



## SERMON SERIES STUDY GUIDE

### Philippians: Working Out What God has Worked in Us, Pt. 1

Pastor John Riggs

#### Summary:

This powerful exploration of Philippians 2:12-13 confronts one of the most misunderstood passages in Scripture: working out our salvation with fear and trembling. We discover that Paul is not teaching a works-based salvation, but addressing believers who have already been redeemed through Christ alone. The foundation is critical here—we cannot work out what we do not already possess. Through careful examination of our adoption into God's family, we see that salvation is entirely God's work from beginning to end. He is both the author and perfecter of our faith, the one who began the good work in us and will faithfully complete it. This truth liberates us from the crushing weight of religious performance and frees us to understand grace in its fullness. The message challenges us to examine whether we truly grasp the exceeding riches of God's grace or if we still carry the burden of thinking we must earn our way to heaven. For eternity, we will never cease to be amazed that we are there solely because of what Christ accomplished, not because of anything we did.

#### Video Breakdown:

- Chapter 1: The Importance of Context in Understanding Scripture. 0:00 - 6:35
  - We examine Philippians 2:12-13 in context to avoid the misinterpretation that salvation is earned through works, establishing that these verses address believers, not unbelievers.
- Chapter 2: The Doctrine of Adoption and God's Sovereign Grace. 6:35 - 19:40
  - We explore the biblical doctrine of adoption, examining how God chose us before the foundation of the world and predestined us for adoption through Christ according to His will, not ours.
- Chapter 3: Salvation by Grace Through Faith, Not Works 19:40 - 30:55
  - We examine Philippians 1:6 and Ephesians 2:4-10 to establish that God initiated our salvation, will complete it, and that it is entirely a gift of grace, not earned by works.
- Chapter 4: Growing in Maturity and the Foundation of Truth. 30:55 - 38:36
  - We recognize that while salvation is complete in Christ, there is a process of spiritual growth and maturity that follows, requiring a proper foundation of understanding grace.

## Scripture References from the Sermon

### Explicitly Mentioned References:

1. Philippians 2:12-13 - Main text: "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"
2. Philippians 1:1 - "All of the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi"
3. Philippians 1:2 - "Grace to you and peace from God our Father"
4. Galatians 4:4-6 - Fullness of time, born of woman, born under the law, adoption as sons
5. Ephesians 1:3-14 (specifically verses 3-7 quoted) - Blessed in Christ, chosen before foundation of the world, predestined for adoption, redemption through His blood
6. Philippians 1:6 - "He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it"
7. Ephesians 2:4-10 - "But God, who is rich in mercy...by grace you have been saved through faith...not of works, lest anyone should boast"
8. Philippians 1:9 - Prayer for love to abound with knowledge and discernment
9. 1 Corinthians 3 - Reference to foundation building (general chapter reference)

### Alluded to or Paraphrased:

10. Romans 2:14-15 - Law written on hearts
11. Hebrews 12:2 - Jesus as author and perfecter/finisher of faith
12. John 19:30 - "It is finished"
13. Psalm 103:12 - "As far as the east is from the west"
14. Galatians 1:8-9 - If anyone preaches another gospel, let him be anathema
15. Nehemiah 8:10 - "The joy of the Lord is your strength"
16. Lamentations 3:22-23 - New mercies every day
17. 2 Corinthians 5:17 - New creation in Christ
18. Romans 6:23 - "The wages of sin is death"
19. 2 Timothy 3:16 - "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine"









**Discussion Questions:**

- How does understanding that salvation is entirely God's work rather than our own change the way we approach our daily walk with Christ?

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- In what ways might we still be tempted to add our own works to the finished work of Christ, and how can we guard against this?

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- What does it mean practically to work out your salvation with fear and trembling if it is not about earning salvation?

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- How does the doctrine of adoption into God's family affect your sense of identity and security as a believer?

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- Why do you think Paul felt it necessary to repeatedly emphasize grace to prevent both works-based religion and the abuse of grace?

