

LESSON 8

Philippians 2:12-18



This Little Light of Mine

OPEN IT

1. What is your favorite hobby? What do you enjoy most about doing it?

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Philippians 2:12-18

2. What does Paul want the Philippians to do in his absence?
3. What does Paul say God is doing in the Philippians?
4. What does Paul say will make him proud?
5. What is Paul's attitude toward these Christians in Philippi?

Day 2

TODAY'S THEME: WORKING OUT YOUR SALVATION

Read Philippians 2:12-13

Paul starts this out by saying, "Therefore," which means we need to look back at what he had just said in order to find out what that therefore is there for! Paul has just encouraged the Philippians to look to and learn from the example of Christ—that even though Jesus was equal with God, He emptied Himself and became a human and even became obedient to death on a cross. So, in light of that, Paul urges the Philippians to live out their lives in obedience as well, even though he isn't with them physically. And his encouragement is to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

It can be easy to twist this verse into saying that we have to work to earn our salvation, but that isn't what Paul is teaching at all. Did you notice what he didn't say? Paul didn't say, "Work for your salvation," but instead he said, "Work out your salvation." This means that Paul is assuming that the people he is writing to already are saved and he's urging them to live their lives differently because they are already saved!

The important thing to remember here is that he reminds the Philippians that God is at work in their lives. It's like Paul is saying, "Because God is working in your life, your works should look like it!"

6. Why do you think Jesus' example should cause us to live our lives differently? Is it enough as a Christian to just say that you believe in Jesus?

7. What dangers are there if we forget that Paul is talking to people who are already Christians?

8. What do you think it means to work out your salvation with fear and trembling?

Day 3

TODAY'S THEME: LETTING YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Read Philippians 2:14-18

Paul kind of answers what he means when he says that we should work out our salvation. He says that we should do all things without grumbling or disputing, being blameless and innocent and letting our lights shine by holding fast to the word of life. So we know that working out our salvation has very practical applications. Sometimes we only let our salvation be understood as more of an intellectual pursuit rather than an entire lifestyle. And to be honest, that's pretty easy, because as long as we are learning it means we must be doing ok. But the second your salvation becomes a lifestyle, it demands a change of how you actually live out your life.

I want you to imagine that you have been placed in a pitch-black room. There isn't even the slightest trace of light in the room and you've been asked to find the door to get out. But, before you're left alone, you're told that there are mouse traps placed all over the floor. Now, how are you going to go about finding the door? I'd imagine pretty carefully. You might even stoop down to brush the floor with your hands to make sure you don't step on a mouse trap, because if there is anything worse than stepping on a Lego, it's probably stepping on a mouse trap.

Now, let's say as you are brushing the floor to make sure your next step is safe, someone turns the lights on and you can now see every detail of the room. You know where the door is and the location of every mouse trap on the floor. Is your effort to find the door going to look any different? I'd hope so! Now you can walk around with confidence and certainty because you know exactly where to step safely and where you are going.

I think that's the picture of what it should look like for us to live our lives differently as Christians—that we can live so differently because we have been taken from darkness to life, from fear to confidence, from worry to certainty when it comes to our eternity.

9. How are you working out your salvation?

10. What does grumbling or arguing have to do with working out your salvation?

11. How does working out your salvation encourage others around you?