

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Alive: Spirit of Life

August 13 & 14, 2022

Faith isn't about fearing death and acting accordingly. It is about embracing life and time from God's perspective: our past, our present, and our future. So, what does that look like? What does it look like to embrace our lives ... our past, present, and future ... from God's point of view?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: PHILIPPIANS 1:12-14; 20-30

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Death isn't the lens through which we enter discipleship. Life is. This is something that the Apostle Paul knew so well. When we catch up with him in our reading for today he is in prison with one of his disciples, Timothy, and he's writing to the church he planted in Philippi. The opening part of his letter isn't some kind of theological treatise like he gives us in Romans. Instead it's the reflections of a life-long pastor to a community he loves. So it's more like a journal. And in his reflections he gives us some hints as to how we ought to approach our lives today.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In the scripture text, Paul teaches us to make peace with the past. What is something from your past that you have struggled to make peace with? If you've succeeded in making peace with it, share the process you went through to get where you are today. If you are still struggling with it, what have you tried to do to make peace? What do you think it will take to get to a place of peace? How did/do you see God's hand in the process?
- What is your picture of death and the afterlife? Describe it in as much detail as you can. Is it something to be feared or something to be embraced?
- Paul trusts in the future because he trusts in Christ. Read John 14:2-4, Hebrews 4:14-16, and Romans 8:1-2. Are these verses reflected in your picture of death? Why or why not?
- When we make peace with the past and trust in the future, we are able to more fully live in the here and now. Paul encourages us to "conduct [ourselves] in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." What does that mean to you? What are some practical ways we can do that in our everyday lives? Share a story about a time you did that well recently.

APPLICATION: Take advantage of opportunities to "conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" this week.