

Philippians 2026 – Week 4 – Philippians 2:12-30

Philippians 2:12-18: *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

INTRO to Philippians: The letter of Philippians is the perfect starting place for biblical teaching on following Christ as a disciple. This letter speaks to obedience and faithfulness in the life of the individual believer, and the importance of being healthy and unified in the Church. Philippians presents God's instructions in a warm and encouraging tone, as believers are challenged to conduct ourselves at all times and in all places “in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.”

INTRO to Philippians 2:12-30: Following the incredible and incomparable “Christ Hymn,” the letter turns back to practical applications for Christlike living as a disciple and in the Church.

I. Don't forget your true calling—to follow Christ and His will in all you do. (vs. 12-13)

-The Philippians demonstrated integrity in their obedience – they were an example of obedience when the Apostle Paul was present but also when he was not (**vs. 12**).

-Scripture calls us not to work *for* our salvation, work *out* our salvation.

-Two “churchy words” that are also great words to explain this:

1.) Holiness – being set apart by God according to His righteousness

2.) Sanctification – the process of being made holy as we become more like Christ (see **John 17:16-17** below).

-Work out your salvation simply means to grow in Christlikeness, continue becoming more like Him, growing in holiness, growing in truth, growing in obedience, growing in the fruit of the Spirit.

-We are also called to walk in obedience according to God's will and good purpose “*with fear and trembling*”—in humility, awe, and complete dependence on the Lord.

II. Don't forget your true witness—to let the light of Christ shine through you. (vs. 14-16a)

-vs. 14: *Do everything without grumbling or arguing...*

-everything = in all you do and always!

-This was more than just a word about complaining – these are symptoms of disunity.

-REMEMBER one of those BASICS from last Sunday: A right relationship with God leads to right relationships with others. You are set apart in this way.

-Scripture calls us as Christians to live in harmony for the Lord's sake, for your sake, and for the sake of others!

-Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky – if you've ever experienced a clear night at a higher elevation such as the Rockies where you look up at a sky full of endless stars—it's not the expanse of darkness that stands out but instead those brilliant shining lights that, even though most are billions of light years away—the deepest darkness cannot hide their light.

-When Christians look like and sound like everyone else, we lose our distinctiveness. We are not distinguishable from the rest of the world.

-When we let our light shine as we *"hold firmly to the word of life,"* we display a faithful witness as Christ commanded and modeled for us (see **Matthew 5:14-16** below).

III. Don't forget your true destination—to finish the race and enter Christ's eternal Kingdom where He is making all things new. (vs. 16b-18)

-Paul's hope for the Philippians is that He will be able to "brag in the Lord": *And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.*

-Just as Christ *"emptied Himself and was poured out"* (**Philippians 2:7-8a**), the Apostle Paul said that he was being poured out as he spent all of Himself for the faith.

-AND YET, Paul wrote, I am glad and rejoicing...and you should also be glad and rejoice along with me.

WHY? Because we know the end of the story...and we know our promised reward!

In the end, giving our all for Christ will be worth it!

-Philippians 1:6: *Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

Other Scriptures Referenced:

John 17:16-17: *"They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."*

Matthew 5:14-16: *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Philippians 2:19-30: *I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰ I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. ²¹ For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. ²³ I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.*

²⁵ But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. ²⁶ For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. ²⁹ So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-Sanctification and Disciple are best understood as "a long obedience in the same direction." –Eugene Peterson