

Book of Philippians

Part 3

Philippians 2 NIV

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Vs. 12b “continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,”

We know that Paul did not mean “work so as to earn your own salvation.” Such a statement would contradict the whole of Paul’s gospel. What Paul did mean is to call the Philippians to put forth real effort into their Christian lives. This is not to work their salvation in the sense of accomplishing it, but to work out their salvation – to see it evident in every area of their lives, to activate the salvation God freely gave them. (Guzik)

- I can’t depend on someone else to make me Godly; and I can’t blame someone else if I’m behaving worldly. It’s up to each Christian to work out their Salvation with fear and trembling...
- If Christ has forgiven me, saved me and calls me his own. Then I have been given a great gift. It’s not that I have earned it but it has been provided to me through Christ. Now I have a responsibility to work out this Salvation He has given to me in real life.
- Paul says before that, *“As you have always obeyed - not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence.*
- From this text it’s obvious that a big part of them workout out their salvation with fear and trembling has something to do with obeying God no matter if Paul is present or not.

- As parents it's one thing see your kids acting right when you are there... The question that makes every parent nervous is how do they act when I'm gone...
- This is what the Apostle is speaking to... Please don't just make me proud of you when I'm present; make me proud of you when I'm gone.

Ultimately what Paul is speaking of here, in regard to them and us working out our salvation with fear and trembling is truly summed up in the biblical phrase, The Fear of the Lord...

We just had a big discussion in our Staff meeting on the need for the Fear of the Lord, and the lack of it in many cases...

This is true on every level of Christian Service... No one is so talented, spiritually gifted or seasoned in the Christian duty that they are above the great need for Godly character and integrity...

Story: John Bevere was invited to visit Jim Baker in prison. At one point John asked Jim when did you stop loving Jesus? Jim answered, I never stopped loving God, I just stopped fearing Him.

Proverbs 9:10 NIV

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is insight." -

Proverbs 14:27 NIV

"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death."

2 Corinthians 7:1 NKJV

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

- How does this work, If we have been washed in the blood of Jesus, how is it that Paul says, “let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
- This is the part where we participate with the Holy Spirit and remove the things that need to be removed and add in the things that need to be added.
- The Fear of the Lord is the anchor that ties you and I to the reality of God and who He is... The Fear of the Lord is the anchor that holds when life and temptation comes... The Fear of the Lord will get you to the finish line...
- Because we can't see God we might be tempted to believe that he doesn't see every part of our life. But God see's every part of our lives. And He still loves us... and He still chooses us...

The greatest understanding we get on the Fear of the Lord comes from Jesus:

Matthew 10:28

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Vs. 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

- The first part has to do with personal diligence...
- This part has to do with divine enablement...

God is working in you Purposefully, Perpetually and Powerfully to make you more like Jesus.

This Verse is a good way to start your day: You can ask yourself

1. Who can I count on to be with me today? "for it is God"
2. What will he be doing? "working"
3. What will he be working on? "you"
4. Why will he be working in me? "To will and act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

"It is the will of God for the Spirit of God to use the Word of God to make the Child of God look like the Son of God." (H.B. Charles)

"Grace all-sufficient dwells in you, believer. There is a living well within you springing up; use the bucket, then; keep on drawing; you will never exhaust it; there is a living source within." (Spurgeon)

"for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

- There are two will's needed to walk faithfully in God's good purpose: God's will and your will.

Amos 3:3

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

- When we are stubborn it is God who works in us to will and to act...
- When we are not interested it is God who works in you to be interested and to act...
- If you need proof that God is real, consider where you are today. Was there a time you were far from him, far from interested in serving God, going to church, raising your hands in worship to God, spending time in the His Word and desiring to do his will?

- There definitely was in me... but God has worked in me to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Vs. 14

Do everything without grumbling or arguing,

NKJV - Do all things without complaining and disputing

- Somebody make a plaque and sell that at Hobby Lobby; this verse is great for Adults raising Teenagers and Pastors raising Christians.
- In the KJV the word is Murmuring and means; secret debate, secret displeasure.
- It's easy to think this (Grumbling/Complaining/Murmuring) is not a big deal, until we realize it's the stuff the Israelites were guilty of when they Grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and against God in the Wilderness.

Exodus 14

The people complained and said to Moses at the Red Sea "Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

Exodus 15 - The people complained about the bitter water;

Exodus 16 - The people complained about being hungry;

Exodus 17 - The people complained about being thirsty;

Numbers 14 - It's the thing that kept an entire generation of Israelites from the Promise land. Because they complained about how difficult it looked to enter the Promised Land.

Vs. 14-16

14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, **15** so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky **16** as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.

- Paul makes no exception about it. A grumbling, arguing grieves the Holy Spirit and stops the light of the Gospel from shining...

? How important is it that the Church in Philippi be blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation?

- It's huge; because without it they are no different than the world and they lose the thing that sets them apart as a light for the Gospel.

? How important is it for us not to act like the world, talk like the world, respond like the world?

As Christians we should hold the things of this world loosely... knowing this is not our forever home...

We are in this world but not of it...

Paul's reference in Vs. 15 to “warped and crooked generation” comes from Deuteronomy 32 and how God spoke of the Israelites

Deuteronomy 32:5,6

*“They are corrupt and not his children;
to their shame they are a warped and crooked generation.”
Is this the way you repay the Lord,
you foolish and unwise people?
Is he not your Father, your Creator,
who made you and formed you?*

So the application is two fold:

1. Grumbling and Complaining is worldly and ungodly.
2. And it makes Christians look like unfaithful Israel, who's bones were buried in the sand and never received the promise land...

Vs. 17,18

17 But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. **18** So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

- Paul here alluded to a practice among the Jews. In their sacrifices, they often poured out wine beside an animal that was sacrificed to God.
- With this Paul indicated the possibility that his execution may be imminent.
- In the midst of this Paul said “I am glad and rejoice with all of you... So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.
- Paul looked forward to what might be his imminent martyrdom, and expected the Philippians to be glad and rejoice with him. Paul wasn't being morbid here, asking the Philippians to take joy in something like death. Yet he did ask the Philippians to see his death as something that would bring glory to God.

This re-echo Paul's words from

Romans 14:8

If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

