

Destiny

SMALL GROUP STUDY | Empathy

We've learned previously that the church is 'the body of Christ' and that we are all members of that body. We also learned that *"if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."* (1 Cor 12:26). This verse speaks of what we commonly call 'empathy'. Empathy has been defined as *"the ability to share, understand and feel another person's feelings."* (Chambers Dictionary). Think about that definition for a moment before we get into this week's study.

READ | What does the Bible say?

With the theme in your mind, read together:

Philippians 2:3-8

REFLECT | What does the Bible mean?

- Q1. What has this passage got to do with empathy?
- Q2.
 - a. What 'attitude' is it that Paul is encouraging the Philippians to embrace? (v5)
 - b. Why must we be *instructed* to embrace this attitude?
 - c. What are the barriers to us embracing this attitude?
- Q3.
 - a. Consider the phrase 'being made in the likeness of men' (v7). What is the meaning and significance of this phrase?
 - b. Read John 1:14^a. How does this statement mirror or expand on the verse we've just read?
 - c. It's from the last verse that we get the concept of 'incarnational living'. What do you think this means?

- Q4. Besides being born into our world and living amongst us, can you think of ways Jesus demonstrated 'incarnational' living in His daily life?

RESPOND | What do I need to do now?

- Q5. How can we be more 'incarnational' like Jesus in our daily interactions with others?
- Q6. In what way must we 'empty ourselves' (Phil 2:7) in order to lives full of empathy for others?
- Q7. Think of a time this last week when you could have been more empathetic. What would you have done differently if you had the opportunity to live through that experience again? Share your thoughts with each other if you're willing.

Suggested memory verse(s):

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.
(Romans 12:15 ESV)