

## Philippians 2:12-13

Today, God is going to reveal to us through His timeless, written Word that salvation is not only a work God has done for us but also a work He is doing in us. Salvation is what God has done for us *and* what God is doing in us.

Salvation is what God has done for us when He sent His Son Jesus Christ the first time and salvation is what God is doing in us until He sends His Son Jesus Christ for a second time.

Yet so we're not tempted to think that we don't have any personal responsibility, we must understand this: Our salvation which God has done for us through Christ and doing in us through Christ is made evident by our faith in Jesus Christ which we show by our works.

To see that this is true, let's all turn to Philippians 2 and read verses 12-13:

*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye 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. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Now, to be upfront, this is going to be a two-part sermon (Part 1 today and, Lord willing, Part 2 next) because these are pivotal verses. Today, we simply going to lay the groundwork and, next week, we're going to unpack what's written in greater detail.

I know you've heard me say this over and over again where I sound like a broken record but Bible verses like this one brings up the fact that there is a reason why we don't die the very moment we believe Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, especially given the fact that Paul wrote in chapter 1 that to depart and to be with Christ is far better.

Usually, when we hear the phrase—*our own salvation*—we immediately think that God has saved us from the wrath to come...from hell...from the lake of fire because He sent His Son Jesus Christ Who took our place and suffered our punishment through His death on the cross.

And, praise God, this is salvation. From what Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 1, verses 9-10, we realize that we have *turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

Then we're told in 1 Thessalonians 5, verses 9-10: *For God hath not appointed us to (has not destined us for) wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep (whether we are awake or asleep), we should live together with him.*

And as a servant of Jesus Christ, Paul is echoing the words of the Lord Jesus Who said of Himself in John 3, verses 16 and 17:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

And at the end of the chapter, the apostle John reveals and draws this conclusion in verse 36:

*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:  
and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life;  
but the wrath of God abideth (remains) on him (John 3:36).*

If you do not believe that God's Son, Jesus Christ, is your Lord and Savior, then you are not saved from the wrath to come. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 says that when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, you will be punished with everlasting destruction as the Lord Jesus, in flaming fire, takes vengeance on those who do not know God nor obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, yes, salvation means if you believe the Lord Jesus is your Savior, then God has saved you from the wrath to come where you will not be perish in the everlasting fire of hell.

But this is not all that salvation means.

To Biblically see that this is true, let's begin by asking ourselves this question:

In the gospel according to Matthew, what name did the angel of the Lord tell Joseph to call the child that was conceived in Mary, his virgin fiancée, by the Holy Spirit? JESUS.

But what why the name: JESUS?

Well, in Matthew 1:21, the angel of the Lord specifically said to Joseph: *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

Now since Romans 6:23 tells us—*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*—this means that when Jesus saves us from our sins, He saves us from the penalty and punishment for our sins, that is condemnation.

But salvation from condemnation is not all that is meant by the promise that Jesus shall save His people from their sins because Jesus, the Son of God, said in John 8, verses 34-36:

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Through His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ saves us from our sins because He has saved us from the dominion of sin. Romans 6, verses 5-7, reads:

*For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

That's why we're commanded in Romans 6, verse 12: *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof* (to make you obey its passions).

Here's what we have to comprehend:

Jesus Christ doesn't simply save you from eternal death because death is not the root of the problem. Sin is the root of the problem. Sin is the cause; death is the consequence.

Death exists because sin exists. Why do we die? Because we sin.

The Biblical evidence we have for this is James 1, verses 14-15:

*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

You see, death is a symptom of sin. If Jesus only saved us from eternal death, then He's only treated the symptom and not the cause which is sin.

If we believe that Jesus only saves us from eternal death and does not save us from the dominion of sin itself, then we're treating the Lord Jesus like an earthly judge who has the power to pardon a criminal but not give him the power to resist the temptation to commit the same crime again.

But the Lord Jesus didn't come to just save you from the consequence; He came to save you from the cause. In Titus 2, verses 11-14, we read:

*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, **teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly** (sensibly), **righteously, and godly, in this present world**; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, **and purify unto himself a peculiar people** (His own special people), **zealous of good works.***

In Romans 6, verses 20-22, Paul writes:

*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

That's why we're told in 1 Peter 4, verses 1-2, we read:

*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh (Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh), arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin (has finished with sin); that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

When Peter says—*for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin*—this means as we're told in Galatians 5:24—*And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

In other words, we put to death any desire of the flesh to sin and we do so by our faith in Jesus Christ Who died for our sins and rose again for us to be new creatures who walk in newness of life because as 2 Corinthians 5:17 says: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

And what does it mean to be new creatures who walk in newness of life? It means we no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

And this leads us right to what Paul says here in Philippians 2 where he writes:

*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye 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. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Now, again...as we pointed out at the beginning, we're just laying the groundwork today and next week we'll explore these more fully but for now, I'd like to close with this exhortation based on the biblical evidence we've looked at today concerning our own salvation.

As we've seen from Scripture, salvation is that the Lord Jesus has delivered from the wrath to come if you believe in Him. Yet we've seen from Scripture that salvation is also that the Lord Jesus has freed you from sin in order to will and to do God's good pleasure.

Therefore, if you believe in Jesus Christ with a desire to be saved from God's fury but not with a desire to live the rest of your life in obedience to the will of God, then you're not saved because Jesus says in Matthew 7, verse 21:

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

In John 8, Jesus Himself says about His Father at the end of verse 29: *I do always those things that please him.* This is why, as the Scriptures says, Jesus did no sin (1 Peter 2:22a).

Yet we sin from the moment we're born because we do always those things that please us, saying in our hearts: "Not God's will but ours be done."

But since Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, if you truly believe God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is your Savior, then you are born again by the Holy Spirit to do the will of your Father which is in heaven which means, by the power of the Holy Spirit, God works in you both to will and do His good pleasure.

And, Lord willing, we'll define what this means the next time we gather together.