

A Way to Thanksgiving Break

An Invitation to Something Different

That familiar feeling is settling in, isn't it? The semester winding down, family gatherings approaching, and that strange mix of anticipation and exhaustion that marks every holiday season. We scroll more, sleep less, and somehow emerge from "break" more tired than we began.

But what if there was another way in?

The Invitation

We're inviting you to join something beautifully simple this Thanksgiving break: **Read one chapter of Philippians each day you're home.**

That's it. Four chapters. Four days. A letter about joy written from a prison cell.

Here's what makes this remarkable: Paul writes about thankfulness not from a place of comfort, but from chains. He discovered something most of us miss - that gratitude isn't dependent on circumstances. It's cultivated through practice.

The Practice: Word, Prayer, Worship

This isn't about adding another task to your holiday to-do list. It's about shifting from consumption to cultivation. Here's the simple rhythm:

WORD: Read one chapter (5-10 minutes)

Start wherever you are. Maybe it's morning coffee. Maybe it's right before bed. Just read.

PRAYER: Let it sit with you

Don't rush to the next thing. What phrase caught your attention? What challenged you? Let the words marinate.

WORSHIP: Live from that place

This is where it gets real. Let what you've read shape how you move through your day. How you respond to that family member. How you view your circumstances.

Why Philippians?

Of all the books we could read, why this one? Because Philippians is Paul's manifesto on joy in the midst of difficulty. Consider these themes you'll encounter:

- **Chapter 1:** Joy in the midst of suffering - "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"
- **Chapter 2:** The humility of Christ - choosing others above yourself
- **Chapter 3:** Letting go of achievements to gain something better
- **Chapter 4:** The secret of contentment - "I can do all things through him who strengthens me"

Each chapter builds on a radical idea: that thankfulness isn't about having the right circumstances, but the right perspective.

Not Consumption. Cultivation.

Here's what we're learning: You can't scroll your way to rest. You can't binge your way to peace. These things we reach for - they promise escape but deliver exhaustion.

Real rest doesn't come from checking out. It comes from checking in - to what's actually true, what's actually real, what actually lasts.

Gratitude grows when we give it space to breathe.

The Reading Plan

Keep it simple:

- **Day 1:** Philippians 1 - Joy in hardship
- **Day 2:** Philippians 2 - The mind of Christ
- **Day 3:** Philippians 3 - Pressing forward
- **Day 4:** Philippians 4 - Peace and contentment

Start wherever you are. Miss a day? Don't quit - just pick up where you left off. This isn't about perfection; it's about practice.

Join Us

You're not doing this alone. Different schedules, different family situations, same text. There's something powerful about knowing others are encountering the same words, wrestling with the same truths, being shaped by the same Spirit.

Share your journey with us. Tag us in your morning routine. Text a friend what stood out to you. Let this be a conversation, not a solo endeavor.

A Different Kind of Break

What would it look like to return from Thanksgiving break actually rested? Not just physically, but spiritually renewed? Not stuffed with food and entertainment, but satisfied in your soul?

This is our invitation. Not to do more, but to be more present. Not to add obligation, but to find adoration. Not to consume more content, but to cultivate gratitude.

Four days. Four chapters. A letter about joy from a man in chains.

Will you join us?

Wherever you are, we'll be reading together.

Redeemer Community Church
College Ministry

Questions? Text Stephen at 205-675-5361