

Living a Life of Joy

#5 Philippians 2:12-18

Be Lights in the World

Joy of Showing Forth Jesus Christ

Sunday, May 4, 2008

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Turn in your Bible to Philippians 2:12-18 Follow along as I read...

- 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,
- 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- 14 Do all things without grumbling or questioning,
- 15 that you may be blameless & innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked & twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
- 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
- 17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad & rejoice with you all.
- 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

This week has been great. I ran across the cure for injured backs like herniated disks. It is a cream--works great

You rub it on before you go to bed & in the morning your back is like new—guaranteed for 1 year.

This stuff is so good we've set up a booth in the foyer. You can get yours for only \$79.95 a tube.

Some of you know that no matter how hard I try to sell this stuff; it will not sell, will it? Why?

It is because my message doesn't ring true with my experience... I still have an injured/sore back.

To encourage someone to want something, they must see that it works... does what you say it does.

This is Paul's simple message in Phil. 2:12-18==the message of the gospel is a radical message.

It says that sinners can be radically reborn...become new creations and are set free from sin.

It says those who trust Christ to save them are forgiven of all their sins & personally know God.

But the only way that message will ring credible is if our lives line up with what we say is true.

Otherwise, people simply will not see the Jesus we say we know, trust and love.

Last week we saw that Christ followers magnify Christ by...

1. Humbly Receiving Grace 2:1
2. Humbly Relating with each 2:2-4
3. Humbly Living As Jesus did 2:5-11

2:12 Therefore... In light of Jesus' example of living...

This morning, God wants to speak to you about Three Important Issues...

1. Complacency is so common!
2. Complaining is so natural!
3. Coasting is so easy!

God speaks into each of these three issues with a simple, yet powerful exhortation.

To experience the mindset of Christ: joyful humility of obedience...

1. **Work OUT as God Works IN:** Cooperate & partner with God's purpose in saving you (12-13)
2. **Zip It:** Stop grumbling so Jesus can shine through you (14-15)
3. **Lean Forward:** Keep walking with Christ though you may suffer for it (16-18)

Since Complacency is so common...

I. WORK OUT AS GOD WORKS IN: Cooperate with God's purpose in saving you

WHAT? Daily choose to cooperate with the Spirit as He moment by moment applies God's saving power.

It doesn't mean: work for your salvation. Salvation is a gift from God because of grace--not earned.

Rom. 4:5

Eph. 2:8-9

Phil. 3:9

Does mean: work out...mathematician doesn't work a problem just half finished but fully finished=answers
farmer doesn't just plant seeds & walk away; works the field up to the harvest=finishes it!

Implies: 1) Growth, progress...moving to full completion—Christ-likeness!

2) Participation—our cooperation with God...He has a part & we have a part!

your own salvation... salvation is personally experienced...not as a family, city or nation!

Salvation has three aspects: past, present, future...

Phil. 1:6 '...He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus.'

1. **Past:** I was saved...justified...saved from God's righteous judgment against me because of my sins.

Justification=legal term, means to be declared legally righteous.

The moment we trust Jesus as Savior, God declares us legally righteous: 100% accepted by Him.

- Rom. 5:1** *‘Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus...’*
2. **Present:** I am being saved...sanctified...saved in a progressive way from sin’s power/rule over me.
Sanctification: progressively made to be more like Jesus in my life by the power of the Spirit.
 Moment by moment yielding/trusting of the Spirit to enable us to be and do what God wants.
Rom. 8:4, *‘in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.’*
- Rom. 8:13** *‘...if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.’*
3. **Future:** I will be saved...glorification...saved from the presence of sin completely
Glorification: future event in which God will transform my body to be like Jesus’ glorified body.
Rom. 5:9 *‘since therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God’*

HOW? *Cooperate with the Spirit...knowing that a lot is at stake—not making but manifesting it is real!

It doesn’t mean we are to be afraid of God in the sense that He hates us and wants to clobber us.

God wants to be intimate with us...but we can’t be intimate with someone we are afraid of.

It means to see the absolute importance of working out your salvation...cooperating with Him.

Do you see the seriousness of your partnering/cooperating with the Spirit?

Those saved by God’s grace through faith in Christ alone WILL keep believing & live differently.

If you have true saving faith, you will trust Christ & make progress—not perfection but will grow.

If you don’t continue to trust Christ to save you...or your life is not changed: never did trust Christ!

WHY? *Cooperate with the Spirit expecting HIS ENERGY to be at work: move you--to want & to do.

God is working in every Christ follower.

1. God is the reason we make progress. God is the source of our progress. AND

2. God has chosen the means of this progress to include us! We are partners not just passengers!

Col. 1:27b-29

1 Cor. 15:10

Phil. 4:13

What does God’s ‘energizing’ enable and empower you to do? What’s His purpose to energize you?

1. to will... To want to do God’s will for His glory & our joy

2. to work... To be able to do God’s will in His strength

Application: The Christian life is NOT one of passivity but of active submission.