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- What are some concrete differences between the freedom found in the gospel versus the bondage of religious systems based on human performance?

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- How should the truth that God will be faithful to complete the work He began in us shape our expectations for spiritual growth in ourselves and others?

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## **Small Group Guide: Working Out Your Salvation**

### **Philippians 2:12-13**

#### **Opening Prayer & Icebreaker**

**Icebreaker Question:** Share about a time when you misunderstood instructions and it led to confusion or mistakes. How did you feel when you finally understood what was actually meant?

#### **Key Scripture**

**Philippians 2:12-13** "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."

#### **Sermon Summary**

This message addressed one of the most misunderstood passages in Scripture. Paul is not teaching that we must work FOR our salvation, but rather that believers should work OUT what God has already worked IN. The sermon emphasized that salvation is entirely God's work through Christ, and we are adopted children who have been given new life, not employees earning our way to heaven.

#### **Key Takeaways**

1. **Salvation is God's work, not ours** - We cannot earn, achieve, or contribute to our salvation
2. **Paul was writing to believers** - This passage addresses those already saved, not unbelievers
3. **Adoption means full rights** - We are legally adopted into God's family with all privileges
4. **Grace eliminates boasting** - No one can brag about their salvation in heaven
5. **Foundation matters** - Building on the wrong theological foundation leads to increasing error

#### **Discussion Questions**

##### **Understanding the Text**

1. **Context Matters:** Why is it important to understand that Paul was writing to believers (saints in Christ) rather than unbelievers when interpreting Philippians 2:12-13?
2. **The "Therefore":** Paul uses the word "therefore" to connect his thoughts. What had Paul already established in Philippians 1-2 that makes this passage make more sense?
3. **Adoption Language:** Read Galatians 4:4-7 and Ephesians 1:3-14. What does it mean to be "adopted" into God's family? How does this differ from being an employee or servant?

## **Personal Reflection**

4. **Your Background:** Did anyone in the group grow up with a works-based understanding of salvation? How has your understanding changed or evolved? What struggles remain?
5. **Grace and Mercy:** The sermon emphasized that we all deserve death and hell, but God gives us life and heaven. How does this reality affect your daily gratitude and worship?
6. **The Foundation:** The pastor mentioned that building on a faulty foundation becomes more problematic the higher you build. Have you seen this principle play out in your own faith journey or in others?

## **Digging Deeper**

7. **Grace vs. Works:** Read Ephesians 2:8-10. How do these verses clarify the relationship between grace, faith, and works? Why does Paul say salvation is "not of works, lest anyone should boast"?
8. **The Tension:** If salvation is completely by grace through faith, why does Paul tell us to "work out" our salvation? What do you think this means practically?
9. **Spiritual Growth:** The sermon compared new believers to newborn babies. What are some realistic expectations we should have for new Christians? How can we better nurture spiritual growth without imposing legalism?

## **Practical Application**

### **This Week's Challenge**

#### **Choose one of the following to practice this week:**

1. **Reflect on Grace:** Spend 10 minutes each day this week meditating on what Christ has done for you. Journal about how this makes you feel and how it should affect your daily life.
2. **Share Your Story:** Tell someone this week about your salvation story, emphasizing what God did rather than what you did.
3. **Examine Your Foundation:** Honestly assess whether you still carry any works-based thinking in your understanding of salvation. Confess any areas where you're trying to earn God's favor.
4. **Encourage a New Believer:** If you know someone new in their faith, reach out to encourage them this week without placing unrealistic expectations on their spiritual maturity.

## **Group Action**

**Plan together:** How can your group create an environment where people feel safe to ask questions about grace and salvation without judgment?

**Prayer Focus**

- Thank God for His grace and mercy in salvation
- Pray for freedom from works-based thinking
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help each person grasp the magnitude of God's grace
- Pray for new believers in your church and community
- Ask God to help the group build on the solid foundation of Christ

**Looking Ahead**

Next week's message will continue this theme by exploring the practical application of "working out" our salvation. Come prepared to discuss:

- What does spiritual maturity look like?
- How do we grow in Christ without falling into legalism?
- What role do we play in our sanctification?

