



Sermon Discussion Questions

For small group leaders or for a whole small group to use

“Joyful Partnership in the Gospel” (Philippians 1:1-11); May 31, 2026

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Sermon Overview

Main Idea

After first considering the background and context of Paul’s letter to the Philippians, we then explored the opening of this letter and its themes. In these first 11 verses, Paul expresses his joy and gratitude to God for their partnership in the gospel and his deep affection for them, leading to prayer for their love to abound more and more—all to the glory and praise of God.

Sermon Outline

1. Context (Acts 16)
2. Introduction (v1-2)
3. Paul’s Gratitude (v3-8)
4. Paul’s Prayer (v9-11)

Discussion Questions

Read the Scripture Text (if the text is shorter, consider reading it together several times).

Initial Engagement

- What is the main idea of the text, or what did the sermon focus on? (See above to review the main point)
- What insight from the text or sermon stood out to you most, and why? (Encourage several people to share)

Deeper Reflection on the Meaning and Implications

1. What are some practical ways you can encourage one another to read through this letter on a weekly basis throughout the summer as we study it as a church family together?
2. What are the three themes that we expect to see throughout this letter—and that are found in Paul’s opening expressions of gratitude and prayer in this passage?
3. Consider Paul’s overflow of joy expressed in this passage and throughout his letter. What is its source and its focus? What is surprising about his joy? How have you experienced this kind of joy or witnessed it in others? (See Romans 15:13; Hebrews 12:2; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Romans 8:30; Eph 1:13-14.)
4. Paul thanks God for the Philippian church’s partnership in the gospel. Describe the various expressions of that partnership. (See Acts 16; Phil 4:15; 2 Cor 8:1-5, 11:9.) In what ways do you partner with others in the spread of the gospel? Share these things with your group for the purpose of encouragement.
5. Considering verse 8, what practical ways did Ryan suggest for us to grow in our affection for one another as we seek to advance the gospel?
6. See how many ZF Ministry Partners your group can name together (without looking at the complete list found at www.zionsvillefellowship.org/ministries/missions)! Consider adopting one of these ministries as a small group. What might that look like? How could you help one another become more mission-minded?
7. Pray together as Paul did in verses 9-11 and as Ryan encouraged us on Sunday—“that we might love more and more, with love based in the knowledge of God’s word in order to discern what is excellent and bear fruit, all for His glory!”

Final Response

- What is one thing you want to remember or do in light of this sermon or discussion?