



SERMON SERIES STUDY GUIDE

Philippians: Working Out What God has Worked in Us, Pt. 2

Pastor John Riggs

Summary:

This powerful message takes us deep into Philippians 2:12-18, challenging us to understand a truth that transforms how we live our Christian lives: we are not saved by works, but we are absolutely saved for works. The teaching carefully distinguishes between working for our salvation—which is impossible and unnecessary because Christ has already completed that work—and working out our salvation, which is our daily responsibility as believers. We learn that salvation is entirely by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, yet this gift comes with profound implications for how we live. The context reveals that every Christian will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ, not to determine our salvation, but to give account for what we did with the new life we've been given. This isn't about fear of losing salvation; it's about the reality of eternal rewards and the sobering truth that our choices matter both now and forever. Using the analogy of gym memberships and physical training, we're reminded that just as someone prepares for a physical challenge, we must intentionally work out what God is working within us. The imagery from 1 Corinthians 3 about building with gold, silver, and precious stones versus wood, hay, and stubble powerfully illustrates that what we build our lives upon will be tested by fire. Some will receive great rewards; others will be saved but suffer loss. This message calls us to live with purpose, understanding that we are lights in a dark world, and that our walk must match our talk if we are to effectively shine for Christ in this crooked and depraved generation.

Video Breakdown:

- Chapter 1: The Authority of Scripture and Context 0:00 - 7:21
 - We begin by affirming the divine inspiration of Scripture and establish the critical importance of understanding context when interpreting Philippians 2:12-18.
- Chapter 2: Salvation by Grace, Not Works 7:21 - 17:00
 - We clarify that salvation is entirely by grace through faith in Christ alone, not by our works, but that we are saved unto good works.
- Chapter 3: The Judgment Seat of Christ. 17:00 - 35:00
 - We discover that all believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give account for what we did with our salvation, receiving rewards or suffering loss.
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- Chapter 4: Working Out What God Works In. 35:00 - 51:35
 - We are called to work out our salvation by living out what God is working in us, shining as lights in a dark world through authentic Christian living.

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Mentioned References:

1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All scripture is given by inspiration of God
2. Philippians 2:12-18 - Main text: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling
3. Acts (general reference) - Paul's vision of the man from Macedonia and start of Philippian church
4. Ephesians 2:8-10 - Saved by grace through faith, not of works
5. Philippians 2:10 - Every knee will bow, every tongue confess
6. Philippians 1:27 - Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel
7. Revelation 20 (general reference) - Great white throne judgment
8. 2 Corinthians 5:1-1 - Absent from the body, present with the Lord; judgment seat of Christ
9. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 - Building on the foundation of Christ; works tested by fire
10. Philippians 2 (later verses) - Shine like stars in a crooked and depraved generation
11. Philippians 1:6 (alluded to) - He who began a good work will complete it
12. Philippians 3 (end of chapter, alluded to) - Press toward the goal of the high calling

Additional Relevant References for Themes Discussed:

13. Romans 3:23 - All have sinned and fall short
14. Romans 6:23 - The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life
15. Titus 3:5 - Not by works of righteousness which we have done
16. James 2:14-26 - Faith without works is dead (complements the "work out" teaching)
17. Matthew 25:14-30 - Parable of the talents (explicitly mentioned in sermon)
18. 1 Corinthians 15:58 - Labor in the Lord is not in vain

19. Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ
20. Colossians 1:29 - Striving according to His working

Key Points:

- Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone—not by works (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- Christians are saved unto good works, not by good works
- "Working out" salvation means living out what God has already worked in you through the Holy Spirit
- Context is crucial for proper biblical interpretation; verses taken out of context become pretexts
- All believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) to give account for their lives
- This judgment is not about salvation but about rewards for faithful stewardship of the new life in Christ
- Christians have a responsibility to let their manner of life be worthy of the gospel
- What we build on the foundation of Christ matters—gold, silver, and precious stones endure, while wood, hay, and stubble will burn up
- Over 50% of the Christian life is not just about getting to heaven but living out salvation here on earth
- Believers are called to shine like stars in a crooked and depraved generation

NOTES:

Discussion Questions:

- How does understanding that salvation is a gift through grace alone, rather than earned through works, change the way you approach your daily walk with Christ?

- What does it mean practically to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, and how can you distinguish this from working for your salvation?

- In what ways are you currently allowing God to work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure, rather than pursuing your own agenda?

- How does knowing you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account for what you did with your salvation impact your priorities and choices today?

- What would it look like for your life to shine like a star in a crooked and depraved generation, and what specific areas need adjustment to reflect Christ more clearly?

- Are you building your Christian life with gold, silver, and precious stones that will last, or with wood, hay, and stubble that will burn up, and how can you tell the difference?

Small Group Guide: Working Out Your Salvation

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Have you ever started a gym membership or fitness goal with great enthusiasm only to quit within a few months? What caused you to stop, and what would have helped you continue?

