



Sunday, August 14, 2016 – Maureen Brown

“Dreaming of More”

So That All Will Know

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

(These are to be used personally, with family or with your Small Group)

John 13: 34-35

“A new commandment I give to you, that you *love one another*, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

What does it mean to love one another? What does that look like? When we say we want to love the church as God intended it and us to be, what do we mean by “love”

Paul gives us an excellent picture of what it looks like to love the church in his letter to the church at Philippi. Paul’s joy at the mere thought of the Philippian church is undeniable in the letter, and it’s that same joy that he wanted the recipients to possess as well.

Discussion Questions:

Read Philippians 1:1-11

1. *“Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.”* Phil 1:3. What does Paul reveal as one of his personal habits for loving people? Discuss the challenge and choice to be thankful “every time” for the people in our lives and in our church. What strategies would help you develop this habit?
2. *“I thank God for the help you gave me”* Phil 1:5 In spite of having gone through many hardships and trials during Paul’s visit to Philippi, why does he choose to write about his gratitude for the Philippians and not dwell on painful memories? Is there someone in your life you need to “remember the best and forget the rest?” Share a time you were able to do this successfully. How did it go?

3. *“I am confident of this, that God who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 1:6 How do you feel when someone (1) tells you they believe in you; (2) provides a positive vision of how they see you; and (3) is patient allowing you time to mature?

4. *I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.* Philippians 1:9-11

The quickest way to change a bad relationship to good is to start praying for that person. If you’re not sure how, follow Paul’s model. Pray they will: grow in love, make wise choices, live with integrity, and become like Jesus.

Next Steps:

Pray and discuss strategies around some of the suggestions below.

- Think about a moment in your life when you felt loved, supported and encouraged. How can you reproduce that feeling for someone in our church?
- Take a moment to pray and ask God to bring to mind one person in our church. If you know the person’s name, write it down on a piece of paper. If not, write down a few words describing the person. Now, ask God to show you one way that you can love that person this week. He may give you something simple like praying for them, or He may ask you to step out of your comfort zone with something riskier like meeting a need they have. What if we all did that? What if we all did that for one person?
- In the context of our church family and these passages and thoughts, what does **“Dreaming of More” – So That All Will Know** mean to you?