

# LIFE UPSIDE DOWN\_\_1

## Imagine



“Meanwhile, live in such a way that you are a credit to the Message of Christ...Stand united, singular in vision, contending for people’s trust in the Message, the good news....”  
- Philippians 1:27, Msg

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”  
- Jesus, John 13:35

Imagine a church filled with believers who are spiritually alive, who truly desire to live as salt and light in the midst of their neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Wouldn’t it be encouraging to know that the watching world would see a collective witness that reflected the truths of the gospel? Think about what it would be like to be in an environment with little selfishness or harmful comments. Imagine standing shoulder to shoulder with people of like mind and faith praising God and serving Him and others.

This is the life the apostle Paul envisioned in Philippians 2. Living “life upside-down” is a paradox: true meaning and satisfaction come from giving our lives away. What’s more, such an inverted way of living is certain to call attention to the living God (Philippians 2:15-16). But most importantly, living “life upside down” will enable you to experience the joy of knowing that your life is bringing glory and pleasure to our eternal God.

## Opening Up

What’s one of the most vivid dreams you’ve ever experienced?

## Digging In

### Read Philippians 1:27-30

1. What are the three images used in verses 27-28, and how does each contribute to an understanding of authentic Christian community? [You’ll probably need to study a little to find the third image in verse 28!]
2. Why is each of these attitudes or actions important? Why is our unity so important to God? [Share as many reasons as come to mind.] From personal experience, what power have you seen in unity?

### Read Philippians 2:1-4

3. On what basis are we to be motivated toward authentic oneness in our relationships with fellow Christ-followers (verse 1)? Paul describes four ways in which we are blessed in our relationship with Christ. Which of the four do you identify with most in your own spiritual walk? Explain.
4. How do verses 2-4 help to define what it means to be “like-minded”?
5. How is the unity described in these verses related to humility? For that matter, what exactly *is* humility?

## Living Out

A divided church cannot reach a fractured world. Christ-followers are to live in a way that honors the reconciling gospel of Jesus. So, relate the impact of God’s truth on your life: *What one truth from this passage would you like to apply this week? What specific relationship needs a “dose” of authentic, Christ-empowered unity in your life?*

## Lifting Up

Share a time of prayer and praise with your group. Consider using (364), “Come, Share the Lord,” as a segue into sharing communion, reinforcing the message. Other related songs: (704) “Bind Us Together,” (705) “A Common Love,” (448) “The Greatest Command.”