

**Week 1: Phil. 1:1b-11**  
Joy in Loneliness

THE  
**REBEL'S**  
GUIDE to JOY

Start by reading Phil. 1:1b-11 for an overview of the passage.

**Context**

Paul writes his letter to the saints of Philippi along with the elders and deacons from a prison in Rome, yet as we contemplate his words in his introduction, we are struck by his joy and love for those outside his cell. Whether it his relationships with others or reflections on justification, Paul's central theme is consistently Jesus. This gives him the perspective to find joy in the midst of loneliness. Take some time to examine your heart and your own sources of joy before you study today.

**Rejoice in the work of Jesus**

Read verses 1b-5 and consider Paul's joy in the body of Christ.

What evidence do we have that Paul's words in verse 2 are more than platitudes?  
In what way does this prayer seem out of place with regards to Paul's circumstances?  
Do you find it natural or unnatural to bless others while you are in difficult circumstances? Why?  
Who do you remember with joy? In what way are you connected to them?  
What does it mean to be a partner in the gospel?  
What does that imply about your purpose as a Christian?  
Who are your partners in the gospel? What does that look like practically?  
Who are you praying for?  
In which of your relationships do you need to redeem/realign your gospel partnership?

**Hope for Sanctification**

Read verse 6-11 and reflect on central theme to Paul's hope for believers.

Where do you find hope for your life?  
In what way does verse 6 give you hope? What does it look like to practically live in that hope?  
What does it mean to partake in grace with Paul?  
What does Paul yearn to see in the lives of the believers?  
How does your desire or lack for seeing the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit reflect the condition of your heart?  
How does Paul's focus on Christ infect the rest of his life? How does that provoke you in this moment?  
In whose life can you rejoice in the work of Jesus? Send them a note this week.

**Reflection and Prayer**

*Take time this week to pray for the following:*

The ability to bless others when you are in difficult circumstances

The ability to love one another in Christ

For a clear vision of what it means to be a partner in the gospel

That God would bless your partners in the gospel

For the sanctifying work in the lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ

That this scripture would transform your life and renew your mind.