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NT 637/737 Philippians

Professor Shawn Craigmiles

Final Exegesis Paper/Project Proposal

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- a. **Overview:** I would like to propose a creative alternative project, which is to devise a bible study of at least 3 sessions on the Book of Philippians for the women in our church.
- b. **Abstract:** This Bible study will be an exploration into Philippians as a New Testament book and one of Paul's letters to a church, as a glimpse into the community life of an early church that can both encourage and teach us in the contemporary church. For proper orientation to reading the letter, the initial lesson will focus on the original setting of the letter, on Paul, on the Philippians church and their relationship (including Acts 15-16). Another session will focus on the content of the letter in which such principles as joy, service, humility and unity will be explored. Another session will examine the presence and significance of women leadership in the Philippian church, starting with Lydia's conversion in Acts and considering Euodia and Syntyche in the letter. The mode of the Bible study will be like a small group class on Sunday at church or on a weekday in our home, over some coffee/ tea.
- c. **Target Audience:** Our local church is composed of a small group of young professionals and families, whose age range is early 20s to 40s. My target audience is the women in our church because as a pastor's wife and a fellow woman, my first desire is that as sisters, we would be securely built up in our knowledge of Scripture and increasing love for one another. I hope that the sisters can feel more confident in approaching and reading the

book of Philippians and appreciate the principles of joy, service, humility and unity. I also hope that a more nuanced understanding of Paul's perspective on women in ministry can emerge as a byproduct of exploring the women's presence in the book, to the effect of encouraging the sisters to confidently serve and to lead.

- d. **Rationale:** Bible Study as a ministry area has been missing in the church for reasons over the years, and so there is all the more a communal yearning for it. Personally, devising a bible study for the first time without any prior experience is daunting, but it is also precisely my reason for this proposal because preparing to teach something can be one sure way to take ownership of one's learning, and there is a burden to share some of what I've learned with the greater body of my local church. The end goal is to help others appreciate God's Word more because that affects how we live, love and serve. Preparing to teach a Bible study in this way will help me to practice thinking more critically through what we've been learning thus far, in order to curate the materials in a way that would best equip our congregation in the knowledge of Philippians and the principles for church community life that may be gained from the book.
- e. **Sources/Dialog Partners:** In addition to the preliminary bibliography below, I plan to explore existing study books on Philippians that are designed for church small groups, for guidance on how to begin to structure a bible study for this context.
- (Dr. Craigmiles, any pointer would be deeply appreciated. Once you kindly grant permission, attempting this project and coming up with a lesson plan are ambitious goals for me, as I have no experience in teaching, let alone teaching the Bible. But it is still something that, at some point, I would have wanted to at least begin to try, especially if I want to be indeed helpful to the people around me with what I am learning. Thank you!)

Bibliography

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