



reflecting Jesus

BETA

I am a link in
God's eternal chain **32**

?

did you know...



what will happen if the link snaps?



the facts of his story

When Paul wrote the book of Philippians, he was probably writing from prison in Rome. He knew his life was soon to end, and as he looked ahead, he saw that it was quite possible that the young Christian church would experience even more suffering. So he writes encouragement and advice. Read Philippians 2:12-18 and answer the following questions.

1. Who does Paul say is responsible for the future spiritual growth of his readers? (verse 12-13)

2. What is the reason why the Philippians are able to "shine like stars in the universe"? (verse 14-15)

3. What does Paul ask his readers to do in verse 16?

4. Why does Paul make this request? (verse 16)

5. Even though the outlook appears bleak, why does Paul say that the Philippians should be glad and rejoice? (verse 17-18)



thinking it through

1. What is the most important idea you saw from the text in Philippians, and why?

2. Someone has "held out the word of life" to another ever since Adam. What do you think about the idea that if you don't hold the word out to another, the chain stops with you? Do you find this idea frightening or exciting, and why?

King Edward appointed William Wickham to build a stately church, and William Wickham performed his duty and finished by writing in the windows, "This work made William Wickham." When chastised by the king for assuming the honour of that work for himself as author, when he was really only the overseer, he answered that he did not mean that he made the work, but that the work made him: before he had been poor, and now he was well established financially. Lord, when we read in thy Word that we must work out our own salvation, thy meaning is not that our salvation should be the effect of our work, but our work the evidence of our salvation.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon



habits for reflecting the work of Jesus ~ passing it on

passing on a new way of living

When Paul calls his readers to "hold out the word of life", he is not just urging them to pass on a message, but message that is wrapped up in a lifestyle. What is being passed on is a totally different way of thinking, feeling and living that is marked with the atmosphere and character of Heaven—of God himself. It's a message which calls us to become people. The message calls us to look at the world in a radically different way than before we met Jesus, and agreed to live according to the ways of the Kingdom of God.

Learning to live lives which are so different to what we see around us takes time. There are many parts to this picture. And in the same way we put a jigsaw puzzle together piece by piece, so we do this with the gospel in our lives.

However, if you imagine that you have a jigsaw puzzle in front of you in the box, it's not much fun looking at all the pieces heaped up in a pile. The pieces only make sense, and we only see the beauty of the picture, when we see the pieces connected to each other.

This is our challenge as Christians. We want to be able to look at God, our lives, and the world, and see them in a single coherent picture. This is what we get a chance to try and begin to do now.

instructions

1. On a separate sheet are all the principles we have been exploring during this course. Cut between each square so you can move each one around by itself.
2. Find a large space where you can arrange all the squares together.
3. Your challenge now is to arrange the squares in such a way that you can tell the story of what God wants to do in our lives. If you have a very large sheet of paper, you can also draw add pictures to help you share the story.
4. To help you begin, imagine that you are talking to someone who does not know anything about what it means to reflect Jesus. Share your story so they will understand the big picture of what God wants to do in their lives.



using your habit

As you continue growing as a Christian, look out for more pieces of the puzzle. As you do, your picture of God's work and plans in your life will become clearer and more beautiful. It is this picture, and the beauty of it, that gives meaning

and purpose to our lives, and it is this that Paul calls us all to pass on to those around.

You can use your journal to help you map out your view of God, your life, and how they work together.

When Luther became a priest and celebrated his first Mass, in 1507, he trembled so much he nearly dropped the bread and cup. He became so terrified of the presence of Christ in the sacrament that he tried to run from the altar.

By the end of his life, Martin Luther wrote 60,000 pages, yet he hoped that "all my books would disappear and the Holy Scriptures alone be read."

On his way to the ecclesiastical hearing at Augsburg, when he feared the heretic's stake lay ahead, Luther's thoughts turned to the welfare of his mother and father. "Now I must die," he said. "What a disgrace I shall be to my parents!"

"Martin Luther—The Early Years," Christian History, no. 34.



putting the pieces together

In "did you know..." we looked at the picture of a chain and saw how in a spiritual sense, we are all links, connecting the past and the future together in one, unbroken story.

In "the facts of his story" we read about Paul encouraging his readers to keep going with their spiritual lives. He reminded them that 1) Both they and God, together in a partnership, where responsible for spiritual growth. God would provide the power, but they must work with him. 2) The purpose of God's work within them was so that they would shine out like stars in the moral darkness. They would be able to do this as they reflected his character in practical, daily living, with each other. 3) Paul also encourages his readers to pass on "the word of life" 4) so that he would not have worked for nothing—for if they did not pass on the good news, the effect of his work would suddenly stop. 5) Even though Paul faced death, and his Christians readers faced many trials ahead, he rejoiced, because both his and their sacrifice was being offered, as an offering, to God.

In "habits for reflecting the work of Jesus" we began to try and pull together all the pieces of what it means to live as a Christian in an intimate connection with God. This picture, which is not just a message we share with our mouths, but a lifestyle that reflects the character of God and his Kingdom, is what we are to pass on, as we link the next person into God's great salvation story.



my time with God

Spend some time this week to review what you have learned during this course. What are the most important lessons you have learned? What do you want to do now, to continue your life-long pursuit of revealing the character of Jesus?



pass it on!

When you look back over the whole course, what would you most like to pass on?



extra help

1. *Go Teach All Nations*, chapter 86, *Desire of Ages*, Ellen White.

Ultimately,
witnessing
requires
opening my
mouth

God has given
me gifts to use
for his church

My body
matters

I am a vital
link in God's
eternal chain

The King of
the Universe
eagerly offers
to guide my
life

I am the light
of the world

Jesus calls me
to join him in
his work

I am God's
message

I have
nothing to
fear because
my Father
is king over
our universe,

Death is the
door to life

I can make
all my moral
choices
using biblical
principles

All things
work together
for good—
even when life
is painful

Private prayer
brings power

Purity is a
direction, not
a place

The Holy Spirit
changes me
as I cooperate
with him

I am my habits

I live
continually in
the presence
of Jesus

God longs
to speak to
anyone who
will listen

Worship is an
attitude of my
heart

Revival
springs from
repentance

God's power
for change
comes
through his
promise

I believe God
by faith

Meditation
teaches me
how to listen
and watch

I was
designed for
intimacy with
God

When God's
word is
studied, God's
voice is heard

The Bible tells
a cosmic story
that teaches
us how to
understand
our lives

I am saved to
become like
Jesus

I am an
ambassador
of another
world

I am as
strong as my
connection to
Jesus

When I am
connected to
Jesus, his life
and identity
becomes
mine

Character is
destiny

I was
designed by
God to reflect
his character
to the ends of
the earth

