

SALVATION

OUR GIFT, OUR STEWARDSHIP



OUR SALVATION IS A GIFT FROM **GOD**. **WORKING** OUT OUR SALVATION
IS WHAT **GOD** CALLS US TO DO WITH THIS WONDROUS GIFT.

1. Working out our salvation is a spiritual discipline in which we, by God working in us, make the most of the gift with which he has blessed us, 2:12-13.

- (Philippians 2:12–13 ESV) 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**, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Stewardship is the careful and responsible management, protection, and oversight of something entrusted to one's care.

A. Working out our salvation is not working for our salvation.

- i. For the one who works his wages are counted as what is due—death.
 - (Romans 4:4–5 ESV) **Now to the one who works**, his wages are **not counted as a gift** but as his due.
 - (Romans 6:23 ESV) For **the wages of sin is death**, but **the free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- ii. For the one who does not work but believes his faith is counted as righteousness.
 - (Romans 4:5 ESV) And to **the one who does not work** but believes in him who justifies, the ungodly, his faith is **counted as righteousness**.

B. We need to understand that Scripture does not contradict itself and be willing to humble ourselves and do the hard work of learning discernment to avoid foolish discussions based on human opinion.

Discernment is the ability to think as God thinks; being able to judge and understand things clearly, wisely, and deeply; seeing what is true beneath and beyond the superficial.

C. We learn discernment by rightly handling God's word with the purpose of learning and receiving God's meaning and intent as opposed to what may seem to be true to us.

- (2 Timothy 2:14–16 ESV) Remind them of these things, and charge them before God **not to quarrel about words**, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. 15 **Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved**, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth**. 16 But **avoid irreverent babble**, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness.

Quarrel ... λογομαχέω [logomacheo] – to fight over words; to quibble about words or the meaning of words; to wrangle about empty and trifling matters.

Babble ... καινοφρονία [kenophonia] – empty discussion, discussion of vain and useless matters; prattle; idle or foolish and irrelevant talk.

- i. The person who successfully learns to rightly handle God's word is the person who values and desires what God says above all else.
- ii. The discerning person who is learning the mind of Christ will see and value the sharp distinctions in Scripture.
- iii. The undiscerning, lazy thinker blurs the clear differences, the lines drawn, in Scripture to fit his rationalizations, flawed thinking and personal opinions—sometimes inadvertently, sometimes purposefully.

D. Working out our salvation is an intentional act of submissive obedience in the context of a keen awareness of the presence and holiness of God that reveals the genuine nature of one's faith.

- (Philippians 2:12a ESV) Therefore, my beloved, **as you have always obeyed**, so now, **not only as in my presence but much more in my absence** ...

Obey ... ὑπακούω [hupakouo] — to hear under, be obedient to, submit to.

- i. Paul commended them for their faithful obedience in his presence.
- ii. But now he directs their attention to discipline themselves in the broader, deeper context of obedience in the presence of God.

E. Genuine faith is obedient faith.

- (Romans 1:4b–5b ESV) Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship **to bring about the obedience of faith**.
- (Romans 16:25a, 26b ESV) Now to him who is able to strengthen you **according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ ... according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith**.
- (Acts 6:7 ESV) And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, **and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith**.

F. The concept of working out our salvation may seem paradoxical but it needs neither our approval nor our

comprehension to be a valid, biblical concept.

G. Working out our salvation is something we are called to do, and are only able to do, as we are bowed in deep reverence in the presence of our holy God.

- (Philippians 2:12b ESV) ... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
- (Genesis 32:30 ESV) So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."
- (Judges 13:22 ESV) And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God."

Fear ... φόβος [phobos] – fear, dread, terror; that which strikes terror; reverence; a feeling of profound respect for someone or something, often a deity, conceived of as fear.

Trembling ... τρόμος [tromos] – a trembling or quaking with fear; with fear and trembling, used to describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements.

H. Working out our salvation is God working in us that we might to do his will and work for his pleasure.

- (Philippians 2:13 ESV) ... for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Our salvation is a gift from God. Working out our salvation speaks of our holy responsibility to honor God with this wonderful, gracious gift.

I. God is the one working in us that we may with him accomplish the work of our sanctification.

Work ... κατεργάζομαι [katergazomai] – to accomplish; to put something into effect entirely or thoroughly; to perform, accomplish, achieve; to work out from which something results.

2. Examples that also help explain the concept of working out our salvation ...

A. Make the best use of our time on earth ...

- (Ephesians 5:15–17 ESV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

B. Invest our lives in the harvest of the Spirit ...

- (Galatians 6:7–8 ESV) Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever

one sows, that will he also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

C. Pursue the kingdom of God and his righteousness as the first priority in our lives ...

- (Matthew 6:33 ESV) But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- (James 3:17–18 ESV) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
- (Hosea 10:12–13 ESV) Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the LORD, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you. 13 You have plowed iniquity; you have reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your own way and in the multitude of your warriors.

3. Believers in Jesus shine as lights in the world and hold fast to the word of life, 2:14-16a.

- (Philippians 2:14–16a ESV) Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 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, 16 holding fast to the word of life.

A. We who are of genuine faith are called to work out our own salvation and are described in this text as those who shine as lights in the world.

- (Matthew 5:14–16 ESV) You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
- (Ephesians 5:8 ESV) ... for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

B. We who are of genuine faith are called to work out our own salvation and are described in this text as those who are holding fast to the word of life.

C. We who are of genuine faith and are called to work out our own salvation have been given simple, clear instructions as to what should be our attitude and our manner of approach in communicating our thoughts to and about one another.

D. Fact #1: We will struggle with the challenge of working out our own salvation with each other and within ourselves.

- (James 4:1–2a ESV) What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.

E. Fact #2: That does not excuse us from the clear instruction—we are to do all things without grumbling or disputing, i.e. complaining, arguing.

Grumbling ... γογγυσμός [goggusmos] – a murmur, murmuring, muttering; a secret debate; a secret displeasure not openly avowed; a complaint uttered in a low and indistinct tone.

Disputing ... διαλογισμός [dialogismos] – doubting, arguing; the thinking of a man deliberating with himself; questioning.

F. We will struggle as we by the grace of God strive to become everything God wants us to be but there is never an excuse for our sinful behavior.

G. Those who grumble and complain are not living as, nor will they be seen by this twisted generation as, blameless and innocent children of God.

- (Philippians 2:15a ESV) ... that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation.

H. Those who profess to know Christ but grumble and complain will be seen in the eyes of a watching world for what they are — blemished and morally defective.

Crooked ... σκολιός [skolios] – curved; perverse, wicked; unfair, surly; dishonest, immoral, or evasive.

Twisted ... διαστρέφω [diastrepho] – to distort, turn aside from the right path; perverse, depraved; corrupt.

Even the perverse and wicked of this world will be able to see the inconsistencies and rightly accuse the grumblers of ... "the pot calling the kettle black."

CONCLUSION: *What an opportunity* — Our lives poured out as a wonderful sacrifice ...

4. Working out our salvation is our opportunity to pour out our lives as a drink offering symbolizing our commitment to a complete, irreversible surrender to God's will in our lives, 2:14-16a.

- (Philippians 2:16b–18 ESV) So that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17 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. 18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
- (Romans 12:1 ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

A. We pour out our lives as a sacrifice for the fruitful field of righteousness in the lives of others.

B. We make this sacrifice in view of the day of Christ.

C. We do this with shared gladness and joy.

D. Patient farmers sow righteousness and wait for the Lord to produce his fruitful field in themselves and in their brothers and sisters.

- (James 5:7–9 ESV) Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.
- (James 3:18 ESV) And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.