BONDSERVANT

Philippians 2:12-18 – Part 7

Work out your salvation?

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed (*hupo*, "under," *akouo*, "hear"), not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation** [obeying God's words] with ***fear*** and ***trembling*** [of the Lord], 13 for it is God who works in you, both to **will and to work for HIS good pleasure**.

Phil. 2:12-13

What does that look like?

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
Fools despise wisdom and instruction. Prov. 1:7

Ps. 119:9-16

Heb. 12:1-11

Two key statements for understanding this passage.

"Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1:27a)

&

"Work out your salvation with fear and trembling"

(Phil. 2:12c)

The Barn Illustration



What did Paul say this looks like?

Stand firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. ... be of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose (Phil. 1:27; 2:2).

We don’t change overnight

Discipleship is “teaching them to deserve all that I commanded you” (Matt. 28:20). As new believers we are used to only being driven by the flesh. It is a process of learning to “walk in the Spirit” and “put to death the deeds of the flesh.” Every day we are called to a process of learning God’s Word, submitting to God’s Word, knowing Christ, and looking like Christ. This causes us to be spiritual lights to a dark culture.

How do we do that?

3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit,
but with humility of mind regard one another as
more important than yourselves; 4 do not *merely*
look out for your own personal interests, but
also for the interests of others. 5 Have this
attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ
Jesus (Phil. 2:3-4).

Have the Attitude of Christ

Jesus is God. But to reconcile us back to Father God, He left heaven, He took on a human nature and body, He temporarily gave up his visible glory and temporarily limited the use of some of His divine abilities (He got tired, ate, drank, didn't know certain things at certain times. etc.) He humbled himself to the point of death through crucifixion. God then exalted Him and made Jesus the Godman Lord [Master] over all creation. Some day, all of humanity will bow and confess that Jesus is Lord of all! This is the kind of attitude we are to have. This is the attitude that creates unity. This is HUMILITY!

What does that look like?

So, in the ministry of the local church, we consider all perspectives that reflect the truth of God's word always remembering the Church is Christ's. We are called to unity of mind, spirit, and purpose. That means we prioritize making disciples of everyone in our households and in our church. The methodology that we use to do that will vary. So, as we work together as the Body of Christ, we must humble ourselves before Christ and each other and seek God's wisdom together.

BONDSERVANT



Yet not My will,
but Yours be done.

Working out our salvation. What does that look like?)

[4] Do all things without grumbling or disputing [this looks like the world]; [15] so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach [this looks like Christ] in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation [Christ's Higher Purpose for us], among whom you appear as lights in the world, [16] holding fast the word of life [where there is unity of mind and purpose] (Phil. 2:14-16a)

Unbelievers are watching us

14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill
cannot be hidden; 15 nor does *anyone* light a lamp and
put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it
gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light
shine before men in such a way that they may see your
good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 5:14-16

We are light, We are to be a “city on a Hill!”

Dr. Robert Lightner writes, “Evidently the believers were complaining (to God and each other) and arguing (with each other). As a result they were not without fault among the unregenerate; they were not shining like stars in their world (2:15). The Philippian assembly needed to show themselves as united and as one in Christ. Non-Christians were not being attracted to Him by the saints’ strife and contentions.

Paul’s Perspective

…so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain [without results]. [17] But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith [Paul’s death], I rejoice and share my joy with you all. [18] You too, *I urge you*, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me (Phil. 16b-18).