**Additional Resources****Recommended Reading:**

- Ephesians 1-2 (focus on adoption and grace)
- Galatians 4:1-7 (adoption as sons and daughters)
- Romans 8:14-17 (heirs with Christ)

**Memory Verse for the Week:** "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." - Ephesians 2:8-9

**Closing Thought**

"We don't work FOR our salvation; we work OUT what God has already worked IN. The Christian life is not about climbing stairs to heaven, but about God descending to us in Christ and then living His life through us by His Spirit."

**Close in prayer, thanking God for His amazing grace.**



## Sermon Transcript

Why is it so significant that we do that?

The reason is because these verses have so often been abused and they've been twisted like old rusted barbed wire rolled up into a ball making a theological mess for many people.

And so the reason it's important that we study the Word of God in a

sequential form is so that we get to a passage of scripture like this we won't do what so many people have done and for those of you that understand how your salvation happened that it was not something you earned it wasn't something you sought out but it was something that God did in fact the provision of salvation was something Christ

Completed.

It's done.

It's over with.

It is finished, just like Jesus said.

And yet, there have been many people that will use this verse, and they'll pull these two verses right out of Scripture, and they'll say, but look right here.

You have to work for your salvation.

That's what they'll say.

Well, that is not true.

That's pulling a letter, a verse out of context.

And we know this.

A text of Scripture out of context is what?

It's a pretext.

That's what it is.

In other words, we can bend it, twist it, and we can make it say whatever we want it to say in many regards.

In fact, oftentimes we do not put the right emphasis of what it really means.

And what the original author intended, what was Paul's intention in writing this?

Why did he pin these words under inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

And we also know that we want to get that meaning so that we're able to understand what this means.

Because there has been false doctrine taught, and some of you may have even come from this background of a works salvation.

Anybody here come from that background that you had to work for your salvation?

Anybody want to slip your hand up and admit it?

I'll raise my hand, right?

They say, well, yes, you're saved by grace, but you've got to work for this thing.

Well, that's not the gospel.

Paul says if anyone preaches any other gospel than the gospel that we preach to you, may he be an anathema, may he be cut off, Paul says.

He says even an angel would come or anyone would come and preach any other gospel than this gospel that Paul preaches.

He says, uh-uh, that's not the gospel.

And so what we're going to do this morning is try to grasp what Paul was getting at when he writes this word, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

I mean, at first look, you say, well, hold on, that sounds kind of serious, isn't it?

For it is God who works in you, he says, both to will and to work.

for his good pleasure.

So our goal this morning is going to be that we would understand the meaning of Paul's intent in writing this through inspiration of the Spirit.

And then once we understand what Paul was getting at here, then the natural progression will be this, then how do we apply this truth to our life as Christians today in 2021?

And that's what we're going to get to.

By the way, just so you know, we will not get through this this morning.

So if you're looking for the application principle, come back next week and you'll learn more in detail what Paul's application would be for this in our life today.

So we have to also understand that we see here in verse 12, there's a word there.

It's called therefore, right?

So when you see the word therefore in scripture, you want to find out why it's therefore.

What's it there for, right?

That's why you do that.

There's a reason that Paul uses this connecting word therefore, because what Paul is talking about, he's given reference in his answer here to what he has previously already mentioned, therefore.

So

When Paul goes through what he's already gone through in the first part of chapter 1 and then primarily right before this in the beginning parts of chapter 2, he finishes with that and then he says, therefore, he writes the next section.

So it's going to help us to understand that Paul is really answering something here and making reference to what he's already talked about with these believers that are in Christ in the church of Philippi.

And so we're going to go back and we're going to actually do a little review of what the Apostle Paul had already presented to these Christians who were in Philippi.

And that's going to help us have a better understanding of what Paul was meaning as he wrote this passage here to the believers in Philippi.

