
Prayer – Does it make any Difference

by Philip Yancey

The Jesus I Never Knew

by Philip Yancey

Check the available resources on (scan QR code):
<http://www.salvationarmy.org/csld/247prayer>



3. Develop a personal plan to build a Christlike character through, for example, daily morning and evening devotions or creating a prayer room at your corps and spending time there.



Junjie Pablo (The Philippines Territory)

I am currently the Young People's Sergeant-Major in Baguio Corps. I teach English. I lead the prayer meeting in our corps (with the corps sergeant-major) that aims to strengthen people's prayer life. I was a volunteer at the International College for Officers and Centre for Spiritual Life Development in London and a delegate to the World Youth Convention in 2010.

Lifestyle OF A SAINT

Philippians 2:5-18

RACHEL VASQUEZ

biblical perspective

In this portion of Scripture Paul is making it clear that we are called to be imitators of Christ in a '...warped and crooked generation' (v 15). As Christ's followers it is important for us to stand out, to look different from the world around us. So, how do we look different? We look different by following Christ's example. Christ took the role of a servant, humbled himself, and was obedient to death (v 8). Therefore, as followers of Christ, we are called to do the same.

Paul also points out that it is God who works in us, so that we may do his will. Meaning, since God is in us, we should not act like everyone else, but rather we should shine out like stars in this dark world. Moreover, when something is being poured out it means that something was inside that cup to begin with. For Paul it was Christ, it was God's love, grace and power that was pouring out from him.

questions

1. Why was it so important for Jesus to be obedient even to death on this earth?
2. Why is it so hard to be a humble servant? In church? At school? In your family? At work?
3. What is being poured out from you – Christ's love or the world's standards?

lifestyle perspective

Think about the lifestyle of a saint. When I think of a saint, I think of Mother Theresa. She is a woman who was selfless, she put others before herself and she literally took on the role of a servant. She really took Paul's words about imitating Christ seriously. I think we are called to do the same. We are truly called to think of others before ourselves, to work without grumbling and to love the people of this crooked generation. I decided to do this very thing by giving a year of my life in complete servanthood and full on dedication to Christ by participating in a programme called 'Revolution Hawaii'.

Throughout that year I learned what it meant to serve the poor, to love my teammates, to search for God wholeheartedly and, above everything, to remain humble. Have you ever tried being humble? Trust me, it is extremely difficult.

For example, a couple of months before the year was up, I had hurt my knee (it turns out I had sprained a ligament pretty badly). Because I was incapable of working as usual, I was advised to do smaller tasks. I was simply infuriated at myself for getting injured so easily and thus I started grumbling. From this injury I learned that I had grown prideful, I had grown complacent, and I had this idea that my new duties were now considered pointless. Thankfully, a staff worker pointed out and encouraged me that what I was doing was also very important and that I needed to do my best. After this I started to pray and sing and I gradually felt better.

From this experience I have learned that when I do things out of my own power and will then what pours out of my cup is momentary love and passion, with a mix of selfishness and pride. But when I have more of God in my life, if I am constantly seeking after him then what comes out of my cup is eternal love and passion, mixed with God's will.

questions

1. How can I be more mindful that God works in me?
2. Why is it so important to value others above yourself?
3. What does a holy life look like? Is there any justice that you are fighting for?

act!

1. Demonstrate random acts of kindness either for a stranger or family member:
 - Pay for someone's food or coffee drink
 - Give out candy or buy pizza for the homeless
 - Tutor a kid that is having a hard time at school (for free)
2. Keep a prayer journal to record three blessings for each day (at least for a month) and to talk to God.



Rachel Vasquez (USA Western Territory)

I have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from California State University Northridge. I recently dedicated a year of my life of servant hood to a programme called Revolution Hawaii. My next step is to continue working with the homeless people in Hawaii and following God's path for my life.

7 *saints* IN COMMUNITY

Philippians 4:1-7

KRISTOFFER PAULSSON

biblical perspective

This passage shows us the whole spectrum of being part of a Christian community. It shows us, first of all, that Paul's love for the church is extraordinary. This is a church that really loves and respects God but Paul also tells us that living in unity isn't as easy as it sounds. Paul is encouraging us to give up our own personal agendas so that we can stand firm as a church and live out our mission to save people in our larger communities. He also gives us the advice to be devoted to each other and help each other when we don't get along.

