



Lights in the Darkness

Philippians 2:12-17

October 21, 2018

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. **17** Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. **18** For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

4 Priorities for A Happy Life

➤ **Work out**

Sincerity even when not watched by people

Understanding God's work

Henry Alford - After this glorious example (of Christ's obedience to His Father in [Php 2:5-11](#)) he exhorts them to earnestness after Christian perfection (not an attainment but a goal at which we should aim)

Everyone should have a workout plan!

- **A LIFE CHANGING PASSAGE**

- **Jonathan Edwards** by most measures the greatest theologian in American history attests to the importance of a proper understanding of [Philippians 2:12-13](#) writing that
- "From St. Paul a sentence hit me when I was about twenty-two **that has shaped my theology ever since**, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you to will and to do his good pleasure" (Bolding added)

The text does not say, "*Work to acquire your salvation, for God has done his bit and now it is all up to you.*" Nor does it say, "*You may already have your salvation, but now perseverance in it depends entirely on you.*" Still less does it say, "*Let go and let God. Just relax. The Spirit will carry you.*" Rather, Paul tells us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, precisely because God is working in us both to will and to act according to his good purpose ([Phil 2:12-13](#)). Nor is God working merely to strengthen us in our willing and acting. Paul's language is stronger than that. God Himself is working in us both to will and to act: he works in us at the level of our wills and at the level of our doing.

W A Criswell emphasizes that [Philippians 2:12-13](#) "must be read together for a proper understanding. "Work out your own salvation" means to "work **out**," not "work **for**." A "works salvation" is not being taught. The idea is to progress to the finish or completion in spiritual growth and maturity. This process is what the Bible calls "sanctification." It should be noted that [Phil 2:12](#) makes it clear we are to be **active**, not **passive**, in this process. **However, though we are active, we are not alone.** [Phil 2:13](#) reminds us again that the entire salvation process is the work of a sovereign God and the result of His grace ([Criswell, W A. Believer's Study Bible: New King James Version. 1991. Thomas Nelson](#))

Katergazomai was used by secular Roman writers (Strabo - 60BC) to describe the working of a silver mine with the goal of extracting all of the precious ore. By analogy, we are commanded to "mine out" of our lives all the richness of salvation God has so graciously deposited in us. By sustained Spirit enabled effort and diligence we are to work out and perfect in daily conduct the precious "ore" God has placed within us when He blessed us with "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" in Christ ([Eph 1:3](#)) and "granted us everything necessary for life and godliness through a true knowledge of" Jesus our Lord. ([2Peter 1:3](#))

**The power that *compels* us
comes from the Spirit who *indwells* us.**

Our **responsibility** is our **response** to God's **ability**

Here is a summary of some of the previous statements that call for the saints at Philippi to **work out their salvation...**

- **Conduct** ([present imperative](#) = continually) yourselves in a manner worthy of the (a supernatural conduct which is in keeping with the supernatural power of the) gospel of Christ ([Php 1:27-](#))
- **Make** my joy **complete** ([aorist imperative](#) = Don't delay. Do this now and do it effectively) by being of the same mind ([Php 2:2-](#))
- (Literally) Nothing from selfishness ([Php 2:3a-](#)) ("*Do*" added)
- Let each of you regard ([present tense](#) = continually) one another as more important than himself ([Php 2:3b-](#))
- Do not merely look out for ([present tense](#) = continually) your own personal interests. ([Php 2:4-](#))
- **Have this attitude** ([present imperative](#) = continually) in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus. ([Php 2:5-](#))

When a musician has a fine composition placed before her, that music is not the musician's masterpiece; it is the composer's gift to the musician. But it then becomes the task of the musician to work it out, to give it sound and expression and beauty as she applies his skills to the composition. When she does, the composition reaches its completed purpose and thrills the hearts of her listeners. (Charles R. Swindoll, *Laugh Again*, p97)

➤ **Speak out**

Grumbling ([goggusmos](#) = to say anything in a low tone, English = **gong**) is an audible expression of an unwarranted dissatisfaction = expression of one's discontent. Expression in low tones of disapprobation (act or state of disapproving). Grumbling, grudging, murmuring, complaining (= making formal accusation or expressing dissatisfaction, resentment, displeasure or annoyance). It can reflect a secret debate or secret displeasure not openly avowed (see use in [John 7:12](#)).

three reasons why we need to work at our speech.

- Complaining denies God's sovereignty
- Complaining disrupts unity
- Complaining discredits our testimony

Disputing ([dialogismos](#) from **diá** = through or as a preposition to intensify meaning of + [logizomai](#) = reckon, take an inventory, conclude; source of our English *dialogue*) means literally reasoning through and so to think or reason with thoroughness and completeness, think out carefully, reason thoroughly, consider carefully, weighing. In the Greek writings dialogismos described the thinking of a man deliberating with himself. It refers to calculated consideration. It pictures one deliberating with one's self which conveys the basic meaning of inner reasoning.

- **All things**

Don't complain; the more you complain about things the more things you will have to complain about. (E. Stanley Jones)

Complaining about our lot in life might seem quite innocent in itself, but God takes it personally. (Erwin W. Lutzer)

If Christians spent as much time praying as they do grumbling, they would have nothing to grumble about.

I complained because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet. (Arab proverb)

It doesn't make you a child of God- it validates that you are a child of God.

Don't forget the cause! The world coming to Christ!

➤ **Shine out**

III.- hunting story

There are at least four ways to respond when it comes to the world:

1. We can isolate and just spend time in holy huddles.
2. We can indulge and become just like those around us.
3. We can incinerate lost people with our attitudes and actions.
4. We can illuminate the darkness by shining and sharing the Word of God.

Whine or shine

Ill.- preacher with few teeth- in his 80's

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS - During the years I was a medical doctor, I had a number of patients who seemed to enjoy complaining about their physical ills. I would examine them and not find a single thing wrong, yet all they did was whine and complain. Pains here, aches there, and as one expressed it, "I just feel no good all over." In my opinion, it was all imaginary. It seemed to me that if they would only start to count their blessings they would soon forget their troubles. How different the case of the very old woman, penniless and weak, who was asked, "Auntie, how is your health?" "Oh, I have so much to be thankful for," she replied. "I have only two teeth left, but thank God, they are opposite each other!" Before you begin another day, stop to count your blessings instead of dwelling on your troubles. —M R De Haan ([Our Daily Bread \(Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved\)](#))

➤ **Hold out**

Holding fast (forth) ([epecho](#) from **epí** = upon + **écho** = have, hold) means literally have or hold upon. To hold fast. To hold firmly to (hold firmly to a particular belief) To direct towards. To give attention to. To hold out, then to hold one's mind toward. To observe.

in this verse the **present tense** calls for them to **hold fast** to the Word continually, continuing to believe it.

When used of the mind it mean to fix the mind upon, give heed to, keep close watch on, pay attention ([1Timothy 4:16](#)). In this use the idea is that of a constant state of readiness.

Notice what Paul says about his joy. See how the obedience of this passage is tied into the subject of joy.

A blessing to the one who led you to Christ and led you to follow Christ.

- **WORK OUT**
- **SPEAK OUT**
- **SHINE OUT**
- **HOLD OUT**

One minute takeaway