

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

God At Work

Lesson Twenty-Three

Philippians

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Lesson Goal: To assist students in realizing that their salvation is a process, and that they are not alone in the process.

Scriptures: Philippians 2:13

For Memory: “It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.” Philippians 2:13

God At Work

In our last memory scripture (2:12b) we heard Paul tell the Philippians to work out their own salvation. We said that the working out had nothing to do with earning their salvation or becoming good enough for God to give them eternal life with Him. We said that Paul was encouraging them to work on finishing what God had started. They were already God’s children. Now they were to work at behaving...at being what and who God expected them to be.

Some of them might have been saying, “We can never do that! It is too hard.” Paul must have expected that, because then he let them know that they were not alone in the task. Paul had just presented Jesus as the perfect example of humility...as being completely willing to serve...as being exactly what God wants a person to be...as being obedient...as doing work which will please God...as wanting to glorify God. When they thought back to all those things we said were “the real Jesus,” they may have been thinking, “If that’s who we are supposed to be like, then it is hopeless.”

We might want to be just like someone else. Maybe it is the president of a country, or maybe a great actor, or a teacher, or an artist. We might even think, “I’ll never be like that person unless he or she enters my life and begins to help me to live like they do.” The artist could guide our hands as we paint on a great canvas. Or the actor could move and speak through us as we perform in some great play. Of course, humanly speaking, that’s impossible...unless you are a puppet!

But, that is exactly what God wants to do! According to our memory verse today, God wants us to allow Him to work in us. God can do that because the Bible tells us that Jesus sends God’s Holy Spirit to live in us when we ask Him to be our Lord. Paul said, in another place (Galatians 2:20), that He didn’t consider himself to be alive anymore. He said that Christ was alive in him. That’s his idea here.

God works in us. The working out of our salvation is what we can do as God works in us. It is obvious from the way Paul says all this that we don’t become puppets of God. He doesn’t take control and do things for us.

Maybe it could be compared to flying instruction. You are in the airplane together

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with your instructor (salvation). You have your hands on the controls (the things you do with your life). You have the guidebook (the Bible). The person sitting in the co-pilot's seat is your instructor (God's Holy Spirit). In your flight, you come to a turn (a decision you must make). Your instructor says, "You should tilt the plane to the left and begin to steer it in that direction." Now, you can go some other direction. But to be where and what God wants you to be, you should choose left. We know, in our hearts...in our minds...that we are choosing the right or wrong way, because God's Holy Spirit is giving us feelings and helping us understand God's Word (the Bible) to us.

Paul tells the Philippians that God is working in them in a way that affects their will and their actions. When God works on your will, He is helping you have feelings and ideas that make you go in certain directions in your life. When we ask for His presence as we do things, He will give us guidance and strength to do it.

He also leads us to be involved in things that accomplish His purpose. What a great thing! When we let God work in us; that is, guide us, we can and will be helping Him do great things that He wants to do.

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.



Teaching Tips:

1. Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us that we are actually God's workmanship, His creation, and that we are created to do good things. See also John 15:5
2. For clarity, salvation as referred to here is not only the initial experience of justification, it is the continuing experience of being the saved child of God.
3. Songs that emphasize God as our guide, the name of Jesus, grace, imitating our Savior and Lord, and Christian service will be helpful to this lesson.
4. Pray with your students thanking God for sending His Holy Spirit to live in us, to guide us in our lives, and to give us strength to do what He wants us to do. Thank God also for allowing us to have a part in doing His work and accomplishing His purpose here on earth.
5. This is a happy lesson. Approaching it as such is important. Also, as with any illustration, the airplane analogy can be carried too far and will certainly break down at some point. Try not to get too deep into the analogy.

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Student Worksheet

For Memory: "It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." Philippians 2:13

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=God wants us to allow Him to _____ in us. God can do that because the _____ tells us that Jesus sends God's Holy Spirit to _____ in us when we ask _____ to be our Lord.

=The working out of our salvation is what we can do as God _____ in us. It is obvious from the way Paul says all this that we don't become _____ of God. He doesn't take _____ and do things for us.

=We know, in our hearts...in our minds...that we are choosing the _____ or _____ way, because God's Holy Spirit is giving us _____ and helping us understand God's _____ (the Bible) to us.

=When God works on your _____, He is helping you have feelings and _____ that make you go in certain directions in your _____.

=When we ask for His presence when we do things, He will give us guidance and _____ to do it.

=He also leads us to be involved in things that accomplish His _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.