

Philippians 2:12-18

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[0:00] Good morning. If y'all will turn with me to Philippians 2. Philippians 2. I don't know what it is about this morning. Maybe with family and friends that I haven't seen for a while in town.

But that singing was just especially special to me as we praise the Lord together. And I'm just thankful to be here this morning. So let's turn to Philippians 2. And we're going to be looking at verses 12 through 18.

I have to mess with Nathan a little bit. I feel like almost every time that I preach, he's not here. So he got the memo, so he stayed home, you know. So Philippians 2 verses 12 through 18. Let's go ahead and get into it.

It says, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only is 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. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent.

[1:12] Children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world. So that's our text this morning.

I feel a lot like Nathan did last week, that we have a really long way to go and a short time to get there. But with that, let's get right into it. I'm not quite cool enough to come up with an alliteration like Nathan would do.

But I do have five points. So here's how we're going to structure our study. They are why work, why work, secondly, our work, thirdly, God's work, fourthly, the work, and fifthly, Paul's work.

So again, that's why work, our work, God's work, the work, and Paul's work. So let's jump right into it with why work.

So anytime that we see the word therefore in Scripture, I think we have to really strongly pay attention to what came right before that word. Right before that therefore, right? We need to look back at the text right before what we've just read.

[2:39] And I considered doing a big overview of chapter 1 and that first part of chapter 2. But I think this therefore is most naturally tied back to right before what we got into. And so let's think about part of the text that we looked at last week for a bit.

So that was all about Christ's example of humility. And I'd like to read together verses 5 through 11 of chapter 2. So let's read those. It says, So what is this therefore referring to?

I think it refers to a couple of things. But I think firstly and primarily in this context, this example that Christ set for us, right? This great example of Christ. The perfect example of humility.

And then, of course, the sacrifice of Christ, right? As well as the new creation that we are in Christ. It's almost as if Paul is saying, You've heard me remind y'all to count others' interests above your own, right?

That's verses 3 and 4 of this chapter 2, right? You've just heard the perfect example of this, right? Our Lord's example of counting others' interests above our own. By taking human form.

[4:14] Humbling himself to the point of death. Even death on a cross for us. Not for anybody who deserved it. Just us, right? Dead, filthy sinners who needed a complete work of God.

To transfer us from the domain of darkness into his kingdom of light. Right? And this sacrifice that Nathan described so well last week. Our Christ denying himself.

Dying for us. While we were yet sinners. This is what comes right before our therefore. This is our in light of this. Right? The example of Christ. So why work?

Look to Christ's example. Right? Paul is about to call us to some really strong, really strong wording. Hard work. Because of the great example of our Lord. So let's take a step past that first word.

And get into our work. Our work. I say our work because these verses are directly tied to believers. The phrase, my beloved, makes that super, super clear.

[5 : 12] Right? That phrase should also remind us that these commands are not about to be just given by a harsh taskmaster. Someone demanding something of us. But from a God who loves us.

A Lord who has shown us exactly the right way to live. And is calling us to simply follow that. Right? And that should be our reasonable service as we understand his work more and more.

So he's talking to the beloved. Those who have been shown his wonderful grace. He's talking to people that have been made new creations in Christ. And those new creations really have the ability to do what is about to be asked.

Right? To walk in the good works that the Lord has given us to walk in. That's who he's talking to. He's talking to the church. Right? So I'm a public school teacher in Forsyth. For those of y'all that don't know.

Often a couple of my believing coworkers come to me. And they're just really frustrated with how their kids treat each other. And because I know they hold the truth. I try to remind them that you can't make dead fish swim.

[6 : 14] Right? You can't make dead fish swim. And they will say something, you know, sometimes snarkily back. That says, yeah, but if I bring a big wave of correction at them. Right? It'll make them float around a little bit.

And so they're, you know, looking like they're swimming a little bit. Right? Y'all get the point? Right? Even the lost of the lost can still have the appearance of good works. Right? But that's not who Paul is talking to here.

Right? He says, my beloved, the church. And this analogy, right? We are fish who are alive and have the ability to swim. And to us living fish who can swim.

Right? He's about to give some really intense commands. And now remember that those of us who are in Christ Jesus. We have the spirit of our Lord living in us. And he can give us, truly give us, the strength to truly obey.

Not just in appearance, but in heart. Okay? So then Paul says, as you have obeyed. Not only as in his presence, but much more in his absence.

[7 : 14] Paul is encouraging them not just to try to look to him, you know, for their continued sanctification. He's trying to get their mind off of him. Right? Whether I'm with you, whether I'm not with you. Right? Look to the Lord for the strength to battle towards sanctification.

