

Philippians

CHAPTER 2:12-18

Lesson 7

Having described to us the humility and self-denial of Jesus Christ, Paul exhorts believers to apply these truths in a practical way. Jesus Christ gave up the glory of heaven to live amongst man, in a body of flesh, to give us **the example** that we might walk as He lived. He died and rose again to give us the *power* to walk as He lived. Appreciating His example should provoke a change in behavior. God has done His part. We have ours. Philippians 2:12-18 addresses the behavior that should result from *bowing the knee* to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Observation: Read Philippians 2

1. In chapter two, Paul used the key word *therefore* six times. This word indicates that the author is basing what he is writing on previous information. List each use of the word *therefore* in chapter two and record what you think each *therefore* is based on.
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2. Paul had several reasons to write to the church in Philippi. In chapter one, we saw Paul's desire to reassure them of his well-being even though he was *in chains*. Based on all we have because of Christ Jesus, list the instructions in chapter two given to the recipients of the letter and to all believers. Following the example below, record the verse reference in parenthesis after each instruction.
 1. Be like-minded, having the same love (verse 2)

Read Philippians 2:12

1. In Philippians 2:12, Paul uses a thought similar to what he wrote in Philippians 1:27. What is that thought?
 - a. Sometimes our behavior changes when someone we respect, or someone with authority, is present. Why do you think Paul emphasized that their behavior should be the same whether he was present with them or absent from them?

2. What instruction does Paul give in this verse?
 - a. The first impression one might get in reading this instruction is that somehow our salvation is dependent on us doing something to secure our own salvation. Scripture will not contradict Scripture. What do we know from the following verses?

John 3:16

John 6:28,29

Ephesians 2:8,9

1 John 5:13

3. Notice, Philippians 2:12 does not command us to work *for* our own salvation, but to work *out* our own salvation. The phrase *work out* means to carry out to the goal, to carry to its ultimate conclusion. What is the ultimate conclusion of our salvation? See Romans 8:29.
 - a. The believer is to allow God to work the salvation process of sanctification into his life. We are to allow God to continue to change us to make us more like Jesus; more like the behavior exemplified in Philippians 2:5-8. We are to do this with *fear and trembling*. We are to do this with an awareness of how easy it is to fall into temptation and sin. What would happen to the believer who decided to *work out his own salvation* without *fear and trembling*?

4. One paraphrase of this verse states, "It is your own; therefore manifest it - work it out." How would you paraphrase Philippians 2:12?

5. The words *your own* is a reminder that we are individuals; God has a distinct and special plan for each of our lives. Record something God is showing you personally about *working out your own salvation*.

Read Philippians 2:13

1. In Philippians 2:13, we have the Divine enablement to *work out* the instruction in verse 12. What is it?

- a. How does this encourage you?

2. *For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him.* (Philippians 2:13 NLT). Note that God not only gives us the *power*, He gives us the *desire*. How have your desires to please God changed as He has worked in your life?

3. From the following verses, what is God able to do in the life of the believer?

Ephesians 3:20

Philippians 4:13

Read Philippians 2:14

1. Write the command in Philippians 2:14.

- a. Define *complaining and disputing*.

2. How does *complaining and disputing* prevent the unity Paul called for in the beginning of chapter two?

3. How does Paul describe those who are causing *envy, strife, and divisions* (1 Corinthians 3:3)?
 - a. *Envy and strife; complaining and disputing* are characteristics of unbelievers. Unity is a characteristic of a believer. Record, from John 17:21, Jesus Christ's goal for unity.

4. What does an attitude of *complaining and disputing* say to others?

Read Philippians 2:15,16

1. Record, from Philippians 2:15, the result of *doing all things without complaining or disputing*.
 - a. Notice the contrast of *blameless and harmless* and *crooked and perverse*. Walking *blameless and harmless* causes one to shine as a light in darkness. Describe ways a Christian's life shines in a dark world as a star shines in a dark sky.

2. How would *doing things without complaining or disputing* cause believers to *shine as lights*?
 - a. How does shining for Christ encourage others to be drawn to Him?

 - b. Think of someone specifically that you want to shine before this week. What steps are you going to take to accomplish this?

3. According to Philippians 2:16, we are to be *holding fast the word of life*. This means we are to hold forth or offer salvation to others. How would focusing on presenting the message of salvation keep a person in an attitude of *working out their own salvation*?

Read Philippians 2:17,18

1. Paul's anticipated response to the Philippians' *shining as lights* was to *rejoice in the day of Christ that he had not run in vain or labored in vain* (Philippians 2:16). According to Philippians 2:17, how did Paul describe his life and attitude toward serving the Philippians?
 - a. Describe this kind of a life and attitude as it would be exemplified by someone today.

2. *So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us* (1 Thessalonians 2:8). How does this speak to you about the importance of sharing not only the message of the gospel with others, but your life also?

3. Earlier in this second chapter of Philippians, we were reminded of the example of Jesus Christ. What is the supreme example of love given to us by Jesus in 1 John 3:16?
 - a. We are exhorted in this verse to love in the same way. Few of us will be asked to die for another. What do you think this means in practical, every day choices?

4. In Philippians 2:18, Paul reminds us that this kind of rejoicing is not limited to himself. What does he write?
 - a. This is a challenge to all Christians. Keeping in mind the theme of *rejoicing* in this letter to the Philippians, scan back through chapters one and two. What are some of the reasons Paul rejoiced?

1.) How does this challenge you regarding what causes you to rejoice?

Review: Read Philippians 2:12-18

1. Explain what it means to you to *work out your own salvation*.

2. What encouragement do you derive from Philippians 2:13?

*(Now may the God of peace) make you complete in every good work to do His will,
working in you what is well pleasing in His sight,
through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

- Hebrews 13:(20a), 21

PHILIPPIANS

Chapter Two - Observation Worksheet

¹Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you 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 who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. ¹⁴ Do all things without complaining and disputing, ¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶ holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. ¹⁷ Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me. ¹⁹ But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. ²⁰ For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. ²¹ For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. ²² But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. ²³ Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. ²⁴ But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. ²⁵ Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; ²⁶ since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. ²⁷ For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. ²⁹ Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; ³⁰ because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.