

Working out Your Salvation

Philippians 2:12-13

Phil 2:12-13 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.

Salvation like creation is an act of God making sinners acceptable to God.

It is God taking a sinful life, one separated from Him & bringing that life in fellowship to Him thru Jesus Christ. Faith in God's provision, His son Jesus Christ-death on cross-burial & resurrection--there is no other provision for salvation... **Salvation math is 1 cross + 3 nails = 4 given**

Opra Winfrey, according to Time Magazine, is one of the 100 most influential people in the world. When an audience member stated *Jesus was the only way of salvation* Opra said '*One of the biggest mistakes humans make is to believe that there is only one way. Actually, there are many diverse paths leading to what you call God...There couldn't possibly be only one way...Does God care about your heart or whether you called His Son Jesus?* God is not arbitrary as some make Him out to be but He's precise **He grades on the cross not on the curve** no matter what the gospel according to Opra might say--or any religion--**Mormon guys**

Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we **must** be saved."

Saved from the three P's. **Penalty** of sin--death. **Power** of sin--slavery. The **Presence** of sin—future in heaven at Christ return.

Col 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.

Salvation is a gift of God to all who receive it. All have sinned, the wages of sin is death, the gift of God eternal life, Jesus is our ransom or propitiation - **1 Jn 4:10** *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

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Needed is *repentance*--1st words of John Baptist & Jesus—repent of sin.

Opra kind of thinking....*Many roads to God...God accepts a good heart...Salvation is not only Jesus, God is not that strict----Repentance begins in the mind and heart. Paul what gained is dung. *Me-Randy Tong**

* Once saved, how much of salvation is **God's** part & how much is **our** part?

* Is it **all** of God & **none** of us?

* Is it a **half** & **half** proposition?

* Does God **start** the work & He looks to us to **complete** it?

There are two extreme positions! The **first** is the person who feels they need to work for their salvation--never rest--Never feel secure in it. Never feel they've done enough to be saved. If asked *are you saved* '*I hope so, I'm trying*' but not '*I know so, I'm trusting*'.

The **second** is the person who, as a **child**, made a profession of faith & baptized, or as **adult** went forward at a BG or Harvest crusade & had a emotional experience & never progressed any farther. They don't talk like, act like, live like a follower of Jesus. They float along w/ the *tide of life* whichever way the crowd takes them they go. They are like *Heb 2:1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.* *Lady Clairol Christians*

Paul declares there is God's part & our part— '*you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only*'. *Paul knows it's easier to **preach ten sermons than to live one**.* The Christians at Philippi were worthy of imitation. They lived their belief 24/7. Not just when Paul or others were around. **Daniel Webster 'My greatest thought is my accountability to God.'**

*Some people want to follow Christ but only as **advisors**.* They only obey to the point that it not infringe on what *they* want to do. They make a show of salvation. When around Christians they act Christian--jargon, smiles, hugs, hallelujah's-Amen's. Around world act like the world.

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Illus daddy why are you so different at church. Hypocrite is one speaking thru mask—Greek plays w/ false face.

A good principle to live by: What we are unwilling to do when around Godly people—Billy Graham, Chuck Smith, don't do when out of their presence. *Eph 6:6 Not w/ eyeservice as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. We are never out of God's sight.* How we act on vacation, out of view of those we know. Business trip in another city, w/o accountability to Christian peers. HS off to college.

A changing pattern of discipleship has developed in the 21st century. Christian growth is much like the developing of children since the 1960's. Where a new emphasizing on a child's self esteem rather than a child's character became the priority. *Nouveau* system of psychology pushed this concept. It jumped from moral development to cultivating self-worth—reinforcing positive feelings about the child.

Same has become true in much of the church today. Feel-good sermons, tell you what you want to hear about yourself no matter how untrue it might be from God's perspective. Instead of Christ-like character it's self-love, self-improvement, self-worth & self-esteem. *Love neighbor as self so work on loving selves.* "God's accepts you no matter how you are living your life".

The true focus for the child should be others not self. Respect & honor for authority. Giving preference to others in honor *Greatest in kingdom is servant.* To esteem, respect & serve others brings w/ it maturity in the way you see yourself.

