

LIGHTS - PHILIPPIANS 2:12-30

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

- Obey - [Hebrews 5:8-9](#); [1 Peter 1:1-2](#); [Romans 1:5](#)
- Work out your own salvation - There's something we must do. [Acts 2:40](#)
- Works in you - [Hebrews 13:20-21](#); [1 Corinthians 15:10](#)
- Work for His good pleasure - [2 Timothy 2:20-21](#)

¹⁴⁻¹⁸ 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.

- Grumbling; complaining; murmuring
 - **utterance made in a low tone of voice** (the context indicates whether the utterance is one of discontent or satisfaction), **behind-the-scenes talk**. -Negative aspect: complaint, displeasure, expressed in murmuring
 - [1 Peter 4:7-11](#). Read.
- Disputing; arguing
 - verbal exchange that takes place when conflicting ideas are expressed, dispute, argument.
 - [Luke 9:46](#); [1 Timothy 2:8](#). We're not saying we can't discuss topics. This carries a negative connotation. Do we really care about the issue? Are we doing so in love (respectfully, kindly, open-minded, etc.)
- Crooked and twisted generation
 - They (the world) have mastered complaining and arguing. We are supposed to be different.
 - What makes us different than the world? Not saying, as usual, that we've earned our salvation. However, we should be changing where necessary. If I don't study with my children, but teach them to be kind . . . how is that different than most of the world? However, if I teach my children the Bible, but I don't stress the practicality of love and what that looks like . . . how am I different than the world? That becomes even more convicting if the world stresses kindness, humility and sacrifice to their children if we do not.
 - Listen, this may seem "thin-skinned" to some (I hope it doesn't), but kindness is a big deal to me. More importantly, it seems to be a big deal to Jesus. Read [Titus 3:1-7](#). **We've got to be lights in this world.**
 - Let me stress "without blemish". [Jude 24](#); [1 Peter 2:12](#); [Deuteronomy 32:1-5](#).

- I mentioned the book I've been reading about Christianity in the 2-3rd century A.D. It's very convicting. There's wasn't one aspect of their life they didn't consider. They truly were separated from the world around them. I'm afraid it would convict the majority of us here - I know it did me.
- **Running in vain!** Paul knew his labor was valuable regardless if someone obeyed Christ or not, but we understand the point. We all need to evaluate our lives. What's the point if we're not going to finish what we started?
- **Sacrifice.** It's something so basic that I believe it's overlooked. We have a tendency to do whatever we can in order to not be inconvenienced. I'll not be long winded about this, but consider everything Paul went through for the sake of Christ and His body. He did so because he learned it from Christ. To follow Christ is to pick up a cross. When did we begin to ask for shoulder pads to bear the weight?

¹⁹⁻²⁴ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

- However, before we can be a light to outsiders, would you agree we must see the light among ourselves? You see this in Timothy. Consider how important he was to Paul!

²⁵⁻³⁰ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

- You see it in Epaphroditus. We've talked about this before, but it seems to good to stress the point. Notice how close these brethren were and how sincerely concerned they were.
- Makes you feel bad when you look at your own life, doesn't it? What have I had to give to the Lord? On one hand it's a legit observation. We shouldn't be silly about it - so many have had to sacrifice so much more.
 - Side note: isn't it interesting how Paul didn't heal him? Something to consider...
- However, it's good to remember that we are to live for Christ and know that He is honored in what we view as the "small" things. **Matthew 25:31-46** makes that clear.