

Philippians 2:12-18

Verse 12

So then, my beloved – The exhortations of this passage are the expected response to understanding Christ’s humiliation and exaltation.

Obedey...in my presence...in my absence - Paul’s presence among them provided motivation but now he encourages them to rely on a greater motivation.

Work out your salvation – The command is not to “work for” salvation but to “work out” the salvation they already possess. The word carries the idea of “bringing to completion”. It is used of working a field so as to get the greatest harvest.

With fear and trembling – We must remember we serve a holy God and we also have a crafty and deceiving adversary. Such an attitude should produce in us an awareness of our weakness and our need to depend on God.

Verse 13

God is at work in you – The word for work is “energein” from which we get the word “energy”. God is the one who gives us the energy to work out our salvation. God will give us both the desire and the energy to serve Him if we will ask.

For His good pleasure – God delights in helping his children.

Principle - God must work in us before He can work through us. This is always a process and takes time. God took forty years to bring Moses to the place where He could use him to deliver Israel. Notice the correlation to humility (Numbers 12:3), “*Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.*”

If the workman is what he ought to be, the work will be what it ought to be.

Verse 14

Do all things without grumbling or disputing – Grumbling will always lead to disputes. The mind of Christ produces unity; grumbling produces dis-unity. Israel’s grumbling in the wilderness resulted in God’s not allowing them to enter the Promised Land.

Verse 15

That you might prove yourselves –

Blameless – Because we walk in truth and deal with our sin.

Innocent – Pure or undefiled.

Above reproach – Not able to be charged with justifiable criticism.

In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation – They lived in a twisted and perverted generation.

Appear as lights - The Light of the world indwells us (John 8:12) and we should let it shine before the world (Matthew 5:14-16)

Verse 16

Holding fast the word of life – Jesus has the “words of eternal life” (John 6:68) and the “word of life” here is probably a reference to the gospel.

So that in the day of Christ... - Paul wanted to be able to glory in their lives at the judgment seat of Christ.

Verse 17

Poured out as a drink offering – The last act in the sacrificial ceremony involved the priest pouring out wine beside the altar to symbolize the dedication of the worshipper. Paul applies this to his life which was being poured out to God in service.

Verses 17-18

I rejoice and share my joy with you all – Joy is mutual when service and unity are mutual.

Rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me – Paul desired that the Philippians experience the same joy he had.

In the “*day of Christ*” God is going to reward those who have been faithful to Him. Part of that reward will be “*the joy of the Lord*”.

“*...Well done good and faithful servant...enter into the joy of your master.*” Matthew 25:21

We must remember that it was for the “*joy set before Him*” that Jesus endured the cross and despised the shame and now sits at the right hand of God. Hebrews 12:2

There is a Purpose to Achieve...

There is a Power to Receive

There is a Promise to Believe

When we know God’s purpose in our life, understand His work within us, and believe His promise of joyous reward we will be motivated to faithfully serve Him.