

Growth Group Discussion Guide

Week of May 13

A Prisoner's Guide-Obedient to Joy

Our Scripture: Philippians 2:1-13

Ice Breaker

What do you remember that is/was humorous or funny about your mother?

Quick review

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Digging Deeper

1. Read Philippians 2:1-5 and substitute the words "Since there is," for the words "If then there is."

What difference does that make to your grasp of the reading?

2. Philippians 2: 6-11 was sung as a hymn in ancient Christian worship. These words spring from Paul's intimate knowledge of the Hebrew bible, specifically the four "servant songs," of the prophet Isaiah. Read these excerpts from the servant songs and identify some thoughts reflected in our scripture today:

Isaiah 42:6-7 (1st servant song)

Isaiah 49:5-7 (2nd servant song)

Isaiah 50:11 (3rd servant song)

Isaiah 52:13-15 (4th servant song)

Isaiah 53:12 (4th servant song)

Media Mix - The Drum Major Instinct

Read Mark 10:35-44

In a February 1968 sermon to his congregation in Atlanta GA, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. acknowledges the fact that many people desire recognition; they desire to be “first.” He calls this desire the “drum major instinct.” But he proposes an alternative kind of ambition one can achieve through a life of service. This excerpt is the conclusion of that sermon and was played two months later at his funeral.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSyt4Egz4DY> (3 minutes)

If you’d like to listen to the entire sermon it is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBiFnDuCJIU> (38 minutes)

Bringing It Home

1. Brainstorm a list of 5 ways that people or society exploit their position.
2. No human being is perfect but;
 - Describe a public leader you have known *personally* whose humility, character and service remind you of “the mind of Christ.”

Or

- Describe a famous public leader whose humility, character and service remind you of “the mind of Christ.”
3. Read Philippians 2:12-13. Part of this verse doesn’t sound “very Lutheran.” Can you identify that portion?

How is the apostle Paul not contradicting his own teaching?

Prayer Time

I’m glad we could share this short spring cycle of Growth Groups together. I pray for your continued discovery that God is at work in you as you follow Christ. Meditate on that thought as you allow John Michael Talbot’s song of St Francis to be your closing prayer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1s1-WJ8nbA>

Housekeeping

Will your group get together this summer? The Fall cycle of Growth Groups will start in late September.

Be invited to “We’ve Come This Far By Faith,” an evening of historical reflection on the life of Atonement. This will be part of our welcome for Kevin Farrar on Tuesday evening June 26th at 6:30PM. You are also invited to Kevin’s ordination on Monday June 4th at Lake Park Lutheran church (time TBA) AND his installation here at Atonement on Sunday morning July 8th (time TBA).

Also please be invited and bring friends to our evening with John Gurda “Neighbors and Strangers; from Milwaukee to Muskego.” Tuesday June 5th at 6:30PM, sponsored by the Apple Tree Society.