Key Scripture

Philippians 2:12-18 Focus verses: "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." (Philippians 2:12-13)

Core Teaching Summary

Main Points:

1. **Salvation is NOT earned by works** - We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-10)
2. **We ARE called to work OUT what God works IN us** - This is about living out our salvation, not earning it
3. **There is a day of reckoning coming** - The Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) where believers will give account for what they did with their salvation (2 Corinthians 5:10)
4. **Rewards in heaven are real** - What we build on the foundation of Christ will be tested by fire (1 Corinthians 3:10-15)
5. **Context matters** - We must understand Scripture in context to avoid misinterpretation

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Foundation (15-20 minutes)

1. **Read Ephesians 2:8-10 together.** How does this passage clarify the relationship between salvation and works? Why is this distinction so important?
2. The pastor emphasized that "you can't work out if God hasn't worked it in you." What does this mean practically? How does this change your understanding of Christian living?
3. Have you ever been taught that you need to "work for" your salvation? How does today's message correct or confirm your understanding?

The Judgment Seat of Christ (15-20 minutes)

4. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 and 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.** Were you aware that believers would stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ? How does this truth affect your perspective on daily Christian living?

5. The sermon mentioned that over 50% of people quit gym memberships within 3-5 months. What parallels do you see between this and Christians who don't "work out" their salvation? What causes believers to stop growing spiritually?
6. The pastor said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" doesn't mean being terrified, but being serious about our responsibility. What's the difference between healthy reverence and unhealthy fear in our relationship with God?

Practical Application (15-20 minutes)

7. **Read Philippians 1:27.** Paul says to "let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." In what specific areas of your life is God currently "working in you"? How are you "working it out"?
8. The sermon shared a testimony about someone coming to Christ through a hunting relationship where faith was lived out naturally, not forced. Share an example of when you've seen someone's authentic Christian walk impact others (or when someone's walk impacted you).
9. The pastor mentioned building with "gold, silver, precious stones" versus "wood, hay, stubble." What are examples of each in everyday life? What are you currently building with?

Personal Reflection (10 minutes)

10. The sermon ended with this question: "**Are you working out what God is working in you?**" Take a moment for honest self-reflection:
 - Where are you thriving in living out your faith?
 - Where have you been coasting or living on "vacation mode" spiritually?
 - What specific step is God calling you to take this week?

Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Salvation is secure in Christ** - We cannot lose our salvation; it's based on Christ's finished work, not our performance
- ✓ **We have responsibility** - Though not saved by works, we are saved FOR good works and will give account for how we lived
- ✓ **Rewards are eternal** - What we do with our salvation matters not just for this life, but for eternity
- ✓ **The world is watching** - We are called to "shine like stars" in a dark world by living out what God works in us
- ✓ **Context is crucial** - Always study Scripture in context to avoid creating a "pretext"

This Week's Challenge

Individual Application:

Choose ONE area where you know God is working in you but you haven't been "working it out":

- **Identify it:** What is God calling you to do/change/develop?
- **Prepare for it:** Like preparing for a mountain hunt, what preparation do you need?
- **Take action:** What is ONE concrete step you can take this week?
- **Share it:** Tell one person in this group to create accountability

Group Application:

Discuss together: How can we as a group encourage one another to "work out" our salvation rather than just "getting by"? What practical ways can we support each other in spiritual growth?

Memory Verse

Ephesians 2:8-10 - "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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

Closing Prayer Points

- Thank God for the security we have in Christ's finished work
- Ask for strength and wisdom to "work out" what God is working in us
- Pray for awareness of the eternal significance of our daily choices
- Request boldness to shine as lights in a dark world
- Commit to encouraging one another in spiritual growth

For Further Study

- Philippians 1:27 - Living worthy of the gospel
- Romans 8:28-39 - Security in Christ
- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 - Running the race for the prize
- Hebrews 12:1-2 - Fixing our eyes on Jesus
- James 2:14-26 - Faith and works relationship

Sermon Transcript:

I want to welcome everyone that's joining us online today and those that are listening by radio. Thank you so much for taking time to be here with us.

I'd like for you to, if you would please, stand with me and open your Bibles.

We'll be reading out of Philippians chapter 2 and we're primarily going to try to wrap up what we started last week.

We only had two verses to cover and we didn't get that done, but we're going to try to do that this week, okay?

If you would, we're going to go ahead and do this verse first, alright?

I bet we'll have this memorized here in another month or so, maybe less than that, right?

2 Timothy chapter 3.

Verses 16 through 17.

It may be up here on your screen.

I hope it is for you guys to share this.

And I think it's important that we do this before we read the Word of God.

And one reason I think it's so important is for you to know and understand this morning that what we're going to be studying is not man's opinion.

What we're going to be studying is the one true sovereign God's Word.

This is His Word.

It's not my opinion.

It's not your opinion.

It's true not because I think it is.

It's true because it's his word.

And so this morning, before we even begin to read this and study it, let's say this together, all right?

All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof,

correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God would be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

You may have a different translation than I do, but that's okay.

It says the same thing.

So this morning as we now hold in our hands the truth, and God has so lovingly given this to us,

And this morning, what we're doing now, we are just going to open this up and we're going to read this and study it together and ask the Holy Spirit to share with us the truth, alright?

