



Grace Life Church
of Dallas

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

Philippians 2:12-13

Work Out Your Own Salvation

Part 3

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Philippians 2:12-13

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, v13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

New Hampshire Confession 1833

Of Sanctification

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means – especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

Review verse 12

Therefore:

(Looking back to 1:27 “*only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel*” and Jesus’s humble example in obedience 2:5-11)

my beloved,

Paul reminds the church they are loved and accepted by God through the gospel of Jesus Christ

as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence,

Sanctification is a progressive work and no part of the Christian life is untouched

work out your own salvation

The command to work out what God has worked in us (We have responsibility)

with fear and trembling,

A reverential fear that motivates towards holiness

A fear of living a life that would give the appearance that the ransom paid wasn’t of value

Sanctification

We desire to be sanctified because we have been born again (new heart/new desires/spiritual life) **Ezekiel 36:22-31**

- As a new creation in Christ (**2 Cor 5:17**), our flesh (body) is not renewed. We are still tempted by sin
- While we remain in this body, we have a constant tension as the new man in Jesus Christ
- We do not have two natures (**Romans 6:6** *We know that our old self was crucified with Him*)
 - **Romans 7:24** *Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death*

As we live in this state of “already” but “not yet” we are commanded to “put on” and “put off”

- The gospel and its promises are put forth as hope, power and motivation in our sanctification (We need to get this order right)
- Seeing and believing the gospel (and its promises) is our hope in sanctification
- Indicatives of the gospel gives hope to the imperatives of sanctification

Indicatives Empowering Imperatives

Ephesians 4:32 *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another* (Imperative), *as God in Christ forgave you* (Indicative)

In our striving for holiness, we do not leave the gospel, Spirit, or faith behind and move forward in obedience, but it is ONLY through the gospel, Spirit and faith that we can take a single step in obedience

- So often in our great zeal to be sanctified, we leave the gospel, Spirit and faith behind as we focus on the commands, but this is a great misunderstanding
- We must understand what God has accomplished and who we are in Christ

Romans 6

-v3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death (Indicative)

-v4 We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death (Indicative)

-v5 If we have been united in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His (Indicative)

-v6 We know our old self was crucified with Him (Indicative)

-v7 For one who has died has been set free from sin (Indicative)

-v10 For the death He died He died to sin, once for all (Indicative)

Indicatives Empowering Imperatives

Romans 6

V11 So you also must consider (reckon) yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Imperative flowing from the hope and truth of the gospel Indicative)

V12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies (Imperative)

V13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness (Imperative)

V18 Having been set free from sin (Indicative)

V19 Present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification (Imperative)

As we all struggle in obeying the commands (Imperatives) make sure you are rooted in the gospel (Indicatives)

Faith is an important part of our sanctification (Believing gospel indicatives)

***For it is God who works in you, both to will
and to work for His good pleasure***

Paul is bringing great encouragement to the struggling Christian

For it is God who works in you

- Regarding our sanctification, it is God who works in us
- Work: *energeō*-put forth power (work effectively)
- The driving power in our sanctification is divine

Galatians 3:2-3 *Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? 3Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

The power needed to fulfill the command of v12 “work out your own salvation” comes from God

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

God, in His sovereignty, will often bring us into situations to teach us not to depend on ourselves.

2 Corinthians 1:8b-9 *we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. 9Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.*

Knowing it is God's power that works in us in our sanctification gives us great hope because God is omnipotent, but it also removes all excuses for disobedience.

- **2 Peter 1:3** *His divine power has granted to us **all things** that pertain to life and godliness*
- He grants us the power needed for godliness, while He sovereignly controls testings/trials
- **1 Corinthians 10:13** *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. **God is faithful**, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it*

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

Paul understood he had responsibility in his sanctification, yet it was God's power at work in him

1 Corinthians 15:10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me*

John 15 The Vine and the Branches

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4Abide in me, and I in you. **As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.** 5I 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.** 6If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7**If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** 8By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.* ¹⁰

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

How does God work in us?

Both to will and to work

- All of our “doing” is driven by our desire
- *Will*: Desire/Affection/Volitional choice
- God can and does sway the heart of people:
 - **Proverbs 21:1** *The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.*
 - **Psalm 119:36** *Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!*
 - If you are struggling with desire to obey, turn to the Lord and pray He would work in you to give you a will to obey (Then believe)
 - Doesn’t this bring you great hope?
- *Work*: energized
 - **Matthew 26:41** *Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*
- Whether there is a struggle with desire/affection or weakness to carry out obedience, God provides the grace needed

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

How does God work in our will, while not making us robots?

- **Psalm 119:18** *Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*
- **Ephesians 1:16-19** *I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might*
- **Luke 24:32** *They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”*
- When we are seeing (with the eyes of faith) truth, we want to obey. God works in us, regarding our will, by opening our eyes to truth.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

Why does He work in us both to will and to work?

For His good pleasure

- If you ever struggle with “Will He listen to my prayer?” “Will He answer me?”
 - You are asking Him to glorify Himself in you
 - **1 John 5:14** *And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.*

Colossians 1:29

For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works with me.

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.