

Week 5 - The Sanctification of the Believer - Our Response to Christ's Example (2:12-30)

A. The Tension between Works and Faith (v. 12-13)

1. Our Responsibility to Work out our salvation

a. This describes the process of sanctification as we work out our salvation

1. With "fear and trembling" - we must strive to obey and follow the Lord and His commands for us
2. "While we must not believe in salvation by works, we must most certainly believe in salvation that works.. " (Opening up Philippians p. 43)
3. Our salvation will be manifest by the good works we walk in
 - a. James 2:17-20 tells us that faith without works is dead and we know that true salvation displays itself in good works that have been prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10)

2. God's Work in Us

- a. However, lest we believe we must earn our salvation we learn in v. 13 that God is the one who works in us both to will and to do his good pleasure
 1. God started the work, God will continue with us to do the work, and God will finish the work (cf. Phil. 1:6)
 2. We can only "work out" what God has already "worked in"

B. How to Shine as Lights (v. 14-16)

1. Pure Light

- a. Negative: avoid grumbling and complaining (v. 14)
- b. Positive: be blameless and innocent (v. 15)
 1. We demonstrate our Faith by avoiding such an attitude and being people who exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in our lives
 2. Grumbling and complaining demonstrate to the world that we do not trust our Sovereign God and His plan and purpose for our life
 3. Remember that we are not of this world

2. Pure Word (v. 16)

- a. We have the truth of the Scriptures, the Gospel, and the teachings of Christ to help us live in and navigate this dark world.
- b. We must proclaim the truth of the Word to the world/people around us

3. Pure Race(v. 16)

- a. We should run/labor in such a way that it is not in vain
- b. Our lives must echo the sentiment of Philippians 1 - to live is Christ, to die is gain

C. Examples to Imitate (v. 17-30)

1. Paul (v. 17-18)

- a. Relentless pursuit of Christ
- b. Willing to even be poured out as a drink offering
- c. Always Rejoicing!

2. Timothy (v. 19-24)

- a. Genuinely concerned for their welfare (v. 20)
- b. He seeks the interest of Jesus Christ, not his own (v. 21)
- c. He has proven his worth like a son with a father
- d. He has served in the gospel

3. Epaphroditus (v. 25-30)

- a. The Man
 1. Brother

2. Fellow Worker
3. Fellow Soldier
4. Messenger
5. Minister to need
- b. The Circumstances
 1. Become ill, near to death
 2. Even still longed for Philippian brothers and was distressed because they had heard he was ill
- c. How they should receive him
 1. With joy
 2. Honor him and men like him, who risk their lives for the work of Christ

D. In Class Work:

1. Together - Read the section from this week (Philippians 1:1 - 2:30). Focus on the particular section of discussion (2:12-30) and discuss together.

E. Questions to Consider

1. It has been said that all we contribute to our salvation is our sin. Discuss this statement in the light of Philippians 2:12-14.
2. If you are a Christian, God is at work in you, enabling you to work out your salvation. Discuss this point in the light of the works he has planned for you to do, and the obstacles you may have to overcome, including trials and temptations.
3. You know a Christian who often grumbles. How would you use this passage to help him or her to make some changes in behaviour?
4. This passage challenges us to Christ-centered living. It is easy to seek our own and not the things of Christ. By putting the Lord Jesus Christ first in all of life, in what ways do you think people's lives may be changed. Consider this with specific reference to 1) Financial giving, 2) Hospitality, 3) Practical acts of compassion.
5. Think of a few ways in which you could cultivate some of the fine qualities of Timothy and Epaphroditus into your own life, to the benefit and blessing of others.

F. For Further Study / Homework

1. HOMEWORK: Read Philippians 1:1-3:1 this week with a focus on 3:1-11 for next week's study. Read Daily. Write down, highlight, or note questions, comments, or things you notice in the text throughout the week to discuss next Sunday.
2. Read Romans 4. Was Abraham saved by grace through faith, or by works? If Abraham was saved by works, would God receive glory or would it go to Abraham? (see. v. 2). Is it true that grace and works are mutually exclusive, that if we are saved by grace, it cannot be by works, and vice versa?
3. Paul's words 'shine as lights' should remind us of Matthew 5:14-16. What is the result of Christians shining as God's lights? (see 1 Peter 2:9-12). Where do believers get their light? Read John 8:12.
4. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. Was Paul determined to have a Christ-centered ministry? Why? Read Colossians 1:13-18. Why is Christ entitled to pre-eminence?