Number one, we learned this, that in verse 1, if you go all the way back, Paul is not writing to unbelievers here.

Paul says that he's writing to what?

All of the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi.

Paul's addressing Christians here.

The redeemed of the Lord.

Those who have been justified already in Christ.

The very elect of God.

That's who Paul is writing to.

And you notice that in verse 2 he says, Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Our Father.

These are those who have received the adoption of God.

That's who Paul is writing to.

So let's make it very, very clear this morning that what Paul is making reference to here in chapter 2, verses 12 and 13, has not your salvation.

You're not working for salvation because they already have salvation.

And in fact, you can't work out what you don't have.

It's impossible.

So Paul's addressing believers in Christ as we would be addressing Christians this morning with what Paul is writing here.

Galatians chapter 4, as we think about this adoption, the position of who we are in Christ, that we are adopted into the family of God.

This is an absolutely...

Incredible thought.

This is that whole process of doctrine that we talked about here as we quoted that verse and we're memorizing that verse that all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine.

Doctrine is theological truth.

That's what we're looking at here.

And this doctrine of our salvation, this doctrine of adoption here that we're looking at, we see it in Galatians chapter 4.

Any of you know that you're adopted this morning if you're in Christ Jesus?

You've been adopted.

I'm sure thankful for adoption.

I'm glad to be part of the family of God.

It says here in chapter 4 of Galatians, In other words, there was an exact time.

that Christ would come.

It wasn't just like, well, haphazard, this just happened and boom, this is where Christ comes on the scene.

No, it happened at the exact moment in time that God had determined that it would happen.

It's the fullness of time.

God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, which is very important because He had to have humanity to redeem humanity.

But he was also fully God, which we just looked at that in the last four weeks of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is fully God, yet he is fully man.

And I know we can't understand that, but if it was something we fully comprehended, it wouldn't be something that would be beyond our ability that God is greater than we are and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts and his ways are higher than our ways.

We can't comprehend and fully grasp the incarnation that Christ, yes, he's fully God, but he's also fully man, both together.

And it's an incredible thing, the incarnation.

But he was born of woman.

He was born under the law.

And there's a reason he was born under the law, because the law is what condemns men in their sin.

In fact, it was the law that he gave the nation of Israel that the Jews would be what?

The law was the commandments of God, the standard of God that they were supposed to keep, but they couldn't keep the law, man.

No one could keep the law.

It was impossible, so the sacrificial system was set in place where the shedding of blood was required for what?

The remission of sins.

It cleaned them from sins, but it didn't take the sin completely away.

Not until Christ came and shed his blood did that happen.

It washed the sin, but it didn't carry it away.

Jesus not only has washed our sin away by his blood and his sacrifice, but he also has carried our sin away.

And it has been separated as far as the east is from the west, buried in the most remote parts of the earth.

God in Christ Jesus not only washed your sins by his blood, but he also took them and buried them.

They are covered.

And what we see here, that he had to come under the law to redeem those who are under the law.

And we all, like the Jews, even though we weren't given the law, we have the law written on our hearts, Paul says, in Romans.

And that we, in and of ourselves, by doing what our conscience tells us not to do, we bear witness to the fact that the law of God exists.

And we see that happening all around the world, even today in places that are remote where men and women don't have the gospel or the word of God.

They still have a conscience and they still have certain things that they hold as we don't go past this line.

There's a reason for that because God has written on the hearts of men.

That's true in every culture and every time and every season.

And then he says this, the reason for this was so that we might receive adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God and daughters, God has sent the spirit of his son, the Holy Spirit, third person of the triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit into our hearts crying, what?

Daddy or father.

He's our father.

We couldn't say that until our redemption.

We couldn't say that until our adoption.

But now as Christians, we have a heavenly father.

He is our father.

He's our dad.

He's our father.

We see something similar to this also in Ephesians chapter 1.

3 through 14.

I'm not going to read all of that.

