

Expository Bible Study for Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Lesson #7 • “Work it Out”

• H A N D O U T •

► Our last study covered Paul's amazing Christology showing both Christ's Humility and His Exaltation. Christ's Exaltation proclaims His resurrection, demonstrates His victory over sin and death, and His future return to earth in Glory, where He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Paul introduced his Christology by discussing the Believer's attitude and the goal of Christ's attitude becoming part of each Believer's life. The Christology also established Christ's pre-incarnation, and how the nature of man was added to Christ's Eternal Divinity, producing the unique God-Man. Paul then focused on Christ humbling Himself to become the sacrificial Lamb, for the purpose of paying our sin debt and to satisfy the wrath of Father God, thus making man's redemption possible.

Paul concluded his Christology with a discourse regarding the Lord being given the Name that is above all names and that there is a day coming when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Our study revealed that this same declaration was made by the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, repeated in Paul's letter to the Romans, and the actual future event described in the vision of Revelation, as recorded by John.

We ended our study with a look at Paul's ultimate purpose for composing this remarkable document. It was Paul's desire to encourage Believers in times of hardships, because in the end, it will be God's Glory that will prevail. Since every true Believer has a relationship with Father God thru His Son, Christ Jesus, Believers will also prevail.

**Paul now turns to a different kind of exhortation:
He wants the Philippians to pursue their own spiritual progress
without being so dependent on his physical presence.**

**This study opens with statements that have been misunderstood by some.
It is our goal to unravel any misunderstandings
with clear and simple teaching from scripture.**

► **Philippians 2:12-13** • Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.

Q: Why is Paul exhorting the Philippians to pursue the progress of their Christianity with or without Paul's presence among them?

Q: Paul says the Philippians were obedient. To whom or what are they showing obedience?

Q: What does it mean that they were to continue to work out their salvation with fear and trembling? Is Paul suddenly teaching that one obtains their salvation thru their works?

Q: Why is this process to be worked out with “fear and trembling” & not just with joyful praise?

Q: What is significant about Paul adding: **“for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.”**

► **Philippians 2:14-16** • Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the Word of Life – in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

Q: What does Paul mean by: “hold out the Word of Life?”

Q: This passage follows Paul's exhortation for the Philippians to continue their journey to spiritual maturity. In this passage, what new concepts does Paul add to his prior thoughts?

Q: What is significant about Paul adding the word “everything” to his admonishment to “do everything without all the complaining and arguing?”

Q: How are we to understand Paul's words: “so that you may become...?”

Q: How does the Nation of Israel fit into Paul's statement?

Q: What is the Day of Christ that Paul references in this passage?

► **Philippians 2:17-18** [ESV] • 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.

Q: What does Paul mean when he says “**even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith?**”

Q: How does Paul react to the possibility that he might be facing his own martyrdom?

Q: What do we learn about Paul when we see his honesty about his possible martyrdom, yet he continues to express hope he will visit Philippi again?

Q: Should he be martyred, what does Paul request from the Believers at Philippi?

► **Historical Note:** The Bible doesn't give us explicit information about Paul's death. What we know is from various historical sources, including the writings of the Church Fathers, and in addition to long-standing Christian traditions.

The letter to the Philippians was probably written some time around 60 to 62 AD, during Paul's first Roman imprisonment. As previously noted, Paul was under house-arrest, chained to a guard, while he waited for his hearing before Caesar. However, after waiting two full years, it is believed his case was dismissed due to a lack of strong accusations from the Jewish authorities. It is believed that Paul did visit both Philippi and Corinth after his release from his first Roman imprisonment.

Paul was arrested a second time and spent time in Rome's underground dungeon prison called the Mamertine. He eventually appeared before Nero sometime between 64 to 68 AD. This was probably during the time of the extreme Christian persecution which followed the Great Fire of Rome in July of 64 AD. Paul was martyred by beheading, following his hearing before Caesar Nero.

**Paul now shifts to a new subject with a decidedly more optimistic tone.
He writes of his plans not only to send Timothy to Philippi
but of his hope to be able to join him.
Above all, Paul writes of his confident hope in the Lord Jesus ...
This is where we will pick up our study next time.**

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**Next Time ◆ Lesson #8
“Timothy & Epaphroditus”**

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