So let's start reading here in the second chapter, starting in verse 12 and we're going to finish in verse 18.

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."

He says,

So that, here's the reason, so that in the day of Christ, Paul says, I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

Amen.

You may be seated.

Well, as we...

come to this passage of Scripture this morning.

Last week, we spent a great deal of time making sure that we get a very good understanding of what the Apostle Paul is teaching the Philippian believers.

And we know that the Apostle Paul is writing this letter of joy from a very unjoyful place and spot in his life.

He's actually in prison here.

We've learned that.

He's in prison not because he has done something wrong against anything that he would be sentenced for, but he's actually in prison because of his testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so Paul is writing this letter to this church that he loved and started himself.

We learned about that in Acts, how Paul went from a vision, from a man from Macedonia, calling for him to come over to Macedonia.

And Paul started this church in a very unlikely way in place with just literally a woman by the name of Lydia and her family.

Not only that, after he was there, he was arrested, thrown in prison.

Through that process and God's intervention in Paul and Paul's life, the jailer who beat him and scourged him ended up actually inviting Paul to his house where Paul shared the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with him and his family.

That's really the start of this church.

And so Paul has a long history with these people and he loves these people.

And Paul, not able to be with them in person now, is writing them a letter in his absence to bring great encouragement to them.

Even though they've received a letter that Paul was in prison and word that he was in prison, he wanted them to know that they needed to be in much cheer and joy, even in Paul's circumstance.

And so for us to understand what Paul is getting at here, we mentioned this last week that that one of the important principles of biblical interpretations, very important we understand this, is that

Context is extremely important.

And last week we learned that a verse that you pull out of Scripture, out of context, becomes a pretext if you do not use context.

And so a lot of people throughout a lot of years, unfortunately, have brought great abuse to the body of Christ in preaching this section of Scripture because they simply pulled out these two verses out of this letter and they...

would say something like this, you are to work out your own salvation.

You're supposed to work for your salvation.

And see, that's not what this is.

Paul says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is working in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

We made it very, very clear through understanding what Paul is getting at that you're not working for your salvation.

That's not something we do.

Because the Bible makes it clear, the Apostle Paul says that our works of righteousness are filthy rags before God.

Because why?

We can't attain to the holiness of God.

The only way we stand before God, righteous today, is not because of our working for righteousness.

It's because of the one who came and provided the only way that we could be righteous.

And that is the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, provided that.

You and I know emphatically that we cannot add one single thing to the work that Jesus Christ gave and provided for us in atonement on the cross of Calvary.

Absolutely not possible.

So if you have a background, and the reason we're going through this, and I think it's important this morning, if you do have a background of a works...

faith based faith in other words you need to earn this you got to work it you need to merit the favor of god you're going to have to have all this stuff at the end of life and make sure that you dotted your t's crossed your eyes and hopefully at the end of it all maybe by maybe the skin of your teeth you just might make salvation that's not the gospel

And in fact, another important hermeneutics is that scripture interprets scripture.

So what we're doing in preaching through this letter is we're reading everything before it, and then we're going to be studying everything after it.

So as I begin to study these things, I have to know the whole book.

I have to read this.

I have to not just simply pull out these two verses and make it and twist it and bend it into this incredible theological mess of barbed wire that's been rolled up with grass and dirt and all kinds of stuff into a mess.

What we're going to do is we're going to study this in context, okay?

So that's what we're doing.

We know that if Paul was saying you had to work for your salvation, we'd have to throw out almost all of his other letters because in every other one he's telling us we're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ Jesus alone.

That's how we are saved.

In fact, in Ephesians 2.8, we looked at this last week briefly, Paul says, "...for by grace you have been saved."

Through faith, not through works, through faith in the one who did the work, Jesus.

He is the one that did the work.

And this is not of your own doing, so no big heads in heaven.

Trust me, there will be none.

We will be there only by the grace and mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus.

That's it.

It is a gift of God.

It's not a result of works.

I don't know how much more clear we can make this.

It's very, very clear.

So that no one may boast.

We love to be able to boast about our achievements.

But when we get to heaven, there's not going to be any boasting about your achievements in gaining salvation.

For only Christ, the one in whom we will lay our crowns before.

is worthy of praise, glory, honor.

And that's why He has the name that is above all names.

That's why He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

And that's why every single knee in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth will all what?

They will bow before Him and they will confess that He alone is the Lord God Almighty.

Amen.

He alone is.

But then in verse 10 of chapter 2 in Ephesians, he says, for we are God's workmanship.

Did you know that you are the workmanship of God?

We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for what?

For good works.

We are not saved by works, we've been saved unto or for good works.

That's what we've been saved unto.

Which God has prepared beforehand that we should, here's a very important word, that we should walk in them.

Walking has to do with how we live.

That's our walk.

You've heard it say, hey, you know, your walk needs to match your talk and all that thing.
You know what I'm saying?

This is what we're getting at here with what Paul is sharing here into the Ephesians, is that we are not saved by works.

