**God Works in You Both to Will and to Do**

*Philippians 2:12-13*

**Introduction**

1. Salvation is from God – **Philippians 1:28**
2. However, man has a responsibility in salvation, namely, the reception of it – **Philippians 2:12**
   1. Done with fear and trembling:
      1. Humility in the acknowledgment salvation is by God’s grace.
      2. A sense of caution, knowing it is possible to fall short, and intending to avoid such.
      3. **(v. 13)** – ***“for”*** – reverence for God’s gracious favor of working in us for salvation.
   2. **(v. 16)** – not holding fast to the word would mean Paul’s labor was in vain (empty).
      1. Paul’s work is the Lord’s work – as an apostle.
      2. **2 Corinthians 6:1** – don’t receive grace of God in vain.
      3. Work out salvation with fear and trembling because this is God’s tremendous effort to save you – don’t make a mockery out of God’s gift through slothful negligence.
3. God’s work in us must not be taken for granted. We must appreciate through diligent pursuit the salvation God is drawing us to, and leading us in.
4. God Works in You
5. God Began the Work
   1. **Philippians 1:6** – God began the work of salvation in the Philippians.
   2. The beginning – **Acts 16:11-15, 30-34**
      1. **(v. 13)** – word spoken.
      2. **(v. 14)** – heart opened by the word to heed (apply self to) the word.
      3. **(v. 15)** – baptized as a response to the word, faithful to the Lord in submission to the word.
      4. **(v. 30)** – request for instruction to follow for salvation.
      5. **(vv. 31-32)** – answer of needing to believe, and the following information (word of God) to lead to such faith.
      6. **(vv. 33-34)** – response to the word, baptism, leading to salvation.
   3. God began the work of salvation – **Acts 16:9-10; Romans 10:13-17** – Macedonian call, preacher sent, heard, gospel believed, called on Lord through obedience in baptism.
   4. **NOTE: the start of the work, the continuation of the work, and the completion of the work are accomplished by the same method.**
6. God Continues the Work to Completion
   1. **Philippians 1:6** – God will complete the work till judgment.
      1. **Philippians 2:13** – ***“works”*** – present, active, verb
   2. The work began with the preaching of the gospel – **Romans 1:16** – God’s power to salvation.
   3. Same with the Thessalonians as with the Philippians – **Acts 17:1-4** – reasoned from scriptures, explaining, demonstrating, persuaded (hearts opened).
   4. Thessalonians’ work continued by God – **1 Thessalonians 2:13**
      1. Past – received, welcomed
      2. Present – effectively works in you, believe
      3. Method – word of God.
         1. ***“effectively works”*** – *energeō* – same as ***“works”* (Philippians 2:13)**
         2. How? Through the word.
7. God Works in You to Will
8. ***“to will”*** – incentive, motivation – God’s works in us through His word a desire to do His will.
9. Desire for Purpose
   1. **2 Corinthians 5:14-15** – Christ’s death on our behalf, and our response to die to sin resulted in newfound purpose.
      1. **(v. 15)** – no longer living for self, but for Christ.
      2. **Galatians 2:20** – Christ lives in me.
   2. God is a God of purpose – **Ephesians 3:11** – eternal purpose.
      1. Therefore, His creation has a purpose – **Ecclesiastes 12:13**
      2. Mankind seeks and craves purpose – many fail to find it.
      3. It is found in Christ – **Philippians 1:21** – to live is Christ.
         1. **Ephesians 2:10** – created for good works.
   3. Through His word, God reveals His purpose, which is our purpose – **John 15:14-16**
      1. **(v. 15)** – whereas a mere servant is not given intimate involvement in the work, a friend is given to know.
      2. **(v. 16)** – not just the knowledge is given, but the appointment for activity within the will.
      3. **John 14:12-13** – the “greater works” of the kingdom – their purpose.
      4. One in purpose with the Father and Son – **John 17:20-23**
10. Desire to be Like Christ
    1. Who we were before Christ – **Ephesians 2:1-3; Titus 3:**3
       1. Paul’s reflections – **1 Timothy 1:13, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:9**
    2. Changed when obeyed the gospel – **1 Corinthians 6:11** – ***“such were some of you”***
    3. Process of transformation – **2 Corinthians 4:16** – day by day.
