

## #5 Philippians 2:13

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**Verse 2:12** (work out your salvation with fear and trembling)<sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

Paul tells us to work out our salvation; he means both, individually and also corporately, as an independent body of believers, sacrificially loving and supporting each other; that is how those, outside, will come to know that we are His disciples and, so, want to be one, with us because true love is here.

Jesus said, 'By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.' He meant that we love each other within the Body of Christ. He did not mean, in any sense, that we love outsiders, that we love and serve our city, that we love the downtrodden; He meant one thing: they will know you belong to Me because you love each other and, so, this is the family they will want to be part of.

Yes, we are to love those outside, even our enemies... but that is not what Jesus meant and it is not, at all, what Paul is always stressing which is loving and serving each other, within the body, especially those who are difficult to love. Today's false teachers have turned this around, saying we must love our city; their reason is clear: they desire the love of the World, their acceptance but Jesus said, 'They will hate us!

When someone sees a family, a father and mother with several children of varying ages who truly love and support each other, even if they don't have much money... that is a family they wish they had been a part of or could be a part of. When we see a rich family that pays no attention to each other but are really good at giving to charity... no one wishes they were part of that family. One family looks like the World, the other family looks like Jesus Christ.

Loving and caring for each other within the Body: that is what Paul meant by, 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling.' Why? Because it is God who is at work within you, individually and corporately, and He is the One who is working out His will within you. He is the One who is putting within you the desire to do what is right and He is the One who is working within you to accomplish that which He has given you the desire to do. Why with fear and trembling? Because it is God doing the work and you really don't want to stand in His way or fail to work with Him in what He has so plainly commanded us to do. He will discipline us if we fail to walk like disciples... nobody ever wants discipline; ***it is so much easier when we, ourselves, do the work of changing ourselves from the outside in as He does the work of changing us from the inside out.***

God commands us to love each other; He is the One who puts, within us, the desire to love each other but then, even more importantly, He is the One who moves and works within us to accomplish His will; He is the One who, within us, is doing the action that proves the loving '...He is not far from each one of us;<sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and have our being...' Acts 17:27

We can say that we love but if we do not do the action, the work that corresponds to true loving, loving the unlovable or the less lovable... we must give Him the opportunity to do the loving through us. We must put ourselves in the place where the love needs to be proven out.

'If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?<sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother, and sister, also.' 1John 4:20

'And ***let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,***<sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.' Heb 10:24

Love does not come naturally or easily... sure, we can easily love our children up until they become teenagers or we can easily love our husband or wife until the honeymoon is over and the real him/her comes out... then comes the need for sacrificial love, laying our lives down, denying our own selves to love as Jesus does.

How do we know if we are loving sacrificially, allowing the Lord Jesus Christ to love through us? If we can easily love that person, if we find that we want to do what needs to be done... then we are loving... and that is good and fine. But...if we find ourselves asked to do something for someone... if we really don't love that person naturally, if we really would rather not have anything to do with him, or her... we don't even want to be around them but we can clearly hear God, within us, telling us to go do that action, and we do, with the

attitude of submission and grace... then we know that we are loving sacrificially, that the Lord Jesus Christ is loving through us. What gains eternal rewards? Anything and everything we do for the glory of God.

We can do that sacrificial act of love with an attitude of resentment, of being miserable while doing it and we will have done a good work but we will not have done something for which the Lord Jesus Christ will say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' That act wasn't done for the glory of God.

Our attitude is everything in doing good works that correspond to love. That's why Jesus says, 'If you want to be great in God's kingdom, learn to be the servant of all... from your heart. We can do that good work with an attitude of loving submission or we can do that work with the attitude of pride... 'I'm better than this, I'm better than you but I'm doing this good work for you... aren't I really great!!' No glory to God: no reward.

If God is moving us to do something difficult... to sacrificially love someone, to do the works that correspond to love... He will never tell us to do something we cannot do nor will he tell us to do something for which He is not the one at work within us to do it. Think about it! What a great thing! To be given the wonderful opportunity to allow the God of the Universe to step inside of me (actually, He's always there) to give Him permission, to welcome Him to do some difficult work for which He will then reward me far beyond my imagination... just for allowing Him to do that thing which really wasn't that difficult anyway; I just didn't want to do it... but I did and with the right attitude... I can't wait to see the marvelous, fantastic unimaginable eternal reward that He has reserved in Heaven... for me... and not for me only but for all who are faithful to do those difficult works of love. 'It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.'

"You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup> Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. <sup>44</sup> And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. <sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.'" Mark 10:42

**Verse 15:** 'Do all things without complaining and disputing,'

Do everything with the right heart and attitude, the attitude of submissive, loving service, as unto the Lord your God who will never fail to richly reward every act of service unto Him.

Why do I always talk about our eternal rewards? Simple... because God's Word always does: 'And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> **knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward** of the inheritance; **for you serve the Lord Christ.**' Col 3:23

Don't want to do it... do it anyway while you 'Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. <sup>3</sup> For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.' Col 3:2

You died; you no longer even belong to yourself; you are no longer yours: 'Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price; **therefore glorify God in your body** and in your spirit, which are God's.' 1 Cor 6:19

Again... just imagine... when you are asked to do that seemingly difficult thing for that unlovable person... you have just been given the invaluable opportunity to glorify, in your body, the God of the Universe, the same God of the Universe who never fails to unimaginably reward those who choose to glorify Him and His Name.