Right? So you've always obeyed as in my presence, but even now much more in my absence.

Right? And then we see the reality that the Lord truly expects our holiness.

The Lord truly expects our holiness. Clay reminded me this week, we were talking about this text a little bit. About the verse where the author of Hebrews reminds us to strive for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

It's intense. Right? When I read this passage, another text that comes to mind is the passage where the Lord calls us to be holy as he is holy. Right?

These intense commands. Right? If we need to feel some intensity of our need for sanctification, there it is. Right? Strive for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Our Lord is holy.

[8 : 15] So we are also to be holy. Right? So Paul encourages the Philippians here to continue to obey and follow the Lord as they always have. And even more so now in his absence. And now let's get to that part of the passage that we've all heard so quoted so many times and we know so well.

The work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. This verse has been known to make people really uncomfortable.

Many of us may feel uncomfortable right now. People often accuse this verse of preaching works-based salvation. They might say, if we need to work out our salvation, aren't we earning it? Isn't it no longer a free gift? No longer an undeserved kindness? No longer grace? And then I might go to a passage like Ephesians 2 that we treasure so much. Right? And then I start reading verse 8. Right? For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not a result of work, so that no one may boast. Then they might be tempted to stop reading.

[9 : 16] Right? And go on about how the gospel is a totally free gift. A gift that could never be earned. That there is grace given to us so far above our understanding. They might go to an old hymn.

Right? The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell. The guilty pair bowed down with care. God gave his son to win. His erring child he reconciled and pardoned from his sin. Oh, love of God, how rich and pure, how measureless and strong. It shall forevermore endure the saints and angels song.

Last verse of that song. Could we with ink the ocean fill? And were the skies of parchment made? Were every stock on earth a quill? And every man a scribe by trade? To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry.

Nor could the scroll contain the whole. Those stretch from sky to sky. It's page 220 in the old red back hymnal. And I could go on and on and on and on. And they could too.

[10:12] Are these people correct? Yes. Absolutely. Salvation is totally a free gift. As Paul would say, if anyone preaches to you a gospel that says we need to add something to earn our salvation.

To play a role in it ourselves. Let them be accursed. That's what he says. However, does this mean that since we are saved totally by the Lord. Nothing of our own. That he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

Before we've done anything good or bad. That we now have no commands about the way we live. Paul says elsewhere, by no means. Right? By no means.

I think people that make that argument must have a little bit of trouble getting past verse 9 in Ephesians 2. Right? Let's go back and read Ephesians 2 verses 8 and 9 again. But then keep reading and flow with it into verse 10.

So picking back up in verse 8 of Ephesians 2. It says, For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing.

[11:10] It is the gift of God. Not a result of work so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works. Which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So notice what Paul, right? The same apostle writing both Ephesians and Philippians. Note how those flow together. Right? He is noting that after salvation, the Lord has good works already prepared for us beforehand for us to walk in.

He is saying that after salvation, right, we will have good things to walk in and bad things to put off, to neglect. Right? In the same way in our text today.

This is called working out our salvation with fear and trembling. This carries the idea of continually working. Continually working to bring something to fulfillment or completion.

And this concept is all throughout scripture. People often use the phrase to work out what God has already worked in. We'll define this idea a bit more in a few minutes.

[12:14] But first, I'd like to just help us note how clearly this concept is throughout all of scripture. And so I'm going to read quite a few passages that speak to the same idea.

So if you're writing down references, be ready. Here comes a bunch of them. So in our book that we're studying right now, Philippians 3 verses 13. Excuse me. Let me slow down a little bit. Philippians 3 verses 13 and 14. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6, 19. I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification. 1 Corinthians 9 verses 24 through 27. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things.

[13:18] They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly. I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

1 Corinthians 15 verse 58. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast and movable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1.

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. Galatians 6 verses 7 through 9.

Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 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.

And let us not grow weary of doing good. For in due season we will reap if we do not give up. Ephesians 4 verse 1. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

[14:21] Or all of Colossians 3, right? I could read that whole chapter, right? All the things that we could put off as God's chosen people and all the things we're called to put on as God's chosen people. Hebrews 6 verses 10 through 12.

For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work, and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness, to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 12 verses 1 and 2. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Guys, I have like six more, right? I could keep going, and I could keep going, and I could keep going, right? And I read those to drive home the point, right? This is super, super, super common throughout Scripture.

Right? So, so, so many passages. Okay? Right? Y'all are probably thinking of others in your head. Why didn't he mention this one? Right? Because there are so many that illustrate this concept of working out our salvation so well.

