

"Paul's Letter to the Philippians – 'Work Out Your Own Salvation'"

Review:

- **High plain of the previous exhortation: "Let this mind . . ."**
- **The exhortation is clear and powerful: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, WHO ..."**
- **This is optional, beloved, but it is not optional IF WE WOULD SEEK THE SAME GOAL THAT THE APOSTLE SOUGHT, "THAT I MAY KNOW HIM . . ."**

Phil. 3:7-8

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things [but] loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them [but] dung, that I may win Christ . . .

- **Christ's Emptying: Verses 7 & 8:**
- **Christ's Exaltation: Verses 9-11:**
- **Paul's Confidence in the Flesh: 3:5-6:**
- **For Paul, All Things Counted Loss for Christ: 3:8-11:**

1) "But made himself of no reputation

2) took the form of a servant

3) made in the likeness of men

4) and found in fashion as a man

5) he humbled himself

6) and became obedient unto death

7) even the death of the cross"

- **How practical this is though? This is high doctrine BUT . . .**

Phil. 3:17-21

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, [that they are] the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end [is] destruction, whose God [is their] belly, and [whose] glory [is] in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

- *Paul's confidence is ours as well SINCE our conversation is in heaven. He took upon Himself human flesh and is now glorified. We shall be the same -- all of us who have believed. And, for those of us who take upon ourselves willingly his dying in order that we might also be able to take to ourselves his living and his glory, we shall be shining stars indeed for all eternity.*

But we all shall be glorified together! And finally He shall gain His long awaited counterpart! Amen and amen.

Our Text Today:

Phil. 2:12-16

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

I. How Salvation Works – The Exhortation (Verse 12):

[READ] Phil. 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

- *The key verse in this section is this one, verse, 12, and it is here where the central exhortation of this section is found: “work out your own salvation . . . with fear and trembling . . .”:*
- *This verse is not alone Consider Eph. 2:8-10:*

Eph. 2:8-10

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- ***This letter is correctional regarding the teaching of other letters as well - our focus should be not law but grace with the appropriate fruit-bearing following as well.***

Tit. 3:8 [This is] a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

Gal. 5:5-6

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

- ***And now we get to that great verse 13 to underscore what we have just now been saying about works, good works, fruit unto God for his glory:***

II. How Salvation Works — The Lord's Working (Verses 13):

[READ] Phil. 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.

- ***“it is God which worketh in you . . .”:***
- ***Who then is doing the work “defined” here? And I say defined for a reason. Paul’s point here is that it really is the Lord God who is doing this work. That it is “through us” is critically important of course, but the Lord is doing this great work and we should never forget that to our own peril.***
- ***“For” introduces this because the apostle is explaining the previous verse here. “With fear and trembling . . .” are words that need explanation, it would seem. And I would agree and probably you would as well. AND IS THIS JUST WHAT WE MIGHT FORGET SO EASILY? THAT IT IS THE LORD GOD THAT IS DOING THE WORK. BUT THE APOSTLE HERE REMINDS US THAT IT IS PROPERLY***

SPEAKING “WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING” THAT WE BEAR HIS FRUIT!

- ***“both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure . . .”: There is so very much being said here. We can only scratch the surface barely today regarding the dominating theme here in these words, namely that the Lord God is working all things according to his perfect will or as written here, “both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure . . .”. Or, as written in his letter to the Ephesians:***

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will . . .

- ***The quite extreme “gravity” of this should be clear to all of us — but is it? Perhaps not, since the apostle here repeats it in such strong language.***

III. How Salvation Works — The Believer’s Working (Verses 14-16):

[READ] Phil. 2:14-16

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 **Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

- “without murmurings and disputings”:
- “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation . . .”:
- “among whom ye shine as lights in the world”:
- ***The whole character here is not of what we might think of as “good works”, is it? Our lives “shine” (or at least should). And they will if we are “Holding forth the word of life”.***
- ***My, what a challenge indeed. So many today in the churches are totally exhausted with false teachings demanding their life of good works often to the exclusion of what Paul writes of so powerfully here. But what do many believe today? That by our works they shall know us. This is great Kingdom teaching but not what Paul is writing about here. Rather . . . “that [he] may rejoice in the day of Christ, that [he] has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain”.***

- ***And that will be IF WE WERE IN OUR LIVES HERE “Holding forth the word of life”. YES, ALSO, “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world”. BUT INDEED WE MUST ALSO BE “HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE”!! AMEN AND AMEN.***