It's one of my favorite sections of scripture as well for those of you that have read through.

In fact, Ephesians is a wonderful book, period.

of just rich in truth, of doctrine, of who we are in Christ and what God did and how we are to live and so on and so forth.

It's incredible.

But this is what the Apostle Paul writes to Ephesian believers here along the same lines of this adoption here.

He said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

Now listen, in love,

He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ.

According to the purpose of his will.

Not your will.

Not my will.

But according to God's will.

What an amazing, amazing truth.

To the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the blood of Christ.

The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace which he lavished.

It's kind of like taking frosting and putting it on a cake.

I don't skimp on the frosting.

Man, when I put frosting on a cake, it's going to be covered with frosting, right?

He lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight.

Listen, making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose with which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time.

There it is again.

to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on the earth.

We could continue with that passage, but we'll quit.

So Paul here is addressing believers.

These are the redeemed of the Lord.

These are those that have been purchased with the blood of Christ.

These are the ones that would call out to God as Father.

They've been adopted once far away, an enemy of God, part of this world, lost in sin.

What do they call him now?

Now we call him Father.

Father.

What a beautiful thing.

We've been adopted.

That means we have every legal right as the son, legally.

When you're adopted, you have adoption papers, and that gives you legal right.

It gives you a legal name.

It gives you a legal legacy.

It gives you everything, your entitlement.

You're entitled to everything that a birth son or daughter is entitled to when you're adopted.

We have that in Christ Jesus, amen?

We do.

In verse 6, he writes here in Philippians chapter 1.

This is another important part of what Paul's writing as we're getting to where we're going here in chapter 2.

He says, and Paul says, and I am sure of this.

In fact, some of your translations say, I am confident in this, that he who began a good work in you.

will be faithful to complete it.

Who began a good work in you?

God did.

Who's going to be faithful to complete the work that he began in you?

God is.

That is amazing.

So Paul tells them as he's writing to these believers, he says, I want you to know something.

I'm confident that the one who began the work in you will be faithful to bring it to the very point of its completion.

It started here, but Jesus Christ, through the Spirit of God working in us and through us, will bring it what?

To completion.

Jesus is what?

The author.

And he's the perfecter of our faith.

That's what Jesus is.

So this is a work of God, this salvation that we are enjoying today.

And we do want to get this nailed down before we move into this passage.

It's important that we do.

Because, like I said, there's false doctrine and teaching out there that there's a list of works that you've got to do to be redeemed or saved or justified before God.

That is not the gospel.

They're adding to the works of what Christ did.

Let me tell you something.

There's nothing more blasphemous than that.

If you can add to the finished work of what Christ did as a substitution in his death, in his burial, in resurrection, if you can add to that, then Jesus wasn't God.

You are.

See, that's the problem because men twist the word of God.

Because some churches and some belief systems are built around enslaving their people to have to be under the church to attend and make their way to heaven.

That's what all the pagan religions of the world are about.

It's about man working and climbing the steps to heaven.

The gospel and the incarnation is about God leaving heaven.

And humiliation and descending down to what?

Take upon flesh to come to man.

We want to get this nailed down.

Paul spent time teaching this so that his people that he's writing to would not misunderstand this.

And I know this is difficult for you if you come from a background like that, that is a works-based religious system, that they really told you since you were this tall that you have to rely on the church to get to heaven.

And if you don't go through those stair steps of what we require, whoops.

You're in big trouble.

So you know what people do?

They live in fear under a false religious system that is not even biblical.

See, the truth is in Christ we are free.

That's what the Bible tells me.

We're free.

Religion is like a squeeze chute.

And don't get me wrong, I love a good squeeze chute when I'm working cattle.

But I'm not a cattle worker.

And you're not cow.

I'm not a cow.

And what religion does, though, it's like they prod you through the alley of religion and they get you in there and hammer down on the hydraulics and literally squeeze the life.

And there's things going out every end.

They squeeze the life out of you.

Jesus said that I have come to give you life.