[15:43] Did y'all notice how active all of that wording was? So, so, so active in putting off sin and putting on righteousness. A huge part that we play in growing in Christlikeness, of working out our salvation.

We play an active role filled with so much effort. So much effort. In a couple of these passages, right, we heard the word sanctification. And realistically, I think I've probably tossed it around in my speaking already this morning.

And this is the passage, right, that, like, would most commonly be going to when you want to define that. Right? So let's define that. So a good old Wayne Grudem systematic theology definition for us this morning.

Sanctification, right? Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.

Isn't that what all these passages are talking about?

[16:51] Exactly what they're talking about, right? Us moving closer and closer to being free from sin. Putting off the old man. Putting on the new man. Moving closer and closer and closer to Christlikeness.

Right? Now, many, many, many of these passages that we read, I think, strongly focus on our part of sanctification, right? Our work. And our passage here does too.

And we'll get to God's work in just a minute. But I want to examine a couple words in this passage that talk about our working out our salvation. It says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Fear and trembling. At face value, that's exactly what it sounds like, right? A healthy fear of offending God and a righteous awe and respect for him. But let's delve a little bit deeper into those words.

These are intense words, right? Really, really, really intense words. These words that portray quaking with fear, right? As you realize your own weakness and the power that sin so often has over us.

[17:51] This fear carries the meaning of terror, dread, alarm, and yes, some reverence. This is a fear that leads to self-distrust. When we understand our own sinfulness, our own tendencies to sin and temptations towards sin, it's going to lead to some self-distrust.

This is a fear and trembling that leads us to strong action to fight sin well as we realize the magnitude of our sin and the magnitude of the holiness of our God. For example, this is a fear that

may lead us to a conviction to never be at our own home by ourselves if we know we have a temptation towards lust.

This is a fear that may lead us to a conviction to never be around alcohol if we know we would never stop drinking. This is a fear that may lead us to a conviction to choose to have fewer or lesser possessions than we could have financially because we know we'd have a temptation towards greed or idolatry.

This is a fear that may lead us to a conviction. This is a fear that, by definition, makes us take our sins seriously and never sweep it under the rug as if it doesn't matter. Steve Lawson makes this comment about this verse.

I think this is really good. He says, So we are to fight for Christ-likeness and fight to put off sin and fear and trembling as we understand who our God is.

[19 : 38] I feel like we've covered some ground already this morning. And so let's read back a little bit. So let's read part of these verses that we've been talking about for quite some time. So let's go back to the second half of verse 12 in Philippians 2.

So let's get into God's work.

So thirdly, God's work. Earlier, as we defined sanctification, we stated that sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.

Note that our definition included that is the work of God and the work of man. And the reason we say that is that's exactly what Scripture says, right? We can see that quite clearly in this passage. The first few times I'm guessing that many of us read this passage in our lives, if we didn't have much knowledge of how sanctification really works, it can seem a bit confusing. Like, wait? Like, what?

[20 : 40] Paul commands us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, but to will and to work for his good pleasure. So we're commanded to work because God is working?

Well, yes, actually, right? Exactly that, right? Sometimes I think that we forget that we have the Holy Spirit living in us, right? When Paul was calling out the Corinthians for living in rampant sexual immorality, he says in 1 Corinthians 6 verses 19 and 20, Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you whom you have from God?

You are not your own. You were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body, right? We see the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. We are his temple. Or think about John 15 verse 5. Jesus says there, I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. Right? So we see the analogy of the vine being Christ and we are the branches, right, to bringing Christ to all around us.

We see that as we are abiding in Christ, he, through his Spirit, also is abiding in us. We bear much fruit. Well, what are these fruits? These fruits are what we have read about a lot, right?

[21 : 51] These fruits are the good works that the Lord has given us to walk in that Paul mentioned in Ephesians 2. These fruits are the things we put on and put off according to Paul in Colossians 3. These fruits are the product of working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

And how are these good works being accomplished? Well, what does it say? God working in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure. So this willing and working for his good pleasure, it's not as if believers are mindlessly going around and suddenly end up with God changing them. Right? That's not how that works. Making them, you know, do certain good things and suddenly refrain from sins. But instead, God is constantly at work in us by his Spirit, through his Word, even through the encouragement of each other.

Right? To change our desires. To cause us to want to live in holiness. And because of that, to actually live in holiness. Right? We have to remember that apart from the vine, we can do nothing. Nothing at all. Right? So therefore, any good thing we do, any good motive we have, anything is by the Spirit of God working in us. Not some sort of goodness that we could somehow find in ourselves.

[23 : 08] Right? Think about Galatians 3. Right? The same way that we can't be justified by the flesh, we can also never be sanctified by the flesh. Right?