It is NOT ‘letting go and letting God’ but ‘letting go and trusting/partnering with God to do in/through you’

Since Complaining is so natural...

II. Zip It: Stop grumbling--so Jesus can shine through you

WHAT? Don’t grumble about anything! Don’t be an arguer!

‘Grumbling’=to be a complainer, to be dissatisfied, to be discontent, to be a ‘nitpicker’, point out small stuff

Grumbling seems like a small thing ...not big deal! Not so! Grumbling is a very big deal to God.

Ex. 14:11 *Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die. Pharaoh’s army*

Ex. 15:24 *And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? No water*

Ex. 16:2 *And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses... No food*

16:8 *Lord has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him...*

Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord.

Ex. 17:3 *But the people thirsted there for water and the people grumbled against Moses... No water*

Ex. 32:1 *Up make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses...where is he? No Moses*

Num 11:1 *...people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes... Not content*

Num. 11:4 *...oh that we had meat to eat... No meat*

Num. 12:1 *...Miriam/Aaron spoke against Moses because of Cushite woman he married Not fair*

Num. 13:27 *...how long shall this wicked congregation grumble against Me? No way*

Num. 16:3 *...assembled against Moses...why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly Not fair*

Num. 16:41 *...congregation grumbled against M/A-You have killed the people of the Lord You’re blame*

‘Questioning’=to argue or to dispute. It means to be in conflict, and it is the outflow of grumbling.

Grumblers cause questioning/arguing/disputing...

We all grumble. We all do it, often are not aware of it. Ask, “Do you think I’m a grumbler/complainer?”

If yes, say, “Yes, you have a problem with this. You’re a complainer. You’re a grumbler.”

WHY? Refrain from grumbling because it keeps you from shining Christ.

...that you may be blameless in the midst... shine as lights in the world

Grumbling discredits the Gospel of Christ! Grumbling puts a covering over the light of Christ in us!

Grumbling makes us like everyone else! Grumbling is contrary to GRACE & treasuring of Christ

Gospel: is a message of grace--we didn't deserve any of this but God still lavished upon us.

If God never did one more thing for me, I have more than I could possibly ever imagine deserving.

If we believe that's true, how can we grumble? Either we do not believe it or we're totally selfish.

Christ followers ought to be characterized by thankfulness/rejoicing not grumbling/questioning.

'*blameless*'=accusations don't stick.

I can't control what people accuse me of, but I can control whether those accusations stick.

Blameless is a word that means without impurity, which is used to describe pure metals.

It means that we have pure hearts—pure motives. In other words, we are “children of God above
'*innocent*'=unmixed, unadulterated, pure, sincere

'*above reproach*'=free from blemish

'*in the midst of a crooked & twisted generation*'=not hiding out in a fortress BUT with people to reach them

World is crooked/twisted...

'*Shining as lights*'...

Matt. 5:14

Application: What comes out of your mouth has a huge influence on others. It also reveals your heart!

What is filling your heart?

Since Coasting is so easy...

III. Lean Forward: Keep walking with Christ even though you may suffer for it

WHAT? *

16 *Holding fast*=hold up a banner: Hold Jesus & His Word up & say 'This is word of life'

so that in the day of Christ: when Jesus returns

I did not run in vain or labor in vain: I want my life to count & I want you to be there also.

I want the investing of my life in you to have 'stuck'

17 *I am poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith: I may die here in Rome=OK*

Image is that of adding a drink offering to the main offering...my life is a small thing

I am glad... rejoice with you all My joy is made full/complete when I know you are making progress.

Acts 20:24 Paul wanted to advance the gospel; and if their faith is coming alive in them=GREAT JOY!

18 *Likewise...* Live to advance the Gospel even if it costs you your life!

Be glad in Christ...living for the sake of the Gospel...God's kingdom on the earth...Rejoice!

We tightly hold onto those things we think will make us happy— that we think will bring us joy.

But often these things become the barriers to experiencing true joy.

We're selfish because we think somehow our selfishness will bring us joy.

I've got to look out for myself...control my own happiness; if I let go of that, I have no hope for joy.

So we're selfish. And that creates disunity. It creates conflict. It creates grumbling. And it never leads to joy.

When I die to self & see others also as important...leads to reconciled relationships, unity, thankfulness, joy!

What is our VISSION/MISSION as a church: *to treasure Christ & love people for God's pleasure & our joy by inviting and equipping people to become devoted disciple-makers of Jesus Christ.*

What does it mean to treasure Christ? love people? invite people to come to Christ? to equip them?

It means to be... so enraptured by Jesus' glory, greatness, grace & our union with Him that we willingly, joyfully and sacrificially do whatever it takes to live in unity, as teammates to point people to Christ!

It means to be...so secure in God's love for us in Christ & transformed by His love that our greatest joy is to be a empty vessel that God pours Himself into & an available channel for Him to live through for others.

It means to be...so freed from shame & fear that instead of cowering in God's presence...we delight in being in His presence and ...