

The Good Story

CONNECT *BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- What is your favorite hobby?
- What is one positive thing that has happened in your life in the last month?
- Describe an experience when you got in trouble for having a bad attitude.

TRUTH *UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

READ: Philippians 4:10-13

We're looking at the ways the good story of the gospel changes our inner realities. This week, in his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul reveals how the good story of the gospel affects change in our feelings and the attitude of our heart. We all have bad attitudes and the world proposes different ways of dealing with them, but as we'll see, the gospel provides the only proper solution for dealing with our inner attitude.

The good story of the gospel frees us to be honest about the fluctuations of our inner lives...

READ: Philippians 4:10

DISCUSS: Why might it be surprising that someone like Paul would be so open about his own emotions?

There's no getting around it—our emotions fluctuate. And that's okay. The gospel frees us to be honest about our emotions. Not to just excuse them, but to be honest about them. The gospel tells us that in order for Jesus to change us, we have to honestly assess where we are, including where we are emotionally. Paul was so open about his emotions because he understood that he didn't have to pretend with Jesus. Jesus calls us to be honest about the emotions we have and to surrender those emotions to him.

...yet empowers us to posture our hearts differently.

READ: Philippians 4:11-13

DISCUSS: Why do you think Paul was so content in whatever situation he was in?

While the gospel enables us to change our inner life, it comes through us becoming content. Instead of being concerned about our circumstances and needing to have things fall in place exactly as we want them to, the source of the inner strength is Jesus and being satisfied with him and his plan.

GRACE *SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS*

Our hearts are deceitful, but God doesn't demand that we have our inner life in order or completely right to come to him. Jesus died and then he rose with a new body, and I get to have a body like that. Jesus died and rose to bring Heaven to Earth so that when Heaven is here and hell is excluded, the hellishness in our own hearts is excluded too. You can be made new right where you are.

CHANGE *APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

READ: Philippians 4:4-9

Here are four things we can do to keep our attitude aligned with the gospel: 1) reject the delicious invitation to anxiety and self-pity; 2) rejoice in the Lord always; 3) pray instead of ruminating on the bad; 4) ruminate on holy things. As we do those things our eyes will be set on Christ and we will be content with life, whatever our situation.

- How are you doing at being honest about your feelings?
- Would you say that you're content with Jesus and his plan? Why or why not?
- How can Paul's perspective help you find contentment in Jesus and his plan?

PRAYER *RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER*

- Pray that everyone in the group would be honest with what the attitude of their heart is.
- Pray for contentment.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?