And last of all, to rejoice! Rejoice in the Lord. When we do that, we will be able to show his amazing love through the things we do. When we rejoice we do not have to be anxious about what other people think of us or if the tasks that we're facing seem impossible, because the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds in Jesus.

questions

1. How do we stand firm as a Christian community?
2. What can we do to help each other when we don't get along with someone in our Christian community?
3. Be honest with yourself – have you rejoiced in the Lord recently? If not – why do you think you haven't done it? If yes – what has made you rejoice?

lifestyle perspective

I've heard so many times that our Christian ministry is all about relationships with the people outside our churches. But how do we do that? My smartphone had the answer. I was going to write the word 'community' in my phone (as a memo note for this Bible study) when it autocorrected it to 'communicate'.

The first verse of chapter four tells us to communicate/pray with God because that's the only way to stand firm in the Lord. The second and third verses tell us to communicate with each other in our church so we can stand together as one and work together. The fifth verse is telling us to communicate with people outside the church through our actions, which come from our love to the Lord. And the sixth and seventh verses encourage us again to communicate with God, which will help to 'guard our hearts and mind in Jesus' (v 7).

Communicate with God, each other, people outside the church and with God again – that's a circle of communication that I think is useful in our daily lives. We need to be part of a society where we're taking care of others. Jesus gave up all power and human prestige by surrendering and being obedient to death on a cross. We are called to be God's servants and to work for God's purposes in our community – for and not against others (Philippians 2:6-11). The Salvation Army is called to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity. If we read the letter to the Romans we can see that being a saint in a community, being a part of serving others in a lower position and doing that joyfully (without looking at ourselves as superior or better than the ones we serve), goes hand in hand (Romans 12:16).

I can honestly admit that I thought serving people who've had a mentally or physically tough and rough life wasn't my responsibility (mostly because I didn't see it as my gift) until I realised that that was part of giving my all to Jesus. It is all about Jesus (Philippians 3:8-10, 2:3, 4) and loving actions can only be born when ignorance and indifference dies. Support, love and encourage each other and rejoice together. It is by rejoicing in the Lord that we can give up our own prestige and surrender time and time again to serve suffering humanity.

questions

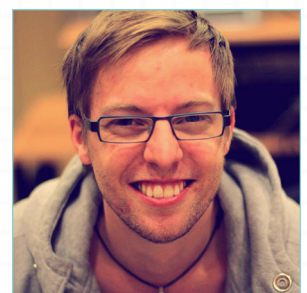
1. Do you feel that you are encouraged and challenged by your church to serve suffering humanity?
2. What kind of things can we do to show the love of God in our daily lives?

act!

1. Rejoice in the Lord!

Write down all the things that God has blessed you with and give thanks for them.

2. Communicate with God, others around you and people in your community (different from the action in Study 6 – do this as a group).
 - Pray. If you can think about something that you've been too ashamed to say to God, pray about it now.
 - Give encouragement, love or support to someone through Facebook, email or spoken words.
 - Take a homeless person to get some food, invite your neighbour (that you've never spoken to) for a cup of coffee, ask your classmate if you can help them with their homework, or feel free to find other ways to communicate with your community.



Kristoffer Paulsson (Sweden and Latvia Territory)

That not-so-typical-Swedish guy who recently worked at the Centre for Spiritual Life Development. I like to hang out with God and support the most beautiful football club in the world, Arsenal. I also spend a lot of time creating ear candy and painting pictures with words.

Shine

AMIDST THE
CHALLENGES
Philippians 2:12-18
GUGULETHU PROMISE KHOZA

biblical perspective

This passage is a word of advice that we as Christians should continue to live as God's obedient children, even if we may think that no one is watching. We should obey God's law, continuing to fear him and 'work out our salvation.'

The verses also say that we can shine above any challenge, for we have the living God within our hearts. Through our purity we will be able to shine and show others the wonders that God does in our lives.

questions

1. How well do you think your 'light is shining'?
2. What are the challenges you face that could possibly dim this light?

lifestyle perspective

This passage serves as a warning to us young people that we should obey God at all times. As young people we can relate to the writer of this chapter, as if he were a parent advising us about how we should live our lives.

It also tells us that there is great reward in listening, but there are also consequences should we not obey. As Ephesians 6:1 says, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right'.

'Respect your father and your mother' is the first commandment that has a promise added – 'so

that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you' (Exodus 20:12 Good News).

Life and society can make us neglect these instructions, because the world has made it okay to do things that are against Christianity, things that have bad consequences in our Christian lives.

