

Bearing The Light Of Christ

Philippians 2:12-18

Message by Michael J. Barnard

June 6, 2010

Teaching Aim: To illustrate that we as Christians should live our lives with a healthy sense of reverence and awe before the holiness of God! To show that Christians are to be lights in a dark world as we offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD'S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Working out your salvation with fear and trembling (vv. 12-13)

1. The word *"therefore"* indicates the conclusion of a thought (vs. 12). How do **verses 5-11** set the tone for Paul's thoughts on obedience in **verse 12**? Who is the supreme example of obedience? Why?
2. Why was it so important for the Philippians to step up their spiritual walk at a time when Paul was under house arrest 700-800 miles away? Why is it important for us to continually grow in our relationship with the Lord today?
3. Does Paul's exhortation to *"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"* mean that we have to be continually terrified of losing our salvation and being condemned to an eternity in hell (vs. 12)? Why or why not?
4. Are Christians saved by works? Think about it before answering. If so, by whose works? (See **Rom. 5:8-9; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3-4**) Are Christians saved by their own works? (See **Eph. 2:8-9**) How should works come into play in the life of a Christian? (See **Eph. 2:8-10**)
5. The Bible teaches three aspects of our salvation: 1) Justification; 2) Sanctification; 3) Glorification. Which aspect of our salvation is past tense? (See **Rom. 3:20-26; 5:1; 1 Cor. 6:11**). Which aspect is present tense? (See **John 17:19; Phil. 2:12; Heb 10:14**) Which aspect is future tense? (See **Rom. 8:17, 29-30**) What aspect do we normally think of when we hear the word "salvation"?
6. Have you ever felt unworthy to live the Christian life or to be in a position of leadership within the Church? Why? If you have, you are in good company as we really don't have the

power to live the Christian life on our own. According to **verse 13**, who is working in us to help us fulfill His plan for our lives?

Part II: Shinning as lights in a very dark world (vv. 14-16)

1. Verse 14 indicates that there were problems within the church at Philippi. What problems do you see in verse 14? (**Also see Phil. 4:2**) How do negative comments and disputes within the local church take away from the effectiveness of a ministry? What is the solution to getting a church back on track? (**See 1 John 1:9**)
2. Does being blameless mean always living in sinless perfection (**vs. 15**)? (**See 1 John 1:8**) If not, what do you think blameless means? William MacDonald defines blameless this way: "A blameless person may sin, but he apologizes, confesses, and makes it right whenever possible." Is there anyone in your life you need to get right with? If so, have you tried? If they were unwilling, are you open to trying again? What would Jesus have you do in your situation?
3. How can we live today as "*children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*"? What are some of the unique challenges that the younger generation faces today?
4. Have you ever gone camping in the mountains on a clear night? What did you see when you looked up into the sky? Why were the stars so bright? How should Christians appear to a dark world according to verse 15b? Someone has said, "The darker the night, the brighter the light." How does this illustration apply to the Christian and the gospel message in the 21st century? What does it mean for a person to walk in the light? (**See 1 John 1:6-7**)
5. What are some practical ways that you as a Christian can walk in the light more effectively? (**See Matt. 5:14-16**)
6. What is "the word of life" and why is it so important for the Christian to hold fast to it (**vs. 16**)? How should the Christian react when false doctrine creeps into the local church? (**See Matt. 18:15-17**) Why do you think so many churches are straying away from the biblical

gospel today? (See vs. 12) What can we do about it?

7. What are some practical steps you can take in solidifying your understanding of the Bible and correct doctrine (teaching)? Are you willing to do it?

8. What is “*the day of Christ*” (vs. 16)? (See Commentaries; 2 Cor. 5:10) What does Paul indicate will bring him great joy on “the day of Christ”?

Part III: Making your life a living sacrifice (vv. 17-18)

1. What is the significance of a drink offering as seen in the Old Testament (vs. 17)? (See Exod. 29:38-41; 2 Kin. 16:13; Jer. 7:18; Hos. 9:4)?

2. According to John MacArthur, a drink offering “refers to the topping off of an ancient animal sacrifice. The offering poured wine either in front of or on top of the burning animal and the wine would be vaporized. That steam symbolized the rising of the offering to the deity for whom the sacrifice was made. How might Paul see his entire life and ministry as a drink offering? How about your life? Are you pouring out your life as a drink offering to the Lord, or are you only taking in? (See Rom. 12:1)

3. How can the Christian find joy in the midst of suffering for the Lord? (See 1 Pet. 2:19-24)

4. Have you ever suffered because of your faith in Christ? If so, how? Were you able to praise the Lord in or for your suffering? Why or why not? (See Jam. 1:1-4) Can you praise Him now?

MINER'S CORNER – *Manna for today!*

- * There are three aspects to our salvation: 1) Justification (*past tense—God does!*);
2) Sanctification (*present tense—We work together with God throughout our lifetime to become more Christ-like*); and 3) Glorification (*future tense—God does!*).
- * To work out our salvation with fear and trembling means to live our lives with a healthy sense of reverence and awe before the holiness of God!
- * The darker the darkness, the brighter the light of the gospel shines.
- * Jesus said, “You are the light of the world.” (Matt. 5:14) That means you!!
- * Our life should be a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. (Rom. 12:1)