If we really believed that... we would be spending every spare moment rooting around, trying desperately to find the next opportunity to show love for the most unlovable Christians we could find; we would be putting ads in the paper: 'Wanted: unlovable person to whom I can show love! Send resume of unlovableness.' But the truth is, God is always giving us those opportunities if we will but open our eyes and hearts to be available and He is the one who will always give us the strength, desire and ability to accomplish what He has set before us: 'For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* loyal to Him.' 2 Chron 16:9 So just do it without complaining or disputing.

**Verse 16:** '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,'

This doesn't say, 'do this to become children of God' we already are that and we can never become unthat but he is saying, 'do this, 'Do all things without complaining and disputing, so that we become ever more increasingly blameless and harmless children of God so that we shine ever more brightly in the darkness in this

'kingdom of darkness.' It is only as those who are lost in darkness see a light shining, if it is bright enough to see, no matter how far away it is, they will invariably do whatever they must to make their way through the darkness to come to that light.

Imagine you were completely lost in the desert at midnight... complete blackness, no stars or moon. Imagine you see a far away light... would you choose to lay down and die, eaten by scorpions and coyotes, or would you begin moving toward the light, swaying your arms before you so that you don't bump into anything and shuffling your feet so you don't trip over something... but you will begin to go to that light, no matter how far.

That is what happens to those who are now lost in the kingdom of darkness. Most are blind and deaf so that they will never see or hear the Gospel but for some, a few, God will open their eyes and they will see a light if there is one shining near them and they will begin to move toward that light. You are light; that's indisputable but are you shining in the darkness around you? Or have you covered your light so as not to invite persecution? That is what many of us do. We are more than willing to let our light shine when we are among other lights; children of the light don't persecute one another for being light but the World does.

That is one of the things which Jesus meant when He said, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Matt 10:33

'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.' Isa 9:2

'...that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' Heb 2:14

'Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, <sup>4</sup> and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." <sup>5</sup> **For this they willfully forget:** that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, <sup>6</sup> by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. <sup>7</sup> But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same Word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 2Pet 3:3

On the other hand, there are those in the World, in these last days, people even in the Church but not really believers, in fact, many will be 'ministers,' TV types: ' But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. **And from such people turn away!** For of this sort (many TV types) are those who creep into households (through TV or their church) and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, <sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 2 Tim 3:1

Paul and Peter tell us of the times we are living now: many will be apostatizing within the Church, both leaders and followers and we are not called to try to 'rescue' them; from those we are to turn away, from those who are willfully choosing to turn from the Truth. Certainly, there are those within such churches and ministries who have been deceived but would want the Truth; to those, of course, we are to shine as light and truth. They tell us that there will be many evil people in the World; they are not our 'ministry.'

'For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, <sup>21</sup> because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. <sup>24</sup> Therefore **God also gave them up** to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> who **exchanged the truth of God for the lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. <sup>26</sup> For this reason

**God gave them up to vile passions.** For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. <sup>27</sup> Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. <sup>28</sup> And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, **God gave them over to a debased mind,** to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, <sup>30</sup> backbiters, **haters of God,** violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; **who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.'** Rom 1

Our first ministry is unto the Lord Jesus Christ, His honor and glory; our next ministry is to our family; our next ministry is to all those within our own local body of believers, our own church and finally, our last ministry is to the World and only then as God sends us, or brings them, into each other's sphere of life.

Faithful teachers must teach and declare who we are, in Christ, and the reality of the Last Days, the perilous times in which we live. Paul said, 'But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all men. <sup>27</sup> **For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.** <sup>28</sup> Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. <sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.' Acts 20:24

**Verse 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. <sup>18</sup> For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.'

Paul was given the task of revealing most of the Church's doctrine and he was also given as our finest example, after the Lord Jesus Christ, to follow and emulate; he wrote: 'Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.' 1Cor 11:1 Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write that.

Here, then, is God's commission to every one of us: that our heart's desire be that we are poured out for the glory of God, that our lives be spent, drained, consumed and completely wrung out, every drop, emptied of self by the time He comes for us. And that is never accomplished by some big, holy deed; it is only done through little by little, bit by bit, one step at a time of laying down our lives, denying our flesh and loving and serving each other, within the body of Christ.

**Verse 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.'

Paul was far away from Philippi. He was in prison in Rome. The only way to get information to or from someone was over land or sea, by horse or boat; everything took at least as long as our own postal service... sometimes, even longer.

In Rome, Paul was concerned for the spiritual state of this Philippian church. Timothy was with him as his apprentice and helper. He was training Timothy to do what he, himself, had always done. We don't have any letters from Timothy but we have the two which were written to him.

One of the great things about Paul was that he was faithful to train up other men for ministry. He had them around him, they wrote out his letters for him and most importantly, he was instilling in them proper, true doctrine. He knew that very soon, after his death and, in fact, even while he was still alive and teaching, wolves, false teachers, workers of evil, messengers of Satan, would be infiltrating the Church in the attempt to derail the faith. We see this clearly in his letter to the Colossians and others. Those Paul trained up for the work of the ministry would carry on, guarding the flock, for some years after his death.