A good example of this is the parable of the lost son, which is found in Luke 15:11-32. This young man was fooled by friends, who made him go against his father. We also as Christians may find ourselves being fooled by worldly things and then we go astray. Yet when we realise our failings and return to God, he is happy to welcome us back, just as the father welcomed his prodigal son and rejoiced at his return.

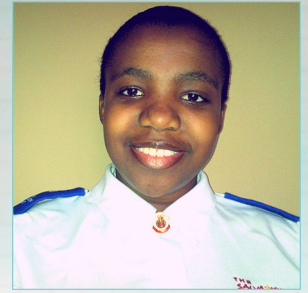
questions

1. Why do you think it was important for Paul to tell us to continue to obey?
2. What reward may we receive from Christ if we do everything without grumbling?
3. How hard do you find it to not grumble or complain about things?

act!

1. Read Philippians 2:12-18 slowly as your own prayer. Pray it for others too whom God may bring to your mind.

2. Commit to memorising verses 14-16a as an important reminder of how to live.



Gugulethu Promise Khoza (Southern Africa Territory)

*People call me Promise! I love and fear God very much
and I'm really passionate about working for Christ.*

*I live with my parents who are officers of
The Salvation Army and my younger brother.
I'm a quiet and friendly person and a straight talker.*

Working FOR IT

Philippians 2:12-13; 4:8-9
LOUISE WAHL

biblical perspective

Paul explains that even though he is not in Philippi to guide the Philippians, they should still keep up their good efforts and not lose the energy they need to work on their salvation. He teaches that it is a two-part effort; theirs – ‘work hard to show the results of your salvation’ and God’s – ‘working in you, giving you’.

By ‘work hard to show the results of your salvation’ (2:12 NLT) Paul is instructing the Philippians not to let go and think that living a life of salvation is without work. But Paul also encourages the Philippians by letting them know that they are not alone in the hard work ahead of them. God is right there with them, doing his part – giving them the desire and power to work.

He writes a list of wonderful qualities (4:8, 9) that he calls the Philippians to strive for, encouraging them to put all his teaching into practice.

questions

1. What kind of work do you think Paul is instructing the Philippians to do?
2. Which things please God? And why do we need desire and power from God to do them?
3. Are there any other Scripture passages you know that can describe God’s part in our salvation? And our part?

lifestyle perspective

‘Life is what you make it’ or ‘Everyone is the architect of his own fortune’. I don’t know about you, but to me those quotes are typical mottoes of the world we live in. They symbolise a world where no one cares about each other, where everyone is just going around doing their own business. They represent a ‘Me, Myself and I’ worldview.

As a Christian, who is in relationship with other people and, more importantly, with God, I can’t have a worldview that only revolves around me. I seek guidance both from God and from other people – and people seek guidance from me. We come alongside each other on our life’s journey and God is always there in a constant relationship with us.

I had always wanted to play the piano and when I was about 11 years old, I started piano classes. I had a great teacher and I rehearsed at home (almost) every week. I loved playing. But then we moved and I did not like my new teacher at all. I barely rehearsed during the week. So I stopped. Today my piano playing is not good and I certainly do not like thinking about how it could have developed if I had kept on practising.

In my life as a Christian I need God to show me the things that I need to work on, skills I can develop. This is God doing his part and he will always do it. But I have to listen to him and I also need to try, to practise, to work hard on the things God is instructing me to do. This is my part. If I stop, I won’t develop.

questions

1. Mottoes:

What do you think about the mottoes: 'Life is what you make it' and 'Everyone is the architect of his own fortune'? Do you agree with the reflections above? Why? Why not?

2. Our part – skills:

How can you do your part; how will you work hard to show the results of your salvation? What skills do you want to develop? Can they help you grow closer to God?

act!

1. Think about how you can make spiritual disciplines a part of your everyday life – and then do it!

For spiritual disciplines, scan this QR code:

<http://www.salvationarmy.org/csld/spiritualformation>



2. Follow a Bible reading plan:

No Bible! No Bed! No Bible! No Breakfast!

(USA Eastern Territory resource)

<http://armyonitsknees.org/?p=1580>



Rations Guide

(Includes a one-year Bible plan)

Download it here (scan the QR code):

<http://www.salvationarmy.org/csld/rations>



Louise Wahl (Denmark Territory)

I became a soldier in 2007. I'm passionate about discipleship, anti-trafficking, fair trade, music and living a life that reflects Jesus. I was a volunteer at the Centre for Spiritual Life Development throughout 2013.