       1. Implies a continual longing to be better.
    4. Attracted to the glory and virtue of Christ – **2 Peter 1:2-4**
       1. **(v. 3b)** – ***“called us by glory and virtue”*** – i.e. the glory manifested in the life of Christ, and His moral excellence (virtue) are the means by which we were called (or attracted) to Him.
          1. **Theory** – the more we come to know about Christ, the more we’ll be motivated to do God’s will to be more like Him.
       2. Desire to partake in such – **(v. 4)** – promised to partake in the divine nature – through knowledge of Jesus.
    5. That measure (standard) continually pushes us to improve as we seek to measure up – **Ephesians 4:13**
    6. **1 John 2:2-3** – we want to be like Christ, so we purify ourselves according to the will of God.
       1. The desire fuel’s the working out according to God’s word.
11. Desire for a Better Life
    1. Paul noted the positive effects of a life devoted to God even in this physical life – **1 Timothy 4:8**
       1. Godliness will indeed bring difficulties – **2 Timothy 3:12**
       2. However, a life devoted to God will avoid many heartaches and difficulties and enjoy many blessings even in this life.
    2. Necessities
       1. **Matthew 6:31-34** – devotion to God takes care of worry as we are ensured by God to be provided for.
          1. **(vv. 25-27)** – knows God provides for the birds, and we are more valuable than they.
          2. **(vv. 28-30)** – knows the lilies and grass are clothed, and God will certainly clothe His children.
          3. **(v. 32)** – knows God knows our needs and will provide.
          4. **(v. 34)** – knows tomorrow isn’t even granted, so why worry?
       2. NOTE: **(v. 33)** – part of this comes from the prioritization of the eternal, which will simplify living – contentment in true riches – cf. **1 Timothy 6:6-8**
    3. Health
       1. Sin is foremost destructive to the soul, but also can bring harm to the body:
          1. **Romans 1:26-27** – sexual immorality – penalty of their error due (i.e. what necessarily follows).
          2. **Proverbs 23:29-35** – consumption of alcohol – **(v. 29),** and even the inability to realize harm.
          3. **Romans 13:3-4** – disobedience to government – does not bear sword in vain.
       2. **Proverbs 13:15** – the way of the unfaithful is hard.
    4. Family
       1. A house built by wisdom – **Proverbs 24:3-4**
       2. Marriage – **Ephesians 5:22-25, 28-29, 33** – those who are members of the body devoted to Christ are given a deeper understanding of a thriving marriage.
          1. Ungodliness is the cause for failed, and struggling marriages. (Even with those who are Christians – maybe not as godly as you thought.)
          2. Those who fear the Lord are granted healthier marriages.
       3. Rearing Children – **Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6** – the scriptures have the key to raising obedient, behaved children.
          1. NOTE: ***“training and admonition OF THE LORD”*** – there is one way that is successful through and through – the Lord’s way.
12. Desire for Hope
    1. Paul noted more importantly that a life devoted to God brings positive results for the life to come – **1 Timothy 4:8-10**
       1. **(v. 10)** – “for to this end” – i.e. this is the main purpose of things.
       2. **(v. 8)** – “the life that now is” – simply a byproduct of life devoted to God.
       3. There is more!
    2. **2 Timothy 1:12** – Paul had committed his life in service to Christ, and was confident he’d receive reward for doing so.
    3. **2 Timothy 4:6-8** – the crown of righteousness is laid up for all who faithfully follow God.
13. God Works in You to Do
14. The “will” naturally translates into the doing.
15. However, the doing is directed by God’s specific pattern:
    1. Not according to the flesh, but the Spirit – **Galatians 5:16-26**
       1. ***“for His good pleasure”* – NOT OURS, OR ANYONE ELSES.**
    2. Thoroughly equips for every good work – **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**Conclusion**

1. God has graciously offered salvation to us.
2. For those who accept His free gift, He has ensured that He will continue to work in us until our salvation is realized.
3. However, His work in us involves our own work of compliance – we must allow God to cultivate in us the will to do His will.