I have come to set the captive free.

Oh, the freedom we have in Christ is incredible.

In fact, the gospel is so great that Paul actually had to continue to teach that this grace we've been given is not to be abused.

It's on that line of teetering toward this grace is so incredible that people looked at this and they were going to the extreme and said, well, let's just abuse grace.

I mean, if there's more and more grace, if sin abounds, grace abounds, let's just let her rip, tater chip.

Paul says, no, you don't understand anything about grace.

Oh, no, we don't do that.

We're not going to do that and blaspheme the name of God and give him a bad name.

No, we're not doing that.

Oh, no, that's not what it is to be in Christ.

So in Ephesians chapter 2, 4 through 10, I'm going to go back to Ephesians again.

We're going to look at Paul's writings here, not only in this incredible book of Philippians, the book of joy.

It's the book of joy.

How many of you need some joy in your life?

Oh, we need joy.

Have you not seen the shift in people?

Have you seen the shift in people?

People need joy.

Joy.

Christians, listen.

You need the joy of the Lord in your life.

We're not living in times that are bringing great joy to people.

But if you're in Christ Jesus, He's already brought you everything you need for His joy.

You need His joy.

The joy of the Lord is what the Bible says.

It's our bulging bicep, man.

It's our strength.

It's what it is.

Ephesians 2, 4 through 10.

As we nail these shingles down to this building.

But God, who is rich in mercy.

Thank you, God, for your mercy.

I need his mercy every day, guys.

And you know what he gives me every day?

His mercy.

Every single day of my life, God gives me new mercies.

Thank you, God.

Because of His great agape love, that's a love that is self-sacrificing.

which he loved us.

That's how he loves us.

Even when we were dead in our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ.  
By grace, you have been saved.

And raised us up together and made us sit together.

Think of this.

In heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Do you not see the incredible greatness of what was just written?

Not only in this love did he in mercy and grace save us.

But he took us from death and he's made us alive in the son Christ Jesus.

alive.

Do you know what it means?

That's why we sing that song alive.

We have a new life in Christ.

We are a new creation.

We have been given this new birth and it's a new life and we have this in Christ.

Not only that, but he's raised us up with Christ.

Remember the exaltation?

That we've been raised with Christ and then it says we've even been seated with Christ in heavenly places.

This is incredible.

And why did he do this?

It doesn't make sense to us, and you're absolutely right.

If you understand something about grace, you would say this.

I don't know why God saved me.

Why did God save me?

A wretch like me, why would God do this for me?

What I deserved is what many people will get, and that's called hell.

Why?

Because the wages of sin is death.

It's always been and always will be.

See, it's not that God is not a God of love and justice.

It's that God is a God of mercy and a God of grace and a God of love that abounds and abounds and abounds.

What every one of us in this room really deserves and all you watching and everyone listening on the radio today, we all rightfully have earned something and it is death and hell.

See, grace and mercy is what God did for us that we couldn't do for ourself.  
And in return, he gives us this, the adoption of God in Christ Jesus.  
I don't get what I deserve.  
He gives me the righteousness of Christ.  
Did you know that you have the righteousness of Christ if you're in Jesus this morning?  
Wow, before God, you're righteous in the Son.  
Did you know that?  
Oh man, he took our punishment.  
What do we receive?  
We took our death.  
We received from him new life.  
I mean, everything is like opposites here.  
That's why when you understand grace that you didn't earn this.  
See, religion is going to make you think that when you get done with this, you've actually done something to gain this.  
And men kind of like that, don't we?  
Because everything we do in life is on an honorarium.  
I mean, I wasn't a real good example of this in school.  
But for those who worked really hard, you got a different letter than I got.  
Yes.  
It was based on performance.  
At work, it kind of works the same way.  
In relationships, often, same way.  
It's everything we do is based on performance.  
And even within religion, it's based on performance.  
Yes.  
But not in the gospel.  
It has been based on only the performance of one person.  
And that is the Lord Jesus Christ.  
And he alone.  
He alone.  
Then we'll finish out here what he says.  
For that in the ages to come.  
That means for eternity.