We were saved by the work that Christ did in the atonement that brought us justification through his shed blood on the cross of Calvary.

He not only died for sin, he took away our sin and buried it.

It's gone.

And now, by faith in His work in Christ, faith in Him, all by the grace of God, we have what?

been made new, adopted into the family of God, repented of that old life, turned away to Jesus, who's the author and perfecter of our faith.

He is the one in whom we trust.

We don't trust in our works for merit from God, amen?

Not in relation to salvation.

So if you believe or have been taught your whole life that you have to work

to earn the approval and love and merit of salvation before God, take a big breath and take the weight off and chuck it away and say, no, I am saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus alone.

That's good news, folks.

Because I will promise you, if you could lose your salvation, then you would.

Guaranteed.

You can't even keep up with your car keys.

There's not much hope in you making salvation.

The other thing is if you can lose it, at what line are you above the line and where in the line are you below the line?

And so what men do is they just raise and lower and change the line.

That's a bunch of baloney.

You're either saved or you're not.

You know, I've never been saved from something, and really, I wasn't saved.

You know, that's not how this thing works.

No, we're saved by grace, through faith, not in our works, but in the work of Christ.

So we have settled that.

So church, Christian, hear me this morning.

You are, if you are in Christ, you are safe in Christ.

But as we look through this, then you're saying, well, John, what in the world is Paul getting at in this passage of Scripture?

I told you last week we're going to begin to unpack the application of what Paul is teaching here.

And how do we make this work in our life today?

And what was he referring to for the Philippian believers in their day on how they're supposed to do this?

One thing we have to understand that...

What Paul is getting at here, there's a hint to it back here in chapter 1, verse 27.

So remember, context is everything.

Paul has already shared some very important truths with us.

Let's go back to the 27th verse.

Listen to what Paul writes here.

This is a clue to us to help us, give us a hint on what Paul's getting at.

He says, only let your manner of life.

What is that?

That's our walk.

Let your manner of life be what?

Worthy of the gospel of Christ, Paul says, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear, and now we're seeing this, that you are, he's talking about now they're living.

This is the living aspect.

I mean, I have some animals that I've had stuffed.

They're called trophies, right?

But it has no life in it.

In fact, I take it to a taxidermist and I say, I need you to stuff this thing so that I can take this trophy and stick it on my wall so that I can walk by and look at it and smile.

God did not save you to stuff you and set you as a trophy on the walls of heaven.

This salvation that you have been given is absolutely incredible, but it also is very applicable for the blessings of our life here on earth.

It's about our living.

Yes, we have heaven.

Praise God for that.

But aren't you glad we're not just waiting solely for heaven to have the benefits of salvation?

The new life has already taken place in you if you're a believer.

It's about our living here.

And Paul says, let your manner of life be worthy of this incredible gospel, this good news, this new life in Christ Jesus.

So Paul here, as we're going to learn to unpack this today, he is saying, though, that although we're not saved by our works, that's all been settled, there is a truth that we have responsibility

before God and man on what we do with what He has given us in our salvation.

We have a responsibility, a major responsibility.

So our responsibility before God is how we work out, how we walk, how we live, what he has worked in us.

You can't work out if God hasn't worked it in you.

It has to be in you for you to work it out.

So for people who have made a profession of faith that have never possessed the Spirit of God and really took hold of salvation in faith, now they may have a profession, but they're not able to live it out because they don't have it in them.

But if you're a believer in Christ Jesus, you've been given the Holy Spirit of God at the moment of your regeneration, and the Holy Spirit lives in us to help us as a paraclete live this thing out in our life.

You've been given a helper.

Isn't that good news?

Very good news.

One reason we're covering this, and I want you to know this, is because there's great implications not only for you now in your life here on earth, but also for eternity.

And pastors and teachers who never teach the responsibility aspect of what you've been given living out in your life are going to bankrupt you for something that you can have for eternity.

Yes, you will make heaven.

Praise God for the fact that Jesus Christ has made us right before God.

But did you know something?

You and I have something that we are going to also enjoy, and they're called rewards in heaven.

Did you know that?

I want every Christian in here to know that if you're in Christ Jesus today, that you are going to give an account for what you did with the salvation that you've been given.

Did you know that?

Just as all men who are unbelievers will in Revelation chapter 20 be raised from the dead and stand before the great white throne judgment that we read about there, and they are going to give an account for the things they did in the body.

See?

Likewise, every single Christian who has been given the new life will also stand before not the great white throne judgment, but before the judgment seat of Christ.

It's called the bema seat in the Greek.

It's the mercy seat.

You will give an account before Christ,

with what you did with this gift of new life in the body.

That's going to happen.

You say, John, I don't know.

Is that really a true thing?

Well, let's see what the Bible says.

Remember, it doesn't matter what I think.

It totally matters what the Bible says.

Go with me to 1 Corinthians 5.

Flip back there, and I want to show you this.

There's a reason I want you to know these things, because they have great implications.

Not only, as Paul wrote in a few verses later there in chapter 2, we read them, that we are to shine like stars, be blameless before a crooked and depraved generation.

