

Week 1: Gospel Joy

As Paul opens his letter to the Philippians, he lays the theological foundation for unshakeable joy. In Philippians 1:1–6, we're reminded that through God's grace, we've been made new in Christ, given peace with God, and invited into a partnership in the gospel. And we have this incredible promise: the God who began a good work in us will carry it to completion. Lasting joy isn't found in the certainty of our circumstances, but in the certainty of God's faithfulness.

Discussion Questions:

1. **Read Philippians 1:1-6.** What are some things you look to for happiness, peace, or fulfillment that ultimately leave you wanting more? Why do you think we're so easily drawn to them?

2. What does the fact that Paul is writing a letter from prison focused on joy tell us about joy?

3. Paul begins his letter with the words “grace and peace” (v. 2). How are grace and peace connected? What does it look like to experience God's peace even when your circumstances are anything but peaceful?

4. Paul expresses joy because of the Philippians' partnership in the gospel (vv. 3–5). How have relationships with other believers strengthened your faith or brought joy into your life? What could it look like for you to become a more intentional partner in the gospel?

5. Philippians 1:6 promises that God will finish the good work He began in us. Where in your life is it most difficult to trust that God is still working? How might believing in His faithfulness, rather than relying on your circumstances, change the way you face that situation?