

## Philippians: Working Out Your Salvation | Philippians 2:12-18

- 1. THINK:** Paul calls the Philippian believers 'beloved', which denotes intimacy in a relationship. How does working out our own salvation with 'fear and trembling' also generate from an intimate relationship? 'Fear and trembling' usually denotes enemies, but in Christ, we are no longer enemies, so how does this 'fear and trembling' actually give evidence of the intimate relationship we have with God? How would working out your salvation with casualness, lack of caution and self-confidence actually be worse? **DO:** Think through, discuss, write and ponder all the realities of God that give you reason for 'fear and trembling'. Can you also think of some reasons you should experience fear and trembling in your working out your salvation based on what you see in the mirror each day?
- 2. THINK:** What confidence and comfort do you take in the fact that even as you are working out your salvation, that it really is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure? How does that comfort you on your worst day trying to work out your salvation? How does it comfort you even on your best day, when things have gone well, that it still is God working in you? What does His help daily as you work out your salvation add to your fight? What does His help keep you from on your best or worst day? **DO:** Spend some time thanking God and truly worshipping Him for keeping you. If you are doing this study, answering these questions, it means that God has been at work in you, keeping you in Him and keeping you from swerving away drastically. Spend some time in the reality that above all your effort and intentions, it is God at work in you.
- 3. THINK:** Why does Paul equate doing all things without grumbling disputing as the equivalent of being blameless and innocent children of God. Isn't complaining just a normal part of the Christian life? What does not doing that produce in us that makes us blameless? **DO: (1)** Make a list of all the things that in the last week you have complained about (use many pages if necessary), even small murmurs and quiet grumbings, whether voiced to another or not. Then, take that list and right beside it **(2)** write down the character trait of God that you have attacked. In that grumbling, what have you accused or called God? Right next to that, **(3)** write what you have said about yourself in that grumbling. What do you think you are owed, what do you deserve, what do you have a right to? How does doing this exercise make it more real to you that grumbling and disputing is the opposite of being blameless and innocent children of God?
- 4. THINK:** How do the non-believers that hate God that you are around respond when things don't go their own way? Do they praise Jesus, in spite of the circumstances? Do they typically make a list of everything they are grateful for? What do they normally do? Now, if they are typically complainers and grumblers in their own situations, and you do the same, and all your grumbings are accusations of God, how much light do you think they see in you? **DO:** Where

should you be repenting right now? Where have you not been acting like the 'beloved' that Paul calls you? Take time to do that today. None of us are perfect, and we all need to take time to honestly bring our sin before God and deal honestly with it.

5. **THINK:** What if you are/were the only one on your job, the only one on your block, the only one in your family that chose to be intentional light in the midst of the crooked and twisted and dark generation that you live in? What would happen if you were the one to be grateful in every circumstance, the one to choose joy when tragedy happened, the one to bless instead of curse, to serve instead of be served, the one to forgive or cover over an offense? Do you have a vision of the light that Jesus wants you to be in the situation He has you in right now? **DO:** What will it cost you to act like the beloved that Christ calls you? What will it cost you to be light? Look through some of these and see if they are what it might cost:

- To choose joy means you do not get to complain, grumble, gossip, slander, bemoan, minimize
- To choose to be light means it will cost you speaking worldly wisdom that offers no hope, but instead use the Scriptures and the reality of the cross to encourage others
- To choose to work out your salvation with fear and trembling means you step out of center and put God back in the center, so that when you do well, speak well, accomplish, etc., it is a platform for God's glory, not yours
- To be light in this dark generation means you stand up for truth even when it is not popular, but do it in a way that is gentle, blesses and points people to Jesus, but does not point them to your personal standard or even your personal choices. It is about God's truth.
- Living this way will cost you friends and you may not be that much 'fun' anymore
- Living this way will put others needs before your own and you will see others the way Jesus sees them, not the way you do
- To choose to be quiet when you are offended means you do not get to promote your own preferences, but live to serve others
- To live life this way means the trajectory of your life is absolutely, daily, seeking Christ and running to Him and not to the world. Your love for Him is growing and your affection for the things of the world grows to distaste to disdain to hatred
- What other things can you think of that living as the 'beloved' and called to work out your salvation with fear and trembling and deny grumbling, what will these cost you? \_\_\_\_\_