The world is crooked and depraved.

Would anybody deny that?

Always has been, by the way.

It always will be.

Because people outside of the new life in Christ, that's how we used to live.

Don't forget that.

We all used to live there at one time.

Amen?

Amen.

We're no longer to live there.

Why?

Because you are new in Christ.

You've been given the new life.

You've been set free from the slavery of sin.

Now you've been given what?

The Spirit of God that now enables us to live this new life and work it out, work it out, work it out, and work it out.

That's what we're to do.

Well, 1 Corinthians chapter 5.

Let me look here where I want to go with this.

Maybe it's 1 Corinthians chapter 5.

How about we go to 2 Corinthians chapter 5?

Yeah.

I'm actually fairly decent at maps, but this was not a really good map for you here.

I laid down a wrong road turn.

We turned left instead of right.

Here we go.

2 Corinthians chapter 5.

2 Corinthians 5, just follow along with me.

This is the Word of God.

This is not man's opinion.

This is why we need to study the Word of God, not listen to man without studying the Word.

That will get us into all kinds of trouble.

We're not going to do that.

You're not going to take my Word for anything because it's only the Word of God that matters.

And that's why I tell you all, please study the Word of God.

Please, please do that.

We have it, so let's use it.

Paul writes here to the church in Corinth, a pretty rank church, pretty rough church, a lot of people that came out of a very, very, very rough style of living.

We all can identify with this, right?

He's writing this to them.

He says, for we know, speaking now about what happens when we die here, it's important, speaking to believers, he's not writing this to unbelievers, he's writing this to Christians.

He says, for we know that if this tent, this old body that we have,

That is our earthly home when it's destroyed, when it dies.

We have a building from God.

Jesus says, I go to prepare a place for you that when I am finished, right, I will come back and I will receive you unto myself that where I am you may be also.

What's Christ doing?

He's preparing a place for us.

That's what he's doing.

A house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this tent right here that we have now, we groan.

Has anybody groaned this week?

You groaned when you got out of bed this morning to come to church, probably.

Oh, not again.

I could stay home today and sleep.

Yeah, you could have, but I'm glad you're here.

I'm glad you're here.

He says, we groan and we long to put on our heavenly dwelling.

If indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked, for while we are still in this tent here on earth, we groan being burdened.

Anybody have any burdens in their life?

like called a job and a mortgage, right?

For in this tent we groan, longing to put it on.

He says, we may not be found naked.

We're being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed.

So that what is mortal, which is our bodies now, may be swallowed up by life.

He who has prepared us for this very thing is God.

God prepared this for us.

Who has given us, what?

The Spirit as a guarantee.

That's your guarantee right there.

We have the Spirit of God.

So we are always of good courage, Paul says.

Always.

Did you know things aren't falling apart?

They're falling in place.

Did you all know that?

I say that periodically so that you understand.

What you see happening in this world is simply God letting things fall into place according to his sovereign plan.

That's what's happened.

So you know what?

We're of good courage.

We're of great courage, actually.

We know that while we are at home in this body, while you're still alive on this earth, living in this tent, Paul says, we are away from the Lord.

That's an absolute truth in the sense that we're not there with him.

We're here.

His spirit is in us.

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Yes, he says, we are of good courage.

He says that twice.

And we would rather be away from this body because when we die, what's Paul say?

You're not going to soul sleep, man.

He says, you will what?

And be at home with who?

The Lord.

The Lord.

That's what happens when we die as Christians.

Amen?

So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him.

Do you see that?

We make it our aim to please him, not because we're working for salvation, but because we're working out our salvation.

And there's reasons for that.

For we must, here we go, for we, speaking to Christians now, this is why this is so important that you understand this truth.

Because it has huge implications for you, not only now in life, but for all eternity.

That's why I want you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, to know this truth.

Because I want to see God handing out your rewards.

That what I've done here in the labor, like Paul says, if I'm pouring out myself all for your walk in salvation, let it be so.

Paul says, I don't want to think that I've run in vain.

Paul says, I want to see that you were there, you finished well, and God is giving you the rewards for the way you lived out what he has given you.

This is why I want you to know this, so that you are going to be so blessed with the gifts that you will receive for all eternity.

And it's the things done in the body that will bring those gifts forever.

It's not your salvation.

No, it's not your salvation.

But it's rewards.

It's rewards.

Then he says this moving along.

For we must all appear before, here's that word, the judgment seat.

If you look it up in the Greek, bema seat.

It's called mercy seat.

The mercy seat was in the holy of holies where the great high priest would once a year on the day of atonement take the blood of the lamb and he would sprinkle it over the mercy seat of God where he dwelt between the cherubim.

You know who our mercy seat is now.

His name is Jesus.

His blood is what is atoned for your sin.

And it's by the mercies of God.

Amen?

We're going to appear, he says, to believers before the judgment seat of Christ.

Listen to what it says.

So that each one, can you say each one?

Can you say me?

Yeah, that's not good English, but hey, it works.

So that each one may receive, here it is, what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

This is so important.

