

QUESTION 5

- a) There is a real sense of partnership and fellowship that comes in this suffering.
- b) Satan wants us to think that we're alone in the battle. But that's not true.
- c) Knowing that others are sharing in it gives us encouragement to press on.
- d) Some of those in the church would have remembered the suffering that Paul endured when he first visited Philippi back in Acts 16.
- e) He is of course in prison now.

QUESTION 6

Examples:

- Live as good citizens.
- Put Christ first in our decisions and actions.
- Encourage one another. The local church is an important means of standing together.
- See that the church is essential for the Christian in terms of life and service.
- Focus our whole lives on the gospel.

GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 5

QUESTION 1

- a) The opening word 'only'; or 'whatever happens' (NIV) is a clue to the passion that Paul has for these believers.
- b) 'Only' seems a strange word to begin a sentence with. However, in the original Greek language it is an emphasis and represents one essential issue.
- c) It has been suggested that this passage we are looking at, acts as a summary of the message that Paul wants to convey to the church in his letter.
- d) A life worthy of the gospel of Christ represents a kind of life which is completely different to that of the world. The word 'worthy' in the Greek means 'to conduct oneself as a citizen'.
- e) We are citizens of heaven (see **3:20**). We live on earth as citizens of heaven.
- f) This verse combines his concerns for the Christian and for the gospel. The two go together.
- g) We are to live out the gospel that we have received (see **Ephesians 4:1**). That gospel is then seen by others.
- h) Sin has been defeated at the cross; enabling us to approach God.
- i) That affects the way we live. This is about the consistent life.
- j) We have been bought with a great price. Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 6:20** that because of this, we should "*glorify God in your body*".
- k) A manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ is a lifestyle that is consistent with what we believe.

QUESTION 2

- a) They are to stand firm, united and fearless.
- b) To stand firm in one spirit has in mind a Roman military formation in which the soldiers stood side by side, shoulder to shoulder as close as possible to each other. This would ensure that the enemy couldn't penetrate the defences.
- c) Paul wants to see them standing firm under opposition, but in unity. One soldier leaving his post leaves a gap in the defences.
- d) To stand firm we need to be united; in one spirit. Whatever happens outside the church, within it we can find strength and encouragement.
- e) We are to strive side by side. It's the term that gives us our word 'athletics'. A wonderful picture of standing together and working together.
- f) Unity in the gospel is so important.

- g) All three of these characteristics are centred on 'the faith of the gospel'.
- h) This is different to 'faith in the gospel'. Faith in the gospel is that which joins us to Christ and saves us as we submit to him.
- i) The faith of the gospel represents the sum of the truths we believe. It is the gospel. Paul uses the same idea in **1 Timothy 3:9; 4:1**. Jude writes about contending "*for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints*" (**Jude: 3**).

QUESTION 3

- a) Their actions confirm two key things:
- b) Firstly, their own spiritual condition and destiny. They are secure. This opposition is proof of that; and backs up what the scriptures tell us about opposition (e.g. **2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12-14**).
- c) These battles prove that the believer is saved. Satan will not bother us otherwise.
- d) The most important thing to remember is that this salvation is from God and cannot be taken from us.
- e) Secondly, there is a terrible contrast between the two states here; those of salvation and destruction. It is the difference between being with Christ and being without Christ.

QUESTION 4

- a) Notice that suffering has been granted to us. It should be considered a privilege (see **Acts 5:41**).
- b) It is for the sake of Christ. It is on account of him.
- c) As we have already seen, we are involved in spiritual warfare. Opposition to the gospel is a continuation of the conflict that began in the Garden of Eden (see **Genesis 3:15**).
- d) Satan is out to destroy the church. He will not win; and the conflict will end when Christ returns.
- e) We endure it for the sake of Christ.
- f) "*The greatest weapon against the devil is a godly life. And a local church that practices the truth, that 'behaves what it believes', is going to defeat the enemy*" (Wiersbe).