**THE THINGS WE TALK ABOUT**

By Danny McGaughey

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The men’s breakfast and Bible study that meets on Thursday morning is studying through the book of Philippians. This week we studied the following passage: “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. 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.” (Philippians 2:12-18)

We talked some about verse 14. The two words specifically were grumbling and disputing. Serving God is a joy, not something to grumble or complain about. If a person grumbles and complains about serving in the Lord’s church how does that affect people around them? Negatively. People do not want to be around people who do these things. Whatever service people do for the Lord it must become a ministry and not a job. Ministry is fun. Jobs are not so much fun. The person that chooses to have an attitude that serving is a ministry and not just a job is much happier. “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord and not for people,” (Colossians 3:23)

Paul addresses this earlier in the same chapter. “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:1-5) This does not mean to stand by if the ministry is not following the Bible and say nothing. I am concerned about the attitude and the negative witness that is displayed by someone who complains a lot. Let your service to Jesus be a joy and pleasure in your heart.

Another verse we discussed at length was verse 12. “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,”

The part of this verse we discussed a lot is “Work out your own salvation.” What do the words “work out” mean? According to *Vines Expository Dictionary*, work translates, as freedom from strife, vainglory, cause, do, perform work. To get the meaning of the word “out” you have to use it in conjunction with “to work.” This part of verse 12, to work out, translates to achieve and effect by toil. Salvation is to be of enough importance to the Christians that they put all their efforts into achieving it.

David Lipcomb’s commentary on this passage states, “To work out salvation with fear and trembling is to fear God with such reverence and awe that they seek to do His will and tremble lest they should fail to understand that they may do it. “All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.” (Isaiah 66:2) The fear is not exactly the fear of God, but of the greatness of the task and of the possibility of failure. “Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,” (Hebrews 2:1-3)

Salvation is not unattainable. If so there would not be 178 verses in the Bible that contain the word salvation. However, it is attainable through the blood of Jesus and obedience to His word. It is to be of such importance that Christians do all they can to read and study God’s Word and put into practice what they learn from their study of it. It’s not complicated, but man makes it complicated. “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (I John 5:11-12) “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.” (I John 5:20)

Salvation is there for all who seek it. The Christian’s responsibility is to make salvation known to the lost and dying world. “For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (1 Thessalonians 5:9) Have a blessed week.

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