He's not speaking here to unbelievers.

He's speaking to the church in Corinth.

All through the writings here of Paul, we're going to understand what Paul's getting at here.

He's getting at something very important for believers.

He says, listen, you've got to know something.

There's something coming.

It's called the day of reckoning.

It's coming in the future.

For example, let me give you this example.

Maybe this will make it simple because I work in a very simple mind.

Amen.

That's it.

Was that my wife somewhere?

No.

She knows how simple I am.

Trust me.

Bless her heart.

Anyway, moving along.

I know that this spring I have scheduled on my calendar a high country solo backpacking bear hunt.

It's already on my schedule.

And I know the date, kind of when I'm going, kind of.

It can change.

Things happen and I have to sometimes adjust that.

But I know this is coming.

And I also have had past experience that knowing when you're in real high elevation in the mountains, it's hard to breathe.

So what I've been doing for a while now is since I know there is coming a test for me, guess what I've been doing?

I've been preparing.

I have been in preparation.

I've been working out, even though you can't tell, I have been working out.

Right?

You're lucky I got a shirt on today.

Yeah.

I've been exercising.

I've been running.

I've been working out.

You know why?

Because I've got a great test coming.

I have to prepare with things that I need.

I got no one else to rely on.

I got to think about grizzly bears.

Where do I place my food?

How do I keep my food?

I've got to have all these things in place.

I have to be prepared because when I get there, I'm not tested yet, but it's going to be tested.

And I can promise you, it won't take very long for my test to show what my preparation was when I get there.

That's why in my mind there's something coming because this is how I'm made.

If I'm going to work out, it better be a goal I'm working toward or it's not happening.

Because the recliner at night is a whole lot more comfortable than the other recliner.

So what I know is there's a day coming of reckoning for me, and it's coming in the near future, that I'm going to have to have this heavy pack by myself in isolation in high country, and I'm going to have to put the miles and the effort in in order to locate what it is that I'm trying to harvest.

But I'm going to be tested to see.

This is what you have to know, Christian.

This has got nothing to do with your salvation.

But there is the parable of the talents is a parable for us to understand.

That the master gave something to his workers.

Each according to their own ability.

He didn't give somebody who didn't have the ability to do five talents.

He didn't do that.

He gave them what their ability was.

So every one of them was giving something according to their own ability.

Did you know not everybody has the same size of faith?

Did you know that?

Yes.

We don't all have the same measure of faith, but the person that has a lot in this measure, he's the same amount responsible for that is as a person who has a smaller amount of faith.

And the smaller amount of faith person shouldn't look at the other one and go, well, gee, I don't need to do anything because I don't have as much faith as him.

That's not how this works.

Paul says, work out, guess what?

Not my salvation.

Work out your own.

What we have a tendency to do in the physical realm is look at people and go, you know what, that one over there needs a gym membership.

We do that in the church.

Well, that one over there needs to get things, you know, X, Y, Z. Paul didn't say that.

He said, work out your own.

And the reason he puts fear and trembling in there is because, you know what he says?

Guys, we need to be serious about this.

There's a lot at stake here.

A lot at stake.

A lot at stake.

We're all going to stand before the judgment seat of God in Christ Jesus.

Every Christian will, and we're going to give an account for what we've done in the body with the new life that we've been given.

And that's why this is so, so, so very important.

So Paul says to the saints, these Christians, the redeemed of the Lord, the bride of Christ, knowing that God is what?

God's working in you.

Did you know God is working in you?

He's always at work.

He's working in you both to will and to work not for your pleasure but for his good pleasure.

His good pleasure.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

You've got to take this serious is what Paul says.

Now, just quickly, did you know that the health fitness industry is big business?

Anybody know that?

That was no pun.

Big business.

Did you not get that?

Anyway, moving on.

Okay.

Wow.

It's big business in the United States.

There is a recorded 41,370 health fitness clubs in America.

Are you a member of one?

You don't have to raise your hand.

We will judge.

No, just kidding.

Just kidding.

Just kidding.

Oh, strike that.

Just kidding.

Moving along.

Here we go.

And these 41,000 plus memberships, gym facilities...

employ over 700,000 employees.

Wow.

Consist of some 64 million members.

That's a lot of people.

Americans spend more than \$35 billion annually on gym memberships.

That's pretty amazing.

Yes, don't worry, the government spends a lot more.

The global gym industry generates, I don't know how they got these numbers, but this is Google, okay?

So, hey, take it for what it's worth.

It generates \$96 billion in 2020 was the number, the world industry, gym industry, with more than 184 million members.

Over 50%, and this is the low end, I had a higher end, but I wasn't going to put that in there.

Over 50% of people who start a gym membership will quit within the first three to five months.

Isn't that interesting?

So as we look at what Paul's getting at, this working out, this working out what God is working in us, we're going to look here at primarily four reasons why...

And Paul's going to allude to this in his writings.

Why people do not work this out, what God has worked in them.

We've already talked about the first one.

I think that's because most people don't know that for Christians, there's a day of reckoning coming where they're going to stand before Jesus Christ.

