

Work out what God has worked in.

Lesson 7

TEXT: Philippians 2:12-13

INTRODUCTION:

- DISCUSS: A new Christian approaches you and asks you this question: “Now that I am saved, how do I grow spiritually?”
 - a. We don’t think at all and we grow physically. So how do we go about growing spiritually? What would you tell them?
 - b. In today’s text, Paul answers this question.

CONTEXT: We have been walking through Philippians verse by verse. It’s critical we don’t forget how these thoughts go together in one coherent line of thinking.

- 1:27 – The command to live worthy of the Gospel.
 - a. Where?
 - 1:27-30 – Outside the church
 - 2:1-4 – Inside the church
 - b. Why?
 - 2:5-8 – The example of Jesus
 - 2:9-11 – The exaltation of Jesus
 - c. How? Today’s text...

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The What: Christ-motivated obedience (vs. 12)
 - a. If we are to keep this as simple as possible, the key to spiritual growth is seen in the first part of verse 12, “as ye have always obeyed.”
 - b. Obedience is the key to spiritual growth. As we obey the Lord we will grow. When we chose to disobey, we stunt our spiritual growth.
 - c. Question: Have you ever become frustrated with where you are physically? Maybe you are not happy with some extra pounds that have attached themselves through the pandemic. Why did this happen?
 - i. Most of the time, it has happened because we have “disobeyed” the laws of physical health. You can’t live on sodas and chips and expect to be in top shape.
 - ii. Oftentimes, the same is true in our spiritual health. When we are frustrated with where we find ourselves, it is usually because we have disobeyed the Lord somewhere that is keeping us from achieving optimum spiritual health.
 - d. Notice Paul’s use of “wherefore” at the beginning of the verse. He is connecting the previous verses to this new section. If Jesus is Lord (vs. 9-11) then we must follow Him in all He asks us to do.
 - e. So if we are to grow we must be willing to obey. Why do we obey? Because Jesus has saved us and Jesus is Lord – Christ-motivated obedience.
 - f. Transition: But how do we obey?
2. The How: God’s Part (vs. 13)
 - a. Paul outlines the fact that there are two primary factors that contribute to our spiritual growth. The first is God’s part and the second is our part.

- b. God's part is His ability to work in our hearts. God energizes our spiritual desires.
 - c. ILLUSTRATION: The phone and charger – outlined on page 65. This is an easy visual! Bring your phone and charging cable to hold up as you illustrate. The point: The power of our obedience to Christ comes from God.
 - d. Point out: God is not going to do it for us! We still have the choice to grow or not, but when we choose to obey God will supply the necessary empowering for us to be successful.
 - e. This should bring us extreme comfort because of what we read in 2:9. The power God displayed in Christ's exaltation is the power He demonstrates in our sanctification.
 - f. If we choose to obey we cannot fail!
3. The How: Our Part (vs. 12)
- a. God does His part to empower us, but if we are going to grow spiritually it will require active, personal obedience.
 - b. Notice in this verse God doesn't tell us to work "for" our salvation. "No one can work his salvation out unless God has already worked it in."
 - c. Paul has the idea that we carry out the natural implications of our salvation.
 - d. A good verse to cross reference is Ephesians 2:8-10. We are not saved by our works, but we are saved unto good works.
 - e. What is our attitude to be?
 - i. With fear: This means with complete reverence to God. Like a small child who loves his father/mother so much they never want to disappoint them.
 - ii. With trembling: Not trembling before God, but trembling at our understanding that if we try to obey on our own and in our own strength we will certainly fail! We need the Lord!

APPLICATION: So where do you need to obey?

- Use your keys as an illustration (from Keith Hill). Show them your keys with the following description:
 - a. House key: Where you keep your most valuable possessions – family!
 - b. Work key: Where you put into action the skills, talents, abilities and education that God has graced you with.
 - c. Other illustration: Gym locker key: Where you go to spend down time/recreation.
 - d. Safety deposit box key: Where you keep things only you know about.
- Question: Who has a copy of your keys? Important question: Does the Lord?
 - a. House key: Does the Lord have access to be Lord in your home?
 - b. Work: Is your faith as real at the office as it is sitting in SS?
 - c. Gym: Is Jesus Lord over your free time?
 - d. Safety deposit box: Is He Lord over the things only you know about?
- Lordship implies a willingness to obey. Where do you need to begin obeying the Lord today?
- The key to Christian growth is taking the next obedient step.
- Challenge the class to ask themselves: Is Jesus Lord over my life every time they pull their keys out this coming week.