

Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of February 5, 2017

Philippians 4:10-14

These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.

Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁰ I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress.

New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁰ *How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me.* ¹¹ *Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have.* ¹² *I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little.* ¹³ *For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.* ¹⁴ *Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.*

Connection Questions:

1. What does stewardship mean to you? What does tithing mean to you and how is it related to an understanding of stewardship?

2. Do you think the church should address the issue of money and stewardship on a regular basis? Why or why not?

3. Jesus talked more about the issues that surrounded money than any other subject. Discuss why you think that was such an important issue for him to talk about.

4. Why was perseverance such a constant theme for the Israelites, the disciples, and the early church?

5. How is perseverance an important part of a healthy relationship with God? How is it related to faith development?

6. One definition describing perseverance from a faith perspective described the word in this way, "Persistence in remaining in a state of grace until death." Discuss what these words mean to you in describing persistence.

7. Paul says, "I have learned to be content with whatever I have." What was Paul trying to convey to his listeners about faith through this statement?

8. Paul ends our text by saying, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." How does our faith help us address the issue of human suffering?

9. Can you give personal examples of times when your faith has been strengthened because of perseverance?

10. Motivational speaker John Maxwell says, "A difficult time can be more readily endured if we retain the conviction that our existence holds a purpose, a cause to pursue, a person to love, a goal to achieve." Discuss what you think he means in this statement. What would be the opposite of this statement?

11. Read Philippians 4:10-14 in unison as a closing prayer.