The Lord is working in us, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. And I'd like to remind us of what the will of God is for us.

Right? It's that we become more like him. Think back a few weeks to Philippians 1, verse 6. I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Or even the passage that we've referenced so often recently, and I think so often forever. Romans 8, 28 through 30. Right? And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good.

For those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined, he also called.

[24 : 06] And those whom he called, he also justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified. We reference that so often because it's so sweet. Because it shows where we are headed and how the Lord is working things for good.

And that good that he is working is our sanctification. Right? And he will bring it to pass. We are guaranteed that. If we are predestined, we are called, we are justified, and we are glorified.

And on that one day, right, at the day of Jesus Christ, according to chapter 1, verse 6, we'll be complete. Now, earlier we saw a bunch of passages.

Right? A bunch of passages. I could have read more and more and more. Right? That really emphasize man's work in sanctification. But now these passages, look at where all the emphasis is. You'll see how it's on God? God is ultimately doing the work to bring us to completion, not the efforts of our flesh. By no means let us ever, ever think that this means that we don't have to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

[25 : 10] Right? As we preached a couple weeks back, let us hate our own sins so much more than we hate the sin of others. So that then we'll work out our salvation with fear and trembling. We put off the sin.

And what do we replace it with? We can't just replace it with nothingness. We replace it with righteousness. Right? Abiding in the work of the Lord. The good things that he has prepared us beforehand to walk in.

I also want you all to notice how personal this text is. As your own salvation. Right? God working in you. Of course, Paul is writing to a church.

Right? For sure. And churches need to work out their own salvation. Why? Why? Because churches are people. Right? But I want you all to notice, even in this text in Romans, the Lord is working personally in us.

And what does it say about his willing and working? It's for his pleasure. His pleasure. Isn't that really incredible? The Lord of the universe delights in us.

[26 : 12] Delights in us. And how is that? That's in making us more like himself. He delights in us through making us more like himself.

Margaret and I are expecting our first kiddo at the end of May. And we're super excited and super terrified, but mostly excited. And I've wondered what will he be like.

You know? For me, personally, I'd be really excited if he likes playing music. You know, a guitar or a mandolin or whatever. Right? Maybe he'll like disc golf. Maybe he'll have a strong understanding that Georgia Tech is the correct football team to root for.

Or that 80s K10s are the best type of trucks. Right? But if Everett liked all of those things, I'd be glad for sure. I'd be really glad. But even more than that, I'd be glad if he follows our Lord.

I'd be delighted in that. Now think how much more our Heavenly Father delights in us becoming more and more like him. And with things that matter, a lot more than Chevys or Tech football, right?

[27 : 20] The Lord of the universe delights in our sanctification. And he gives us the grace to carry it out. Works in our desires and in our actions. And is working to bring us to completion in him.

And remember that he will complete this. This God who's telling us this is the Lord of the universe. He's not lying to us that he's going to finish it. He's going to do it.

All right. So we have to remember that Paul here is writing this letter to a specific group of believers. Who he could see, right, needed particular work in sanctification. And so he encouraged them to exactly that.

And so this will take us to our fourth point this morning. The work. The work. So let's reread verses 14 through 16 here. It says, So Paul has a couple of particular parts of work that he believes the Philippians need to be working on.

The first he mentions is doing all things without grumbling or disputing. Right. He is concerned about their murmuring, their muttering. Right. Their subtle, right, yet dangerous disapproval of others or other things around them.

[28 : 51] This is similar to the cause for unity that we've seen all throughout Philippians thus far. Right. If we're grumbling or complaining, right, we are sure to bring disunity. Right.

And if we're disputing, it seems that we're already part of some level of disunity. For many of us, it may seem really easy to avoid this in some context and much more difficult in others.

We might feel that we do a really good job at not complaining, you know, at work. But then when we come home, we might struggle with complaining about family members to our friends. Right. Or maybe the opposite. Maybe we seem to always think the best of our family and our friends.

But maybe we gossip to them about situations at work. Or maybe we even talk poorly about the music at church or the sermon. Right. Let's be careful with the way we talk about everything in all contexts.

Right. Paul reminds us to do all things without grumbling or disputing. So we need to check our motives. Why are we sharing something?

[29 : 51] Are we speaking with the person to correct or to complain? Is what we're disputing worth disputing over? Is it, you know, higher up on our tier?

Is it way lower? Is it a hill that should be fought over? Now, why does Paul say not to grumble and dispute? Look at verse 15. That you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation.

So, in other words, so that we are without fault. Right. That no charge can be truly leveled against us. And joining in with grumbling or disputing would certainly give some room for accusations against us.

