

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Philippians 2:12-16**.

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; **13** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; **15** so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, **16** holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

- B. Only 2 seasons in IL, winter, and road construction! You see signs which read, "Men At Work."
C. God works in the lives of people (Phil. 2:13). But do we let things get in the way of His working?
...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
D. Let us get rid of the things that hinder God from effectively working in our lives.

I. **FIRST, WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION (Phil. 2:12).**

- A. Because of differing backgrounds, cultures, lifetimes, etc., we who come to X will have to do it in different ways. That is, we will have differing attitudes and sins that will have to be overcome in the one plan of salvation (Eph. 2:19-20).
So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,
B. It is the same standard of holiness, and the one plan of salvation, but some will have to stop lying, others stop stealing, while others may have to come out of unbelief. Different kinds of sinful things will have to be removed as we conform our lives to the pattern God desires.
C. Therefore, while we watch others work out their own salvation, we are working on our own. Let us not be guilty of pre-judging each other in what we think needs to be done to be right with God. We mature at different rates and times.
D. Let us be encouraging to one another in trying to be godly people. God is working with and on each one of us. If we spend our time being critical, and unsupportive, we may be getting in the way of God working in others' lives.

II. **SECOND, DO ALL THINGS WITHOUT COMPLAINING (Phil. 2:14).**

- A. As God continues to work in this congregation let us be patient w/one another. We usually want immediate results, but in most cases God doesn't (Rom. 2:4; 2Pet. 3:9).
(Rom 2:4) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?
(2Pet 3:9) The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
B. Example: Sing the song "He's Still Working on Me."
C. Sometimes we complain and grumble about others because things don't always work out the way WE WANT them to. But this doesn't mean that God isn't working (Hab. 1:5; 1Cor. 10:13; Rom. 8:26).
(Hab 1:5) "Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days-- You would not believe if you were told.
(1Cor 10:13) No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.
(Rom 8:26) And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

- D. We also complain because we are not being glorified. God is to be glorified when people turn from sin and do right (Mt. 5:16).
“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”
- E. Lastly, we sometimes gripe and complain because it is easier to find fault than to build up. Remember, God is at work!
- F. Children can tear down in 5 min., what might take hours to make or build (Eph. 4:29).
Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.

III. **THIRD, PROVE YOURSELF TO BE INNOCENT AND PURE (Phil. 2:15).**

- A. Xianity is a full-time job. Frankly, if a Xian lives like he/she should, proving themselves to be innocent and pure in such a work there will be no time to do anything else.
- B. Proof of one’s innocence and purity is found in actions. Faith, repentance, and confession are all expressed in actions (Jas. 2:26; Mt. 3:8; Heb. 13:15).
(Jas 2:26) For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.
(Mt 3:8) “Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance;
(Heb 13:15) Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.
- C. A church that is busy looking-out for lost souls is too busy to be looking-in at one another. Stop looking at each other, God is working and start looking out and around for lost souls.

IV. **FOURTH, HOLD FAST TO THE WORD OF LIFE (Phil. 2:16).**

- A. This is better rendered as “hold forth” in keeping with the metaphor of Paul, in being the lights of the world.
- B. Let us not get caught up into sin ourselves or caught up into others sins. In doing so we shall not be able to convert others with the word of God (Rom. 16:19).
For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore, I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil.
- D. One does not have to have a knowledge of sin to be against it.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Remember, God is working in the lives of people in this congregation.
- B. Do not slow His work and your spiritual growth.
- C. Let us be concerned with one another, but not to the point it pulls us down too (see Gal. 6:1).
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.