

Work Out Your Own Salvation

With Fear and Trembling
Philippians 2:12

Introduction

1. In today's culture the subject of salvation is very desirable—often talked about, but sorely misunderstood.
2. Many do not know why they need salvation, many do not know what to do to be saved, and many do not know how to live as those who have been saved.
3. But the Bible deals with all of these matters in great detail.
4. We are commanded in Phil. 2:12 to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.
5. In this lesson we will be learning how to do this very thing.

Discussion

I. We Must First Be Saved

A. All men need fear and trembling

1. Ps. 111:10: “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*” Prov. 1:7: “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.*”
2. God is a consuming fire: Heb. 12:28-29 Why?
 - a. He is a righteous God, holy in all His ways.
 - b. Because of sin He is going to bring judgment upon the earth.
 - c. If we have any respect at all for Him as our Creator, if we have any perception at all of His judgment, then we will have a healthy respect for Him as our God.
 - d. This is the conclusion of the Hebrew writer: “*...serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.*”
3. Many do not fear God, nor do they respect Him.
 - a. They want their own idea of love.
 - b. They want peace without righteousness.
 - c. They want to feel as if all is well, therefore they do not respect God, they do not respect His word, they do not respect the judgment that is to come.
4. But concerning them it is written, “*In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (2 Thess. 1:8).
5. Do you fear the Lord? Do you respect the fact that His righteous judgment is coming and that that is why Jesus died on the cross—to save you and me from sin?
6. If you believe these things, then will you work out your salvation with fear and trembling?

B. Before we can work out our salvation, we must first obey the gospel.

1. We must hear the truth, not the emotional hubbub preached among the denominations: Mark 16:15-16
2. We must believe in the one true gospel: Acts 8:12
3. We must repent of our sins: Acts 3:19
 - a. This means a determination and commitment of heart to turn away from our sins and turn to the living God.
 - b. Failure to work out our salvation often comes from a failure to repent.
4. We must confess Jesus as Lord and Christ: Rom. 10:10
5. We must be baptized, by which our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16) and we are made disciples of Christ (Matt. 28:19).
6. From that point on we must commit to being continually faithful.

II. The Saved Who Have Fallen Away

- A. Phil. 2:12; Heb. 12:28-9 directed to those who were already saved.
 1. This means that it is possible for those once saved to lose their salvation.
 2. Heb. 10:16: “*If we sin willfully after we have received the truth...*”
 3. Rom. 8:13: “*If you live according to the flesh, you will die...*”
 4. Sadly, this describes many people.
 - a. New Christians who are not devoted to serving the Lord.
 - b. Christians who just become lazy and stop working with God’s people.
 - c. People who obey the gospel, but refuse to cast off their sins.
 - d. Many other scenarios in which people simply stop serving the Lord, no longer live as members of the church.
- B. How to work out your own salvation in fear and trembling.
 1. If a person in this situation truly fears the Lord, then they must repent of their sins.
 2. Repentance mentioned in obedience to the gospel—but is an ongoing process.
 3. When Christians living in sin turn to God, their repentance must be manifest through their actions.
 - a. 2 Cor. 7:10-11—diligence, clearing of yourselves, etc.
 - b. If you truly fear the Lord then will you not do all to make your life right with Him?
 4. To the Laodiceans, they were neither cold nor hot, Jesus said, “*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent*” (Rev. 3:19).
 5. What would have happened had they not zealously repented? “*I will vomit you out of My mouth*” (3:16).
 6. To those who were in sin, James wrote, James 4:7-10.
 7. Are you willing to repent and work out your salvation in the fear of the Lord?

III. All Christians Need To Have Fear and Trembling.

- A. Phil. 2:12 written to Christians who were not in sin.
 1. Vs. 12: The exhortation is for them to continue to be diligently working for the Lord.

2. Vs. 13: As they learn the will of God and do it, God is working in them, therefore they are to have a healthy respect for Him as they do their work so as to not enter into disobedience.
3. Vs. 14: When we fear the Lord we will not be complaining or disputing, but in all things seek the unity of God's word.

B. 1 Cor. 10:12: Learn not to be overconfident.

1. Not underestimate the power of sin and temptation—lest we fall.
2. Rather walk humbly before God, acknowledge own weaknesses.
3. Remember dependence upon Christ for salvation, and not own works.
4. Not confident in own wisdom, but meekly submit to God's instructions for all things—James 1:19-21.

Conclusion

1. Do you fear the Lord?
2. If you have not yet obeyed the gospel—remember that Jesus died so that you can be saved from the judgment to come. If you believe in Christ then will you not also obey His gospel in godly fear?
3. If you are a Christians that has fallen away, remember that unless you repent and humble yourself before God, your soul is in danger. If you truly fear the Lord and want to work out your salvation, the first place to begin is repentance.
4. If you have repented then let is be seen by clearing yourself of your sins, as did the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 7:11.

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