Right. And then what's the why? Why do we need to be blameless and innocent? Notice how that's tied in. So that we can preach the gospel well. Right. In some of the verses we read earlier, I think it was in 1 Corinthians.

Right. We saw that Paul focused on his own personal holiness so that it would not disqualify his witness. Right. We should ensure the same.

[30 : 57] Right. So let's pick up again from verse 14 and read down to the end of 16 again. So do all things without grumbling or disputing that you may be blameless and innocent. Right.

So let's pick up again from verse 14. These verses make it so clear that we are to stand without blemish so that we look different.

Right. From the typical sin patterns that we see in our day as well, a crooked and twisted generation. It doesn't make any sense for darkness to shine into darkness. Right.

In order for us to shine, we must be something different. We have to shine as light or otherwise it's not doing anything. Right. Something with hope, something with the word of life and with lives that reflect the word of life.

Right. If we've got the word of life, but our lives don't reflect that, there's some sort of problem going on. Right. But our own personal holiness, our church's holiness or lack of it sometimes should never disqualify us in our sharing of the gospel.

[32 : 05] And lack of holiness does disqualify us. Right. If the world sees us living no differently than them, why would they want our savior? Sometimes I believe that the overall church culture in reformed circles has swung so far away from the idea of like share the gospel and when necessary use words.

Right. They've swung so far away from that, that we minimize the need of lives lived in holiness that validate the gospel. For sure. We always need to be preaching the gospel in words.

But people should also be able to see a difference in our lives. We should not look like dead fish.

Right. But truly living fish that are swimming around. Right.

So there's a lot of people. So there's discussion among scholars as to whether this holding fast or in some translations holding forth to the word of life is a better translation.

But I believe we could likely all agree that if we're truly holding fast and staying faithful to the gospel, we will truly shine as lights. Right. If we're holding fast to the gospel, we're going to overflow with

the gospel.

[33 : 24] Right. So let us do so. Let our personal holiness be validation of the gospel and not disqualification of the gospel. Let our personal holiness be validation of the gospel and not disqualification.

Now we see a shift in verse 17. Paul begins to focus on himself. It's shifted a little bit. Right. And so that will get us to our fifth and final point of the morning.

That is Paul's work. Paul's work. Paul really likes to write long sentences. Right. We know that. It's almost like, you know, Margaret has a sixth grader that always writes in wrong sentences.

But Paul's are meaningful, not just wrong. Right. So anyway, the sentence that ends at the end of verse 16 begins at the beginning of verse 14.

I know I've had us reread this a few times, but getting us in the word well this morning is the most important thing I could do. So I want us to again reread 14 all the way down to the end of our text and then we'll finish this out.

[34 : 26] So this is 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.

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. So we can immediately know that Paul is very invested in seeing these believers press on to the end.

So, so invested. He wants them to hold fast to the word of life so that in the day of Christ, he can be proud that he did not run in vain or labor in vain. He wants them to not grumble and to not complain because he would see that his ministry didn't really have that much of an effect.

If that's the case, right? He wants to rejoice in the Lord about the good works they're walking in, not to hear that they're struggling with their battle against sin. He's literally pouring out his life for them.

[35 : 32] He does not want that to be in vain. A drink offering was an Old Testament sacrifice where wine was poured on top of an animal sacrifice, right? As the wine evaporated, steam went up.

That symbolized the sacrifice going to the Lord. In this way, Paul's very life, his very soul, he's saying is being poured out for them.

It's being mixed with theirs. Their faith is the sacrificial offering and he is the drink offering. They are there together, battling against sin and battling to follow the Lord.

And as they see the grace of the Lord in each other, they are to rejoice. To rejoice in the sacrifice of Christ. To rejoice in Christ's work on our behalf. To rejoice in Christ's example of humility in becoming our sacrifice.

To rejoice in the new creation that he has made us. To rejoice in him truly bringing our sanctification to pass at the day of Christ Jesus. And to rejoice in him including us in this work.

[36 : 34] So because of Christ's great example of humility in his work on our behalf. We are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Knowing that it is our Lord working in us for his good pleasure.

And in view of that, let us share the gospel well with others. As we live lives that validate the truth of the gospel. And do not disqualify it. So in closing, I just have just a couple of questions for us to think about today, this week.

The first one is, are you working out your salvation with fear and trembling? Are you working out your salvation with fear and trembling? And the second one is, what could disqualify your proclamation of the gospel?

What could disqualify your proclamation of the gospel? For the Philippians, it may have been grumbling. It may have been disputing. But what in your life could disqualify your proclamation of the gospel? And plead with the Lord to do something to help you in your fight against it.

So in light of that, let's pray.