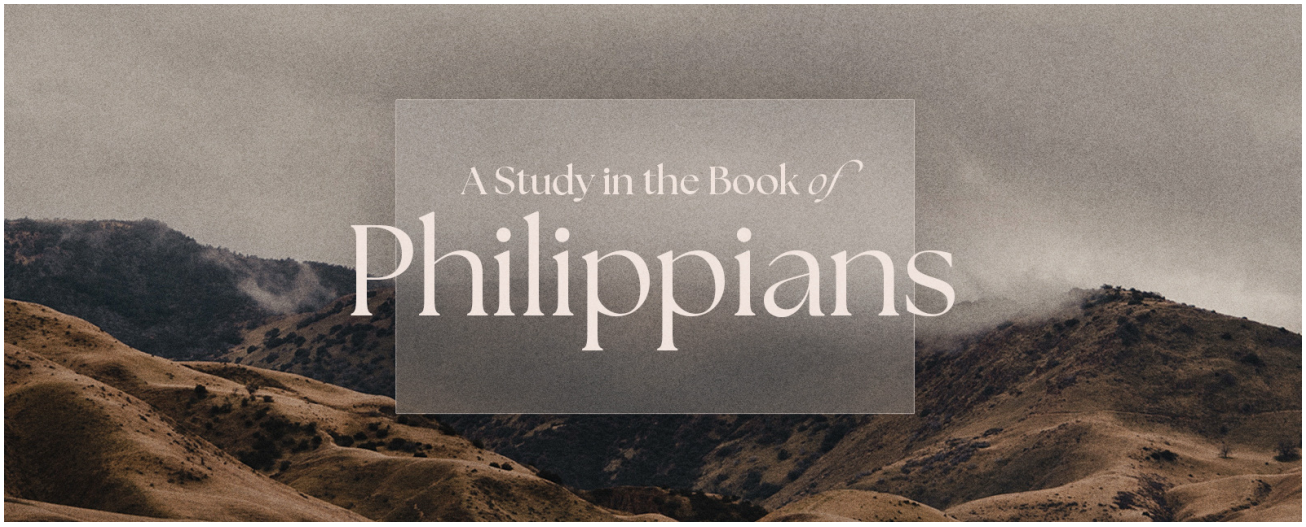

Live Like Epaphroditus
Pastor Dave Patterson 03.01.2026

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon
and some discussion questions for you to use to discuss the weekend message.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group.
For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session. Give priority
to the needs and pace of your group members.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

[Philippians 2:14-15]
Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

[Ephesians 6:20]
I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God's ambassador. So, pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for Him, as I should.

[Philippians 1:6]
I am confident and certain of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion, until the day when Christ Jesus returns.

[Philippians 2:25-28]
Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you. He is a true brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier. And he was your messenger to help me in my need. I am sending him because he has been longing to see you, and he was very distressed that you heard he was ill. And he certainly was ill; in fact, he almost died. But God had mercy on him and also on me, so that I would not have one sorrow after another. Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety.

[1 Corinthians 11:1]
Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

JOY:
A consistent inner delight based on God's character, promises and presence – independent of circumstances

[Philippians 4:4]
Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again rejoice.

Rejoice / chairō

- Imperative ➔ It is a command.
- Present tense ➔ Continuous or ongoing action.
- Plural ➔ Addressed to the whole church.

A life worth living:
1. ***Make a decision to serve (pick up a towel near you)***

[Philippians 2:5-7]
In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Though he was God he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; He took the humble position of a servant.

2. ***Live, focused on others***

[Philippians 2:3-4]
Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble and value others above yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

[Philippians 2:20]
I have no one else like Timothy, who genuinely cares about your welfare. All the others care only for themselves and not for what matters to Christ Jesus.

3. ***Behold and reflect your savior***

[2 Corinthians 3:18]
So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord who is the Spirit makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

Key Points:

1. ***Make a decision to serve (pick up a towel near you)***
2. ***Live, focused on others***
3. ***Behold and reflect your savior***

Applications for the Week:

Spiritual formation happens as we keep our eyes fixed on the Savior, producing a steady reflection of his character. What practical steps can you take this week to "behold" Jesus more intently. What would the results be if you were to slow down while reading your Bible and meditating on his love shown at the cross this week?

Discussion Questions:

1. What specific roles and relationships does Paul use to describe Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25?

2. According to Philippians 2:26-27, what was the primary source of Epaphroditus's distress, and what was the physical reality he faced?

3. What two outcomes does Paul hope for by sending Epaphroditus back to the Philippians, as stated in Philippians 2:28?

4. Paul admits that the mercy shown to Epaphroditus was also mercy on himself, "lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." What does this reveal about the nature of deep Christian companionship and shared burden-bearing?

5. Paul describes himself as feeling "less anxious" once Epaphroditus is returned. How can a life marked by joy and faith in God's sovereignty coexist with experiencing genuine anxiety?

6. Pastor Dave described Joy as a consistent inner delight based on God's character, promises, and presence, independent of circumstances. What circumstance is most challenging your joy right now, and which of God's specific promises can you anchor to in the middle of it?

7. The command to "rejoice" is an imperative, present tense, plural word, a continuous command for the whole church, not based on mood. What would it look like for your small group to intentionally choose and express joy together this week, even if individuals are walking through hard times?

8. True humility means trading status for hands-on care and "picking up the towel" in ordinary settings. Where is the "towel" in your home, workplace, or neighborhood that you have been walking past, assuming it was someone else's job to pick up? What next steps can you take to pick up that towel this week?