

Lesson Notes: Philippians 2:12-13 (NIV based)

READ: Philippians 2:12-13, with vv.5-11 for context

v.12

Does this verse mean that we have to work for our salvation - that we must be good and do good in order to earn salvation?

- - NO ! This verse says "continue to work out your salvation" - meaning to fully act upon, to live accordingly to the salvation God has already given those who believe.

Why should we continue to work out our salvation with "fear and trembling"?

- - We are weak and unable on our own to permanently establish having a Christ-like "attitude" comprehensively, which essentially is godliness. (v.5)

- - This deficiency is because we are corrupted by our sin nature, and by that sin nature we are hindered from properly possessing a Christ-like attitude and fully pleasing God. (Romans 6:12-14)

- - Therefore, we have to work at being godly, work at developing and maintaining a Christ-like attitude, in order to live in accordance to the salvation we true believers have been given.

- - And because we are personally aware of our own wretched sinful condition, we should have a fearful and even trembling healthy respect for God, and for His extreme holiness, and for His unfathomable love, mercy, and undeserved favor (grace) that He extends through salvation to each person who properly believes. (see John 3:14-18)

vv.12-13

Why should we "continue to work out our salvation"?

- - God has placed that responsibility on us and it requires our active cooperative involvement - a commitment to what we are suppose to do and simultaneously a reliance on the work that God is doing in us.

v.13

If God is working in us who believe, then why do we need to do anything to work out our salvation (or live in accordance with the salvation we have been given)?

- - We have a freewill choice to live however we want to, even after we have personally become a true believer.

- - God will not force any person or true believer to live in godliness, or "to [be] and to act according to His good purpose".

- - God is, however, working to persuade and convince us believers to live according to His good purposes, which He will then provide assistance for us to do once we change our mind and the direction of our life away from fulfilling our sinful desires and towards complying with what He wants.

- - So therefore, in order to live in accordance with the salvation we have been given, we must work in cooperation and in collaboration with God and with the work He is doing in our life.

- - Essentially, God is working to break us of our own stubborn and rebellious self-will, and then bring our will into submission to His will.

What motivates God to do this work in us?

- - In His compassion (love), God has our good in mind, and our long-term well-being in mind.

- - And in His omniscience (all-knowing), God knows what is best for us, in the present and in the future - even more than we think we know or can even fathom.

- - And in His omnipotence (all-powerful), God has the means, power, and knowledge to effect good change in us.

- - And in His infinity (unlimitable (by time, etc.)), God has determined a good purpose and plan for each of our lives.

- - And in His grace (lavishing undeserved favor upon us), God is actively working to pour out blessings on us.

- - So by His nature, God is perfectly capable, and desirous, and motivated to work His good purpose in us so that we each earn great eternal blessings that He wants to pour out on each true believer. (cf. Ephesians 1:18; 1 Timothy 4:8)

MAIN POINT: What would you say is the main point in these verses?

IMPORTANT SUB-POINTS: What are some other important points God is making here in these verses?

APPLICATIONS: What applications can you think of for how we should respond to the concepts in these verses?

PERSONALIZED APPLICATIONS: From these verses, what do you think God wants you to learn, or know, or remember, or put into effect in your life? How are you going to do that?

For those of you who are true believers, are your will and your actions oriented towards living accordingly to the salvation God has already given you?

And are you cooperating and collaborating with God and with the work He is trying to do in your life? If so, are you cooperating and collaborating fully with God, or just in areas of your life that you are comfortable with?

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File name: Philippians2_12-13-LessonNotes.____ (.htm, .doc, .pdf)

Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document

Source: www.BelieverAssist.com

Updated: December 12, 2016