

## Philippians 2:12-18

### Work out because God works in

**Verse 12 So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

You must take the Bible in the context of the Bible!

Work Out: Katergazesthai - Idea of bringing to completion.

Go on until the work of Salvation is fully achieved in you. No Christian should be satisfied with anything less than the total benefits of the Gospel.

Fear and Trembling: This is the attitude with which Christians are to pursue sanctification. It involves healthy fear of offending God and righteous awe/respect.

**Verse 13 For it is God who is working in you, enabling you both to desire and to work out His good purpose.**

Working: Energein (verb) - 1) Always used of the action of God, 2) Always used of *effective* Action. God's action cannot be frustrated, nor can it remain half-finished; it must be fully effective.

Philippians 1:6: I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

He will bring His work to completion

Enabling you both to desire and work out His good purpose It's only by God's work in our lives that we would have first, the desire, and second, the ability to work out His purpose. God's purpose is not based on emotions, because those change with circumstance and with the seasons of life, but it's built on the commitment to see something through to the end.

Work OUT because God Works IN

"When Paul urges them to 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, he is not suggesting that they could achieve their own salvation through the quantity or quality of their work. Rather, he is suggesting that there should be an out-working, a translation into word and deed, of the inward experience with Christ." Herschel H Hobbs

It's because of God's faithful and effective work in our lives that we are able to work OUT our Salvation in reverence.

**Verse 14 Do everything without grumbling and arguing,**

Grumbling and Arguing: Gongismas - denotes the misuse of sound. "You have lost the notes to the song and can only make noise" It basically means that you're not using sound correctly.

Where does grumbling and complaining come from? It comes from a focus on yourself and your own circumstances. Usually is the result of thinking something is unfair, uncomfortable, or disappointing.

**Verse 15 so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world.**

Blameless: Life that cannot be criticized because of sin or evil

Harmless: or "Innocent" describes a life that is pure, un mixed, and unadulterated with sin.

Without Fault: Above Reproach. Have a bullet-proof reputation

Crooked and Perverse Generation: The language conveys how severely the generation has deviated from the Truth and from God's Word.

Shine like stars: Live as Children of Light

Paul sets up a very stark contrast in this verse between the Christ-followers and the rest of the generation. If their actions did not match their claim to follow Christ, if they were grumbling and arguing, there would have been no contrast between them and the rest of their generation and their reputations would not have been bullet proof, but as a wet paper bag: limp, weak, and easily torn.

**Verse 16 Hold firmly to the message of life. Then I can boast in the day of Christ that I didn't run or labor for nothing.**

Holding Fast: Holding Forth

This refers to believers' holding out or offering something for others to take.

Word of Life: the Gospel. By their lives, the Philippians were actually holding fast to the Gospel and offering it so others can take it up.

Is Paul being prideful? His view of himself is explained in the next verse.

**Verse 17 But even if I am poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.**

Sacrificial System

Poured Out: This refers to the drink offering that accompanies sacrifices.

Sacrifice: Actual offering

Service: Accompanies the offering

The sacrifice is necessary while the drink offering is secondary. Comparing his life as a drink offering thus puts his circumstances second to their act of faith.

**Verse 18 In the same way you should also be glad and rejoice with me.**

Joy: used to describe Paul's feelings about being a part of their offering. He urges the Philippians to feel the same way.

In verses 14-18 Paul is elaborating on Verses 12 and 13 by explaining how we work out what God is working in us.

He urges us to make sure that our actions are congruent with our decision to follow Christ so that we can experience the full effects of the Gospel and stand as a contrast among the world around us.

As we stand as a contrast, we hold out the Gospel to others with our very lives.

Even if we are poured out as a drink offering, we should rejoice and not complain or grumble!

It seems that this is all dependent on our lives being a contrast to the world around us, so how do we do that?

We HAVE to live lives that are set apart; lives that create a tension between how we live and how the rest of the world lives. This tension is created in the decisions that we make, big or small, and the way we treat others.

How do you treat girls?

How do you treat guys?

How is your dating relationship different?

Are you living together?

Are you playing with boundaries, trying to see how far you can go without going too far?

What kind of things do you talk about in the empty spaces?

What kind of things do you think about or look at in the empty spaces?

Is your character really different than people who don't follow Jesus?

Do you do the things you say you're going to do or are your commitments fully of empty promises?

If any of these areas are not different from the rest of the world, then your life is still in dire need of the Gospel. As God convicts you and works in you, you need to work these things out.

### **Bigger Picture**

Reverently work out as God works in, without misusing sound, so you can stand as a contrast with a bullet-proof reputation, holding forth the Gospel with your lives, and joyfully putting your circumstances second to whom you're pouring into.

### **Bottom Line**

Work OUT as God works IN!