

# SEQUOIA NOTES

## Today's Sequoia Message...

### Shining with Joy

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor  
May 31, 2026



Philippians 2:12-18 (NLT) “Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. <sup>13</sup> For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. <sup>14</sup> Do everything without complaining and arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. <sup>16</sup> Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ’s return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. <sup>17</sup> But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God, just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy. <sup>18</sup> Yes, you should rejoice, and I will share your joy.”

**Big Idea: Shine for Christ by joyfully obeying Him in everyday life.**

### How do we do this?

#### 1) Cultivate Christ-like maturity through devotion & obedience.

<sup>12</sup>“Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear.”

Philippians 2:12b (AMP) “...continue to work out your salvation [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ].”

<sup>13</sup> “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”

Philippians 2:13 (AMP) “For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] for His good pleasure.”

#### 2) Refuse to complain & argue.

<sup>14</sup> “Do everything without complaining and arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.”

*Pastor Jim Cymbala writes... “Crack cocaine, alcohol, and sexual temptation have slain their thousands, but bickering, quarrelling, and criticism in the church have slain their tens of thousands.”*

Daniel 12:3 (NLT) “Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever.”

### THINK test – Alan Redpath – Moody Church

#### T- Is it True?

#### H – Is it Helpful?

#### I – Is it Inspiring?

#### N – Is it Necessary?

#### K – Is it Kind?

#### 3) Hold firmly to the Word of life.

<sup>16</sup>“Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ’s return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. <sup>17</sup>But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God, just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy. <sup>18</sup>Yes, you should rejoice, and I will share your joy.”

- **Jesus is the Light who takes us from darkness so we can reflect His love & light to the world.**

2 Corinthians 4:4-7 (NLT) “Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.<sup>5</sup> You see, we don’t go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, ‘Let there be light in the darkness,’ has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.”

**Big Idea: Shine for Christ by joyfully obeying Him in everyday life.**

### Where is God asking you to take a step of obedience today?

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used today is the New Living Translation (NLT), and the Amplified Bible (AMP).



**Sequoia Impact Communities are where we  
live out our identity as a  
Family of Servants on Mission.**

To get plugged in email:

**impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org**

**Shining with Joy  
#8 of 15 - May 31, 2026**

### **Context**

1. In Philippians 2, what is happening in Paul's life and ministry when he writes this passage? How does knowing Paul is suffering and possibly facing death shape the tone of verses 12–18?
2. Earlier in Philippians 2, Paul points to Jesus' humility and obedience (2:5–11). How does Christ's example connect to Paul's call for believers to "shine like bright lights" in the world?

### **Observation**

3. What words or phrases stand out to you in Philippians 2:12–13? What do you notice about the relationship between our obedience and God's work within us?
4. Read verses 14–16 again. What specific behaviours does Paul warn against, and what practical actions does he encourage believers to pursue instead?

### **Meaning**

5. Paul says to "work hard to show the results of your salvation" (v.12). What does this mean—and what does it *not* mean? How do verses 12–13 protect us from both legalism and spiritual passivity?
6. Why do you think complaining and arguing damage a believer's witness so deeply? How can joyful obedience make Christians "shine" in a dark and divided world?

### **Application**

7. Where are you most tempted to complain, argue, or become critical right now—at home, work, church, or elsewhere?  
How could applying the THINK test help you respond differently this week?
8. Paul calls believers to "hold firmly to the word of life." What is one practical way you can stay rooted in God's Word and take a step of joyful obedience this week?



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