And let me just go here quickly so I don't forget this because we're going to run out of time this morning, okay?

If you would, go with me to...

Let's see here.

1 Corinthians chapter 3.

Just real quick, let me show you something here that's very significant.

I want you to understand this.

We're going to start in verse 10.

I'm going to touch on this as we get into this because I don't know if we'll have time to finish and I don't want you to miss this.

This is a very important part and a very important point for you as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want for you to make sure you understand this.

It's very important.

This has got nothing to do with my salvation.

Thank God.

We're in Christ and we are secure in Christ Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus, for that.

He made a covenant with his own blood.

He's not going to break it.

It's not going to happen.

That's right.

I am in total agreement.

He who began a good work in you.

Paul says in chapter 1 of Philippians, we'll be faithful to complete it.

That's good news.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 3, start in verse 10 with me.

I want you to just hear the words of this.

That's why we're using the word of God.

It doesn't matter what man's opinion is.

All that matters here is what God's word says.

So listen.

Follow along with me starting in verse 10 of chapter 3, 1 Corinthians.

According to the grace of God given to me.

Right before this, people are arguing over some follow Paul, some follow Apollos.

You know how people are.

They follow man.

Don't follow man.

No, don't do that.

Follow Christ.

Follow Jesus.

In the days that we are going to be seeing in our lifetime, those who follow man very well could fall.

But those who follow Jesus, it's going to be all right.

Don't follow men, follow Christ.

According to the grace given to me, Paul says, like a skilled master builder.

Now he's going to talk about our foundation.

I laid, Paul says, a foundation and someone else is building upon it.

Very important you hear this.

Let each one, each person,

We know Jesus Christ is the foundation.

We know that.

If you don't have Christ, you don't have a foundation.

Sorry.

If you have religion, you don't have a foundation.

You've got shifting sand.

That's all you have.

Christ is the rock.

He's the bedrock, the cornerstone.

He's all that.

And he says, very, very important, let each one take care.

Be careful, Paul says.

Be cognitive.

Pay attention, Paul says.

Very important.

How he, each person, builds upon the foundation.

Be careful how you build.

Why?

For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid.

This is why this is so important today.

And that's why we're getting back to this because I know if you're here this morning, you may have not had a good foundation laid.

Maybe you had a foundation of religion laid.

That's no foundation.

Maybe your foundation was, well, you just got wet and went through water.

Did you know baptism doesn't save a person?

If that was the case, we'd all be baptized and saved after every shower.

No, water doesn't save you.

The blood of Jesus Christ shed for you and faith in Him is what saves you.

It's the foundation.

That's why we have to spend time laying the foundation.

Maybe we have to go back and shore up the foundation because the foundation's cracked.
It's shifted.

And you're noticing that your walls have got huge cracks in them.

The higher you build, the more off the thing gets.

because the foundation's got issues.

But that's where you find how to build your foundation upon Jesus Christ, through the word
right here.

Right here.

So he says, let each of us take care how he builds upon it, for there's no, no one can lay a
foundation other than the one which was laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now listen to this.

This is important.

Gotta get this.

Now if anyone builds a

on the foundation with this, gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, hay, or stubble, will be
revealed.

Oh, each one's work will become manifest.

When?

The Bema Seat Judgment.

Each one's work becomes manifest for the day.

What's the day?

The Judgment Seat of Christ.

The day where all believers will stand before Him there.

Not on earth on the great white throne judgment.

In heaven before him.

That's where we're going to stand.

That's why it says every knee will bow, every tongue confess in heaven on the earth and under
the earth.

No one's getting out of that.

And then he says this, each one's work.

Here's that word work again.

You say, John, there's that stinking word work.

Yes, the work.

Each one's work will become manifest.

In other words, it's going to become known.

For the day will what?

Disclose it.

Because it will be revealed by fire.

And the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

Done.

In other words, what you did with this incredible gift of mercy, grace in the new birth of salvation, what you did with it has implications.

Because the lost world, guess what?

They don't have the new life in Christ.

But we do.

We do.

to a twisted and perverse generation, do you know what the church and the people of God are supposed to do?

We're to shine like the stars in the darkness.

But if we are not living out what God is working in us, you are not shining an ounce.

The only way these people who are lost, as were you, they were saved through the gospel.

I heard a story, a testimony of a dear friend that I've made here at church just recently about how he came to a knowledge of Christ and it wasn't the way you might think.

It was actually through something many of us men love to do, hunt.

A gentleman from our church invited him hunting.

Begin to build a relationship when hunting.

No talky-talky of much of anything.

Listen, you don't have to walk around with the guys you work with, whether it's cowboys, oil field workers.

It don't matter what.

You don't have to walk around with this thing up in the air, okay?

There's some freaks out there that do.

And I'll tell you how far they get with people.

Not far.

Because see, what you're doing is you're already showing that just by living.

And what happened was they killed a deer.

And this guy said, before they began to actually clean it, cut it up, he said, don't you think that we should thank God for this moment in this day and for this animal?

The guy's like, okay, sure.

