



9/3/26

Welcome to summer in September. 🌞 I always think that the weather is a great reminder that God is sovereign and I am not. Hahaha. I hope you're staying cool. Praise God for air conditioning!!!

Blessings,
Jonna

Philippians 2:12-18

Paul has just explained that a Kingdom Outpost follows Jesus' example of humility and unity, seeking to honor others and not just SELF. Next, he's going to talk about what that looks like in our personal relationship with the Lord, in how the world will see us, and even how far we're willing to go to see the Lord glorified through us. It's a big calling! O Lord, teach us how valuable this calling is! As Hebrews 5:14 encourages us, O Lord, help us to have our "powers of discernment TRAINED by CONSTANT PRACTICE (of the word) to distinguish good from evil." The world teaches that we should "follow our hearts." The world is wrong! Please help us to follow You... wherever You may lead.

Vs. 12-13 ~ "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

Therefore... since you are called to follow the example of Jesus in genuine humility... continue your obedience to the word even if no one is there to see it. Paul was telling them, "Make sure you're not obeying the word based on MY presence, but based on God's presence."

He said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Though we are a church... we are made up of individual believers. Each believer needs to be pursuing our relationship with the Lord "with fear and trembling." What does that mean??? It means... don't take your salvation lightly. This is the most important thing in my life. I would not have salvation without Jesus. The path I would be walking on would lead to eternal death, eternal separation from God... from all that is holy and good... from all love, joy, and peace. This fear and trembling is

being constantly grateful for what God has done for me.

Working OUT my salvation is understanding WHO it is that is working IN me. "For it is GOD Himself who works in you." It's not the presence of a mere man who works in me. It is God Himself, Creator of the heavens and the earth who spoke the world into existence, who has all authority and power. Do I get that??? He works in me so that my work can actually accomplish something. He works in me so that I actually WANT to accomplish something for Him... HIS pleasure.

When I'm ignoring the Lord, I'm not working out my salvation... I'm working out my selfish desires that have no lasting value. I'm treating Him as though He owes me MY pleasure! Nothing good comes from that. I need to be in CONSTANT practice of honoring Him and His word in true relationship, and enjoying the sweet pleasure of knowing that my Father is pleased with me. O Lord, this is what I want! Please help me to see the incredible treasure I have in knowing You and having You work IN me because the Holy Spirit dwells with me. You are ALWAYS with me!

Vs. 14-16a ~ How does my humble, continuous relationship with the Lord affect the world around me? Let me not forget... I do what I do because I think what I think because I want what I want because I worship with worship... "Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life..."

I do... ALL things without complaining or arguing. Ughhhhh... I have some fear and trembling work to do.

Because I think... Whatever it is, God is greater

Because I want... to honor and please God

Because I worship... the Lord

OR

I do... complain and argue

Because I think... Obviously, God doesn't see what's going on here

Because I want... comfort and ease

Because I worship... SELF

O Lord, let my heart be the first one!!!

I'm always convicted when I'm at a funeral and the person giving the eulogy says, "In everything, I never heard her complain." I so want that to be me! But I am complaining right now about the fact that I complain.

I cannot minimize God's call to stop complaining and arguing. If I try to justify it, I will not be working out my salvation with fear and trembling. I need the Lord to help me learn what it is to "let no corrupting talk come out of your mouth, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear" (Ephesians 4:29).

How do I do this??? I have to "hold fast to the word of life." Continuously. Yes, it's hard. But it's the word of LIFE!!!

What does this look like? By not complaining and instead trusting the Lord's plan... and by not arguing but pursuing peace and mutual upbuilding (Romans 14:19), no one will have a reason to blame me. No one will find fault in me. They may look. They may conjure up something against me, but before the Lord, my heavenly DAD, I will know that I'm pleasing Him... and that's what matters. The world will also know that He's my Dad.

This world around me is crooked and twisted, and it's becoming more crooked and twisted. It's going to get worse before the Lord comes and makes it better. If I'm not holding fast to the word of life, I will get sucked into the trappings of this crooked and twisted world.

But when I hold fast to the word of life, I shine as a light to the world... in hopes that some will see the light of God in me and come out of the darkness into His marvelous light. If I'm not working out my salvation with fear and trembling, this won't matter to me... but that's sticking my head in the sand. That's living in the darkness. O Lord, help me to continually pursue You with everything I've got! Let any apathy or avoidance be a wake-up call to my soul!!!

Vs. 16b-18 ~ "so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me."

I want to be like Paul. He truly thought no cost was too much if it meant seeing God glorified and people following the Lord with the same passion he had. This is the beautiful thing about following the Lord... He has room in His heart for ALL His kids. There's no need to fight for position. We all matter to Him. And because of that security in the Lord and in the hope of eternity with Him, being "poured out as a drink offering" so that other people could grow in faith made Paul rejoice and be glad! That kind of sacrifice is only possible when I am truly working out my salvation with fear and trembling.

It's the mindset of a pregnant woman who is having a really hard pregnancy. She knows that she's gonna hold that baby in her arms one day, and all the pain is worth it. Jesus had that mindset with me when He endured the cross for the joy set before Him. I pray that I will have

that mindset with others.

Paul said, "I want you to rejoice and be glad with me, too." Why? Because he wanted them to see the bigger picture. Yes, it was hard to watch this man that they loved sit in prison. But it was "serving to advance the gospel," and that made it worthwhile.

Father, please help me to have the same mindset as Paul. Help me to continuously pursue You and Your word so that I get to enjoy all the treasures of knowing that You're working in me, and I get to please You. I'll know I'm growing more and more in faith as I see my complaining and arguing decrease, and my rejoicing and gratitude increase. Please make it so.