

## 22S13 Philippians 2:12-18 Stop Grumbling

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today I want to continue our study of Philippians with Philippians 2:12-18.

Before we start, let us remember this short letter was most likely written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome. Paul had first visited Philippi during his second missionary journey, and he has great affection for the church in Philippi. This letter is sometimes called “the Joy Epistle” because of thankful and joyful tone. But remember Paul is in prison in Rome, not very happy circumstances.

I’m reading from the New King James version (NKJV) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Let’s read Philippians 2:12-18 (NKJV) *<sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. <sup>14</sup>Do all things without complaining and disputing, <sup>15</sup>that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup>holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. <sup>17</sup>Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup>For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.*

**Let’s pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your word from Philippians, help us see why Paul is so thankful and joyful despite his situation. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.**

So, before we start studying today. This section in many of our bibles has a heading. Of course, these headings are not part of the original letter Paul sent. But I do find these interesting. I like to see what the many translations say to round my understanding and prepare me for the text, Like this title “Light Bearers” (NKJV), or “Shine Brightly for Christ” (NLT) or “Shining as Stars” (KJV) or I like the what the NIV says, “Do Everything Without Grumbling”. Regardless of your translation title, Paul is about to tell us how we should be seen by others as a representative of Christ.

So, let’s break these verses down a little more. Starting with Philippians 2:12-13 (NKJV) *<sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.* Verse 12 is often avoided or ignored by many of our modern doctrines in preference for

other scriptures. Paul says, “*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*; This is an often ignored scripture. Paul is reminding us we need to work on our salvation continually, with reverent fear of God. I fear for so many Christians who act casual toward God. Remember God is God, I like how the Amplified Bible expands on this “*with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]*. We must be careful to avoid things that might offend God or if you carry the Name Christian, don't do anything that discredits the name of Christ. How many of us do this? Paul is telling us we need to have the proper respect for our King, King Jesus. Work it out with fear and trembling. Taking our relationship with Jesus seriously. Putting God first in everything we do, not just on Sundays and special days. But everything, every time with everyone. Then Paul reminds us God is working with us and through us according to His will not ours and for His pleasure and purpose, not ours. We are the servant, and He is the King. When we align our wills with God's life is better and more satisfying.

Now see what Paul says next with *<sup>14</sup>Do all things without complaining and disputing*, (Philippians 2:14 NKJV). Again, I want to read this also from the King James Bible *Do all things without murmurings and disputings*: This is the New International Version *Do everything without grumbling or arguing*

Do all things without complaining, no grumbling? Ouch. I don't know about you but I'm not very good at this. Paul is telling us to stop arguing, stop complaining, stop disputing. But why is this so important.? Well of course Paul tells us in the next verses.

Paul continues with *<sup>15</sup>that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup>holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.* (Philippians 2:15-16 NKJV). Jesus told us we are the light to the world. Our behavior and words matter. When we act as we should, people can see Jesus in us. But be certain we live in crooked and perverse generation. If we are followers of Jesus, then we need to live like we are children of God. Now no one can be blameless, but we should try to live this way as children of God. And we can do this by holding fast to the word of life. That is, we read and study our Bibles, we pray regularly, fellowship with Christians and serve others God is asking us to serve. We live purposefully as children of God , doing our best to be as Jesus wants us to be.

Paul continues with *<sup>17</sup>Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup>For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.*

Paul is quiet obviously talking about His potential death at the hands of the Romans. Paul wants how he has lived and how he may soon die to be an offering to God. As he says, being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith. Then he asks the Philipians to rejoice with him no matter what happens to him. This is

a great lesson. Rejoice no matter what. No matter what is happening, trust God. Follow King Jesus and be confident in your faith in Christ.

Let's review.

- 1) Why fear and trembling? Paul tells us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Meaning we must work diligently to do the things Jesus wants us to do. Be careful not to be casual about our faith. Carefully and purposefully put God first in everything we do, listen to Jesus and follow the King.
- 2) No complaining? I don't know about you, but I need to work on this one. Part of trusting in Jesus, is understanding He has put you exactly where He wants you for His plan. Complaining and arguing and grumbling does not make our situation better, it only makes our attitude worse. If we can trust Jesus with our situation and stop grumbling, then our attitude is going to be better. Our situation might even get better if we just trust God with it. Then listen to and do what Jesus is wanting us to do.
- 3) Hold fast to the word of life? God has given us everything we need to do His will in our lives. God's words in the Bible are life. We need to hold onto them as if they are the only lifeline we have because they are. We can rely on God's word of life to teach us, to encourage us, to correct us, to guide us as we make them the focal point of our life. Our life should be centered around our study of God's word, such that we can face all challenges with faith. Not blind faith but faith based on the truth contained in the Bible revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

Let me leave you with this. No complaining. Like I've said, I need to work on this one. I'm sure all of us do. Paul is not telling us we can't complain, only that we shouldn't. Jesus is calling us to a better way of living. Life in the Kingdom of God, where people care about each other. No matter what we are facing in our lives, we need to trust the only one who can actually change our situation. Trust King Jesus. We need to face every challenge as an opportunity to show the world Jesus by our words and actions. Everyone has troubles in this life. How we deal with those troubles is what makes all the difference. Will you complain and feel self-pity or will you trust Jesus and live victoriously. You can live confidently with peace, joy, hope and assurance. Now that's a great life.

**Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for this letter from Paul. Help us to read and meditate on this letter so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to do what you ask and not worry about what others are doing. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

I hope you will join us for the rest of our study of Philippians. Please email me comments or feedback. Thank you for joining me today. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.