And they gave thanks to God.

That's it.

Next year,

Now, now we've got a relationship.

Now we're talking about different things about life and how God pertains to things in our life.

And through a process of that and a mom who lived the joy of the Lord going through very, very trying experiences in life, this person, not because somebody smashed him upside the skull with a New King James Version Bible, but because people were living out what God was working in them.

He came to the knowledge and the faith of Christ.

This is the way in which we do what Paul says.

What we'd rather do is live like hellions and walk around with the Bible once in a while.

Somebody.

No way, no.

No way, no.

See,

the world, it has the absolute right to watch your working out.

It has the right.

And when you work out what God is working in you, do you know that it will bear fruit?

It will bear fruit.

Listen to what Paul says here, though, as we wrap this up.

I am so sorry.

We may not make it through the two verses yet.

Anyway, we tried hard.

I want you to understand this truth because I'm telling you, dear Christian, it's going to matter.

Not only in life today does it matter, but it's going to matter for you forever.

What you do with what God has given you, it's not go on vacation in your salvation.

It's not just walk in the glory that I'm saved and everybody else go to hell.

It's that God is working in you for a purpose, dear Christian.

that you would leave the old man and crucify that guy that comes up every day and rises up and says no to godly living and no to a pure life and no to living in Christ.

You've got to smash that man down because just because you were saved does not mean the old man died.

You have to kill him every day because if you give that man his way, trust me,

He will take it and run with it.

But you have the new man.

The new man.

The new life.

And that's what we are to work it out of us.

That's what it's to be.

Sorry I got so excited, but listen.

I want you to know us.

You were sleeping.

I had to wake you up anyway.

I want to preach every message like it's my last message.

There will one day be a last message for me.

I'm sorry I shouldn't beat on that.

That doesn't help anybody.

Guys, there's going to come a last day for you.

And I want you to stand before the king.

And this is what's going to happen.

Listen, we'll finish with this.

I had four points and we didn't even get to one of them.

Here we go.

Listen to this.

Flip back a page here.

Now, if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, these are things that don't perish.

These are eternal things, by the way.

Or wood, hay, or stubble.

Each one's work will become manifest for the day will disclose it because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

If the work that anyone has built on the foundation.

Notice it's on the foundation first.

It's on Christ.

It's on salvation.

That's there.

Built upon the foundation survives.

Listen.

He will receive not salvation.

You already have salvation.

Not eternal life.

Dear Christian, you have eternal life.

But you will receive.

Here it is.

Reward.

Reward.

It's the bear at the end of the week that you worked so hard to get to.

It's the reward, man.

It matters.

If anyone's work is burned up, listen to this.

This is so important.

Stop building your life on the foundational things of this world.

They're wood, hay, and stubble.

To give you a proof of that, this whole thing is going to go up in smoke one day.

It will not last.

It's not going to last.

He says this.

If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss.

The loss of what?

Rewards.

The loss of rewards.

Listen though.

Though he himself will what?

Lose his salvation?

No.

He will be saved.

As one through fire.

Say, John, what's Paul getting at here?

I hope I've made this clear to you to help you understand it.

Paul's getting at something very important here that we all need to know.

God has given you this incredible gift of salvation.

You didn't earn it.

You didn't merit it.

None of that.

He's provided it, and you will always have it in Christ.

And when I hear someone ever tell me, well, at least I just got in.

Oh, dear Christian, you have missed the whole understanding.

It's not about just getting in, man.

Do you know you're going to rule and reign with Christ forever?

Forever.

And the rewards that you are storing up right now.

You might want to answer that.

That could be the Lord calling.

Just checking.

Let's verify.

He may have a different agenda.

No, just kidding.

Those things happen sometimes at the best time, don't they?

They really do.

The truth of the matter is, dear Christian, can I ask you this?

It's not that you look at my salvation or my working out or I look at your working out because only God knows.

Let me ask you this.

And only you can answer this honestly.

Are you working out what God is working in you?

And we have a whole other sermon next week.

Alright, what I mean is we'll get to these points next week.

So instead of getting through two verses in two weeks, it's going to take us three.

Alright?

Paul, would you come on up here please and we're going to close out.

If you're in Christ Jesus this morning, oh, you have such good news.

You cannot lose your salvation, dear Christian.

You are safe and secure in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Sorry, he can't die twice.

He only died once.

That's it.

But maybe you've missed this truth.

And the understanding of working this salvation out in real life.

What God saved you to.

And that's why here in just a few verses Paul the Apostle says, not that I've already attained all this.

Way at the end of his life.

But one thing I do.

I forget what's behind.

And I press on toward the what?

of the high call of God in Christ Jesus.

I press on to the goal, that of which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Paul says, I strain toward that.

That's amazing.

That's what I pray to God that you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, will do.

live out this incredible new life in a depraved and twisted dark world so that they might see what God is working in you coming out of you.

Because Jesus said this, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

And the truth is, in a much different fashion,

When the world sees us.

The reality is they should be seeing.

Some of Jesus.

Paul would you close in prayer brother.