

Work Out Your Salvation

Philippians 2:12-18

I. Does this passage deal with assurance of eternal life? (vv. 12-13)

- A. Why does this passage terrify some believers?
- B. Does this verse instruct us on how to be assured of eternal life?

II. What is this passage commanding us to do?

- A. Believers should be motivated to live an obedient, godly life.
 - 1. The parallelism in v. 12 shows that “salvation” in this context is parallel with “obeying” and is therefore not talking about gaining eternal life.
 - 2. Paul compliments them on their obedience up until now. (even obeying the gospel message and coming to faith in Christ.)
 - 3. It says to “work out” your salvation, not to “work for”, or even to “work out an inworked salvation”.
- B. Of what should we be fearful? Saved from what?
 - 1. First, we need to be reminded that the word “salvation” does not always mean “saved from hell”. We must always ask “saved from what” according to the context.
 - 2. Let’s look carefully at the context.
 - a) *Phil. 1:3-7 Their financial support (Partnership in the gospel) (4:14-17) will help them receive honor on Evaluation Day (the day of J.C.)*
 - b) *Phil. 1:19-22 tells us how Paul uses the word “salvation” in this book.*
 - (1) He defines his “salvation” (ESV deliverance) as not being ashamed because he persevered to the end and boldly magnifying Christ.
 - (2) 2 Timothy 4:6-8
 - (3) Paul, who may not be vindicated at the judgment seat in Rome, desires to be vindicated at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
 - c) *Phil. 2:5, 9-11*
 - d) *Phil. 2:14-16 Paul wanted to be proud of them on the day of Christ and know that his labor was not in vain for eternal accomplishments.*

- e) *Paul refers to the importance of preparing for Evaluation Day two more times in this book. Near the end of the letter Paul (4:15-17) refers to "the fruit that abounds to your account". Each believer has an account in which eternal rewards are accumulating.*
- 3. After Paul has asked them to pray for His "salvation" from shame (vindication) at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1:19-22), he now tells them to "work out their own salvation" (2:12).
- 4. Therefore, a lack of spiritual growth and obedience in my life should make me fearful that I will not receive the commendation of Jesus Christ and the eternal rewards I could have had for all of eternity.

III. Work towards these characteristics of a Christlike life. (vv. 14-18)

- A. Live in unity with other believers. (v. 14)
- B. Be a good testimony to the lost world. (v. 15)
 - a) *Faultless, blameless*
 - b) *Be a brightly shining light in your culture by being adequately different.*
- C. Live in obedience to the Word of God in order to receive eternal rewards on evaluation day. (v. 16-18)
 - a) *Their obedience will affect Paul's evaluation at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (v. 16)*
 - b) *Paul's imprisonment and possible martyrdom for the Philippians is a manifestation of his sacrifice for them. (v. 17)*
 - c) *As Paul rejoices with them concerning their future evaluation, so he desires them to rejoice with him. (v. 18)*

SUMMARY:

Work Out Your Salvation in the sense that we need to cooperate with the power of the Holy Spirit to continually grow spiritually in order be vindicated and receive honor at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

-We as believers SHOULD be characterized by obedience, but that is not guaranteed.

-Thank God for His energy, offered to us as we cooperate with His Holy Spirit, that can enable us to live for His approval.