

Message Three

Experiencing Christ as Our Constant Salvation

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:12-16

- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
- Phil 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and reasonings
- Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
- Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

I. The salvation in Philippians 2:12 is not eternal salvation from God's condemnation and from the lake of fire but the daily and constant salvation that is Christ as a living person:

Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

A. This practical, daily, moment-by-moment salvation results from taking the very Christ whom we live, experience, and enjoy as our inward as well as outward pattern:

1. The main elements of this salvation are Christ as the crucified life (vv. 5-8) and Christ in His exaltation (vv. 9-11).

- Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
Phil 2:6 Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped,
Phil 2:7 But emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men;
Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.
Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
Phil 2:10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
Phil 2:11 And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

2. When this pattern becomes our inward life, the pattern becomes our salvation.

3. To work out our salvation is to work out this pattern and to become in experience a reprint of this pattern—cf. 1 Pet. 2:21.

1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

B. The constant salvation in Philippians 1:19 is one in which a particular believer is saved from a specific encounter in a particular situation, whereas the constant salvation in 2:12 is one in which any believer is saved from ordinary things in common situations in his daily living.

- Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

II. To work out our own salvation is to carry it out, to bring it to the ultimate conclusion—v. 12:

- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- A. We have received God's salvation, which has as its climax our being exalted by God in glory as the Lord Jesus was—v. 9.
- Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
- B. Now we need to carry out this salvation, to bring it to its ultimate conclusion, by our constant and absolute obedience with the inward motive of fear and the outward attitude of trembling—v. 12, cf. v. 8; 1 Sam. 15:22.
- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.
- 1 Sam 15:22 And Samuel said, / Does Jehovah delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices / As much as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? / Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, / And to heed, than the fat of rams.
- C. The inner operating God Himself is our salvation, and obedience to Him is the working out of our salvation—Phil. 2:12-13.
- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

III. The reason we need to obey always is that God operates in us—v. 13:

- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
- A. It is not that we by ourselves carry out our salvation but that God operates in us to do it; the only thing we need to do is to obey the inner operating, energizing God—cf. Col. 1:29.
- Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.
- B. The God who operates in us as our subjective salvation is the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—the very God who is Christ in us (2 Cor. 13:3a, 5) and the Spirit in us (Rom. 8:11).
- 2 Cor 13:3a Since you seek a proof of the Christ who is speaking in me, ...
- 2 Cor 13:5 Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not realize about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?
- Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

IV. God operates in us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure—Phil. 2:13:

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

- A. The willing is within; the working is without.
- B. The willing takes place in our will, indicating that God's operation begins from our spirit and spreads into our mind, emotion, will, and eventually into our physical body—Rom. 8:4, 6, 11.

Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

- C. The good pleasure of God's will (Eph. 1:5) is to operate in us so that we may reach the climax of His supreme salvation—cf. Rom. 5:10, 17.

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

V. Murmurings and reasonings frustrate us from carrying out our salvation to the fullest extent and from experiencing and enjoying Christ to the uttermost—Phil. 2:14:

Phil 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and reasonings

- A. Murmurings are of our emotion and come mainly from the sisters; reasonings are of our mind and come mainly from the brothers.
- B. Murmurings and reasonings are due to disobedience to God; obedience to God slays all murmurings and reasonings.
- C. We should do all things without murmurings and reasonings in order that we may become blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish—v. 15:

Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,

- 1. Blameless describes our outward behavior, and guileless our inward character; to be guileless is to be simple, artless (not political), or innocent—Matt. 10:16.

Matt 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be therefore prudent as serpents and guileless as doves.

- 2. As children of God, we have God's life and nature—John 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

VI. In the midst of the dark and corrupt world, which is usurped by Satan (1 John

5:19; 2:15-17), our function is to shine as luminaries, holding forth the word of life—Phil. 2:15-16:

- 1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the evil one.
- 1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him;
- 1 John 2:16 Because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.
- 1 John 2:17 And the world is passing away, and its lust, but he who does the will of God abides forever.
- Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
- Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

- A. Christ is the sun, with the church as the moon and the believers as the planets to reflect Him by holding forth the word of life.
- B. To hold forth the word of life is to apply it, to present it, and to offer it to the world by living out Christ—Acts 5:20.

Acts 5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.

VII. Philippians 2:12-16 is a definition of living Christ in 1:19-21:

- Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
- Phil 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and reasonings
- Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
- Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.
- Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
- Phil 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- A. The God who operates in us (2:13) is the supplying Spirit (1:19).

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

- B. To shine as luminaries (2:15) is to magnify Christ (1:20), and to hold forth the word of life (2:16) is to live Christ (1:21a).

Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,

Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.
Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...

C. The only way to live Christ is to be saturated with the word of life:

1. The word of life is the living breath of God (2 Tim. 3:16), the Spirit who gives life (John 6:63).

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

2. We need to pray-read the Word, receiving the word of God by means of all prayer and petition—Eph. 6:17-18.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

3. We need to sing-read the Word, letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom by singing—Col. 3:16.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.

4. If we are filled with the riches of the living Word day by day, spontaneously we will hold forth the word of life; this is to live Christ that He may be magnified in us.

VIII. Philippians 2:5-16 reveals the divine and rich provision for our constant salvation:

Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
Phil 2:6 Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped,
Phil 2:7 But emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men;
Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.
Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
Phil 2:10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
Phil 2:11 And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.
Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;
Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
Phil 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and reasonings
Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.

A. We have the Lord Jesus as our pattern—vv. 6-11.

Phil 2:6 Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped,

Phil 2:7 But emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men;

Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.

Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

Phil 2:10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

Phil 2:11 And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

B. We have God operating in us—v. 13.

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

C. We are God's children, having God's life and the divine nature—v. 15.

Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,

D. We are luminaries qualified to reflect the divine light of Christ—v. 15.

Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,

E. We have the word of life to hold forth, to present, to others—v. 16.

Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.