

“Work Ethic”

Philippians 2:12-18

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All Scripture quoted from ESV unless otherwise noted

The central thought of v.12-13 is in the simple phrase, “**Work out your own salvation.**” (v.12)

- Not, “*Work FOR your own salvation*”
- κατεργάζομαι – has implications of bringing something to completion
 - Being told you have to work for your salvation is not good news

You are called to a **Work** ethic, not a “**Works** ethic”

- This is not a call to spiritual muscle-building; this is a call to access and employ spiritual power for maximum impact (See 2 Peter 1:5-8)

Work out your salvation with **Integrity** (v.12a)

- Paul had been with the people of the Philippian church and had seen their obedience to God’s will and leading; now he’d gone away – how would they respond now?

*In the absence of Godly **Leadership**, a steady and uncompromising commitment to personal spiritual growth becomes even more important.*

- Don’t obey God because you think you’ll let someone else down; obey God because you love Him, and because you want to honor, serve, and please Him. Obey God because He is worthy of the utmost honor and obedience

Work out your salvation with **Passion** (v.12)

- You are not called to judge someone else’s work here; you are called to live a life worthy of the high calling you have in Jesus Christ
 - R. Fausset describes the fear and trembling of v.12 as “not slavish fear, but trembling anxiety not to fall short of the goal”^[1]

Work out your salvation as if you were afraid to fail at it.

- *This is a fear that **Motivates** rather than intimidates*
 - A fear of failing to live up to the name of Jesus that is stamped on your soul; a fear that affirms that while you do have a responsibility in this, ultimately, you are always dependent upon the power of God at work within you

Work out your salvation with **Submission** (v.13)

- v.13 – “**For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**”
 - In today’s passage, you are told to work out your salvation while God is working in you
- Brings up the question of divine sovereignty and human free will, two doctrines that seem to stand at odds with one another. But in reality, they constitute a tightly

woven fabric that the philosophies of this world have tried in vain to unravel, yet Paul makes no attempt to distinguish between the two.

God is the **Author**, and you are the **Actor** (v.13)

- God is at work within you, purifying the desires of your heart. But He is also at work within you, giving you the capacity to accomplish that which He calls you to do.

You're a work in progress, and part of that work is you, submitting to the Lord as He accomplishes His work in you. Another part is you putting your faith into action with integrity, with passion, and in submission. And like a coin, which has two sides that make up the whole, these two principles must peaceably coexist, for (a) God's working in you, and (b) your working out your salvation are both integral in achieving His good pleasure in your life and in the world today.

God **Delights** in the work of His Children.

[1] https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/jfb/Phl/Phl_002.cfm?a=1105001

DIG IN!

Here are some farm-fresh questions that will help you to personalize and apply this morning's message.

1. ***What was most surprising, unexpected, or helpful from today's passage/message? Why?***
2. ***What barriers to obedience have you observed, in your own life or in others' lives? Is there a simple solution to any/all of these? Are you sure?***
3. ***What are the dangers of being overly committed to either the doctrine of Divine sovereignty or the doctrine of human free will?***
4. ***How can you distinguish Godly desires from your own desires? List at least 3 ways to distinguish one from the other. (HINT: Frame these three ways as questions, such as, "How has this desire grown/changed over time?")***
5. ***Salvation is deliverance. What is it deliverance from? List a few things.***
6. ***Read through the book of Philippians this week. Are you seeing it any differently now?***
7. ***What have you learned through your personal time of Bible reading this week?***