We have the millennial kingdom which will be in age.

You and I are going to rule and reign with Christ.

If you're in Christ this morning, you'll rule and reign with him.

And then we have the new heaven and the new earth that will be created where we will be forever.

Do you understand that?

And so for the ages to come, you and I who are undeserving of salvation, and everyone is, will be in this state forever and

Why?

Because in the coming ages, God might show what?

The exceeding riches of His grace.

Did you know that for eternity you will never cease to be amazed at the grace of God displayed for you in salvation?

Never.

Because you will be there because of Him.

Now, our rewards is something separate.

We'll get into that next week.

But this is so incredible that you grasp this.

Not only His grace, but in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith that is not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God, not of works.

Got to get this down.

Lest anyone should boast.

Now listen, I kind of had a little bit of an attitude towards those curve setters in class.

Because, you know, when they would put the grades up on the board, you know, they used to do that.

They don't do that now because it makes people feel bad, you know, because everybody needs a trophy today.

You know what I mean?

Back when I grew up, heck no.

Only those who won the trophy got the trophy.

Okay?

It's okay to admit you're just not as good as other people and other things or you didn't put out the effort.

That's okay.

It teaches us some things.

But you know that they would put those grades up there and you'd kind of shuffle up there. I never was in a big hurry to get up there and look at grades because I already knew kind of where mine might probably be.

And it usually didn't look like the first letter of the alphabet.

More or less somewhere down a little further in there is where my grades were.

But you know, there was always that real smart girl in class.

And maybe that's you.

That's my wife.

Summa cum laude.

I mean, this girl, she's the epitome of that.

And to this day, she corrects me on all kinds of my speech.

I mean, after church, you guys, I get a lesson in English every week.

Did you know that?

I do.

And I still can't get it, all right?

I still talk like an old hick, man.

That's what I talk like.

But not her.

She knows the parts of speech, how this works, this is proper.

So if I write something, I hand it to her and say, would you please fix this?

Because I know people are going to think I'm a blooming idiot when this goes out, right?

But there was always that element of just kind of like that girl that got it.

She had that spring in her step and kind of that bragging.

Well, I guess I set the curve again this week in class.

But see, when we get to heaven, there's not going to be any of those people there.

Because the only reason they got there was because of him.

Yes.

Yes.

There'll be no bragging in heaven.

There'll be no dragging and sporting the buckles in heaven.

I won that.

That ain't going to be happening.

It will be

As if the pervasive atmosphere is the overwhelming adoration, appreciation of what God did so you could be there.

It's incredible.

It's incredible.

It's incredible.

In verse 9 of chapter 1, Paul prays that their love would abound more and more with knowledge and discernment, with a purpose of approving what is excellent in order that they may live a life of purity and walking blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Christ to the glory and praise of God.

And Paul knows that just because someone comes to Christ and they are given the Spirit of God indwelling them, they're given brand new life, Paul knows that immediately you don't have every aspect of that figured out.

I've seen a lot of people that expect that of new believers.

When my kids were born, and we're going to end with this because of time,

When my children were born, I may have wished they'd have come out being about 11, but they weren't.

And you know what?

I didn't expect that of them.

Why?

Because they were a brand new life.

And there were things that they had to learn, and there was a process that we all know of growing up.

And oftentimes, the church has been very guilty of this, especially when we don't understand this, that someone who is new in Christ Jesus, although they may have the excitement of the new life and it's there, and they understand the feeling of what it means to be forgiven because the weight of that sin and guilt is gone.

They understand now that there's a Holy Spirit that's helping them because all of a sudden the things that they once were comfortable doing and did do in the world, they no longer really have that same feeling.

In fact, there's like, man, I just don't quite get the joy out of this anymore.

Something is wrong here.

Why do you think that happens?

Because the new man still has the old man to contend with.