A child needs to feel guilt, shame & remorse when they do wrong. Psychology idea that adults should only criticize the act & never the child, lets the child distance himself from the deed, & by doing so never take full responsibility for their actions. This philosophy develops anti-social behavior in adulthood. *David doesn't separate the deed of sin from the sinner himself.*

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Ps 139:20-22 For they speak against You wickedly; your enemies take Your name in vain. Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies NKJ

Some of our preaching today gives a false view of God & mans relationship to Him. People think anything goes w/ God-He loves & approves of them no matter what. They can live like the devil & it's ok.

Mal 2:13-14 "And this is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. "Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

Isa 29:13 And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote; (RSV)

They lived contrary to what they professed to believe about God--in contrast to Philippian believers. Be consistent. Remember you are never out of God's sight. He is watching. **Chuck Jr.** God is your biggest fan-- is watching and rooting for you to do right in His sight.

The term Christian was one of derision! A label given by those who persecuted believers, saying they are like Christ, Christian. So to take the name is to say my greatest ambition in life is to live like Jesus, that when others see me they see Him. **2 Cor 5:9 Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. Lit make it our aim-bring to pass.**

Because of this Paul tells us to '***work out your salvation with fear and trembling***'. Carry to completion, endure to the end, work until job is finished. Infers free will--**we want to, not we have to**, we choose to see our salvation to the finish line.

Once saved there is a work only the saved person can accomplish. Not to work, brings into question the reality of salvation we say we have.

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Paul is likely thinking of his own salvation journey as he urges others w/ theirs. Paul was working out his own salvation when he said **1 Cor 9:26-27** *Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.* He repeatedly reminded believers *'fight the good fight of faith'* **1Tim 6:12**, *'watch over your souls'* **Heb 13:17**, *'be on guard'* **Acts 20:28**, *'be diligent about His calling and choosing you'* **2 Pet 1:10**, *'be careful how you walk'* **Eph 5:15**.

Paul tells of his own struggle to work out his salvation *'I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ'* **Phil 3:14** *extreme exert energy*

God rebukes casual faith, the cruise control Christians, those not pressing in as Paul did—**HoHum believers—not excitement in salvation or grieved over sin** **Zeph 1:12** *"And it will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit, who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good or evil!'"*

God rebuked King Joash--God who delivers & looks for those to work thru.

II Ki 13:18-19 *Then he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground," and he struck it three times and stopped. So the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed it. But now you shall strike Aram only three times."*

Fear and trembling not a slavish, cringing fear that leads to torment *'For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.* **2 Tim 1:7** But rather *a wholesome, serious caution (Vincent) 'A nervous & trembling anxiety to do right' (Lightfoot).* Fear can be a guard & defence against evil. *M.H. 'Trembling for fear lest you miscarry and come short. With that kind of anxiety which one has who feels that he has an important interest at stake, and that he is in danger of losing it.' The fear we are to casual in our faith.*

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A self-distrust, always on guard of the deceitfulness in our heart. Alert to & appalled by the power of inward corruption. Hurt over things dishonoring God.

Maturity is hard work, it takes commitment & struggle. My part is needful for God to complete His work of grace in me. *'Believe as if you had no power, work as if you had no God.'* Vincent's word studies of the NT.

For it is God who is at work in you, both to will & to work for His good pleasure.

I do my part in response to Gods unconditional commitment to me. He can't fail! Ever invest in sure thing? I've invested in sure losers. You can't loose w/ God!

First-price paid is so great--1 Pet 1:18-19 *knowing that you were not redeemed w/ perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers but w/ precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished & spotless, the blood of Christ.*

Second-God can't lie-Heb 6:17-18...*God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed w/ an oath, in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us.*

Third-Given a pledge & power--Eph 1:13-14 *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Fourth-It is God's prerogative to bring it to pass—*What God proposes God disposes* Isa 46:9-11...*I am God and there is no one like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; Calling...the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.*

God's work in us produces an effect upon us, which is **to will & to do His good pleasure**--things that please-not displease—We are never led contrary to His word. *Spurgeon 'The direction in which the arrow is flying prophesies the target in which it will be fixed.* We are God's garden planted w/ His spiritual DNA.....so our job is to cultivate it.