



### Philippians Group Discussion Guide Week 5

The guide follows the same format: three questions followed by prayer. My additional questions are in italics. Please especially make sure you consider the application questions I ask. Have a great study!

Read Philippians 2:12-18.

*12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.*

**What does the text say?** In this section we are seeking to make as many observations as we can. I encourage you to mark up the text above you (underline, circle, draw lines connecting verses/words, write short comments, etc).

- Summarize the context...what was said in the preceding verses? How does this fit within Paul's thought process?
- What are key words/phrases in the passage?
  - What are the repeated words/phrases? Why are they significant?
  - What are important connecting words and how do they help us understand Paul's point?
  - What themes or ideas are being emphasized?
  - What does this passage say about God? Man? Sin?
  - What questions do you have?
- Some other questions to help discover what the text says:
  - *Notice the word, "therefore," in verse 12. What follows then is related to what came before. What is the relationship between verses 1-11 and 12-18? Do you see any repeated themes going back to chapter one through here?*

- *Do verses 12-13 teach that salvation is by works? Why or why not? What key words help us understand what Paul means?*
- *What does Paul mean by “work out your salvation”?*
- *Often, God’s sovereignty and human responsibility are pitted against each other as if it has to be one or the other. How do we see both in this passage? Can you think of other examples where we see this tension in the same passage?*
- *The text literally says: “the one who works the working is God.” What does this mean?*
- *What does fear and trembling have to do with working out your salvation? Describe this fear and trembling in your own words.*
- *Paul says in verse 14 to do all things without grumbling or disputing. What does Paul mean by these two words? Why is grumbling and disputing such a big deal?*
- *Paul is most likely quoting from Daniel 12:3 when he tells them to shine as lights. Look at Daniel 12:3. What was going on in Daniel? How are the circumstances similar for the Philippians?*
- *Paul again entertains the possibility of his martyrdom in verse 17. Despite being imprisoned and facing death, he continues to rejoice. What is his reason for rejoicing?*

### **What does the text mean?**

- Describe Paul’s main point in a sentence or couple sentences. What is the big/main idea?
- What are some of the subpoints? Summarize Paul’s thought process and some of his supporting points.
- What other passages could be helpful in understanding this text better?

### **How do I/we apply this passage?**

- What are we to think/feel/do?
- What sins does this passage expose in you/us?
- *What does working out your salvation look like? What are areas of needed growth for you (areas where you need to labor harder to work out the implications of your salvation)?*
- *How does verse 13 encourage you?*
- *Think about that phrase from Sunday’s message: a long obedience in the same direction. What does this phrase mean? How does that idea challenge you and encourage you?*
- *How much do you grumble? How can you grow in this area of not grumbling?*

### **Pray**

- What is there to praise God for from this passage?
- What sin(s) is there to confess?
- What is there to ask God for?