And then this process begins to happen.

That's why you've been given the Holy Spirit.

Aren't you glad babies have mamas?

If it was left to us daddies, we'd all be in trouble.

What does a mama do?

Oh, mamas do a lot of things.

I can't take credit for how good my kids are.

My wife gets 90.

Okay, 88%, all right?

It's the growing aspect.

Now, we do have a part in the growing aspect, and we're going to learn that next week.

But what you shouldn't have, and this is something we still have but we shouldn't, is you shouldn't have a 50-year-old still sleeping in the bassinet and waiting for his aged mother to bring him his milk and change his diaper.

See, what should happen is a natural progression that God has put in all of us that we grow into maturity.

And see what happens, though, oftentimes if we're not careful, we could aid the fact that, you know, there's a process in that.

You know, just because someone's 17 or 20 doesn't mean they act like it.

And because they're 30, they may act like they're 15.

But that still negates the fact that they should be acting like they're 30, right?

So what we're going to look at, we get into this next week, I want you to understand something.

I want to lay the groundwork for this this week.

So that without any questions in your mind, and if you still have any, I would love to spend more time with you.

If you still believe that you have a major role in your salvation of accomplishing the work of salvation in your life, I would love to spend some time with you.

And if you come from a background like I did in my own life, do you know I still to this day after I've been preaching all these years and God has revealed the truth of the word of God to me through much study and through the Holy Spirit, I finally came to understand grace.

But did you know today I still struggle with God's grace?

And I still struggle to see myself the way the Bible tells me that God sees me.

Maybe that's you this morning.

And that's okay.

It's just something we are trying to learn to overcome.

And I know that in our church and those listening and watching, we have people from all different backgrounds.

I know that.

And as we think about what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3 about the foundation and why the foundation is so important, and we'll close with this.

Any of you that have ever built anything out there know that the foundation is the most critical aspect of anything that you build.

And in fact, when you begin to build on top of a foundation, it may only be an inch out here, but if you're going to go up 20 feet, wow, it gets way Willy Wonka up there.

In fact, the further you build up on the foundation that's incorrect, the more incorrect it shows itself to be the higher you go.

And what we're going to do in the next several weeks is we are going to go back and we are going to really look at the foundation.

Why?

Because some of you come from a background like I did.

Some of you come from even maybe a Catholic background where you were taught that you have to do all these things in order to be right with God.

And if you left the church, you don't have hope of heaven.

Did you know that?

not according to what my Bible teaches me.

Some of you might come from Mormonism or Jehovah's Witness or all different backgrounds.

So by God's grace, the next few weeks, we're going to learn to understand what Paul was getting at here and we're going to look at this foundation.

Does that sound good?

All right, let's close in prayer and then we're going to get out of here this morning.

Not out of the presence of God.

Thank God we can't ever get away from that, hey?

But we're going to move on with our day and thank you all for being here

I'm so glad that you're here this morning.

Father God, we love you today.

And Lord, as much as we struggle with your grace to get past the point of a works-based reward system, we understand, Lord, that Jesus Christ, he is the one that did it all.

And the basis of the reward and the work was not me and not us.

It was all him.

And Father, thank you for our salvation today.

Lord, may we understand how great and good and wonderful your grace really is.

that for the coming ages, for all eternity, you will continue to show us the exceeding magnitude of your kindness dealt toward us in Christ in the grace that you displayed in saving mankind.

We love you, Jesus.

God, thank you so much for loving us.

And we pray this in the name of our Lord, our Redeemer, the author and the perfecter, the beginner and the finisher of our faith, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Amen.

Thank you all so much for being here today.

We will see you next week.

Don't forget the announcements.

Thank you for being here.

why others prosper living so wicked

We'll understand why Cheer up my brother Live in the sunshine We'll understand it All by and by guitar solo

When we see Jesus coming in glory When He comes down from His home in the sky Then we shall meet Him in that bright mansion

farther along we'll understand why cheer up my brother live in the sunshine we'll understand