

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage you to worship God each day.

God tells us that Ezra read from the book of the Law day after day and that the people of God were filled with joy!

Let's Worship God

Philippians week three





Let's Worship God

Philippians

Day 13 - Philippians 2:12-13 - Will and Work

It's great praise for Paul to be able to say that the Philippians have always obeyed, not just when he's there, but even more when he is not. Paul is not talking about them obeying him but obeying God's Word. There's always a tendency to relax obedience when the spiritual leader is absent, and Paul has been gone a long time.

The fear and trembling Paul speaks of isn't a dread of God condemning you to Hell. It is a fear and trembling about doing anything to "hurt" God, it is a fear of sinning and offending the God we love. The Christian doesn't dread God who gives him the life-giving Gospel, but he does dread the poison of sin that robs him of the strength to give evidence of his salvation. The saving brought about by God at the time of our conversion doesn't mean we immediately die and go straight to Heaven. We are saved, yes, but until we reach Heaven, our hearts hold upon that salvation must be made ever stronger. That's what Paul is speaking of here. Paul is not saying that we earn our salvation by good works. He is not saying that we can lose our salvation once we have it. He is simply making the point that we have been saved, and we are to work out the effects of that salvation in our lives. A live man must eat and exercise to remain alive and strong. We have been made alive in Christ, and we need to feed on His Word and exercise it in our lives, so we can stay alive and strong.

God is the one who gives us the desire to live for Him and the ability to live for Him. So, in order to work out our salvation we need to be going to God. Paul is assuring us that yes, we are completely dependent on God for salvation, and God will never disappoint us, but by His Word, will bring us to keep on willing and working for Him. God is the unfailing source of all the power and supply we need.

Let's Worship God

Philippians

Day 14 - Philippians 2:14-18 - Light in the World

The “all things” that the Philippians are to be doing refers to their new life in Christ, their obedience to God and His Word. They are going to have a lot to endure. But they are to go on being obedient without grumbling and complaining about it. God wants our obedience to be joyful not grudging.

The purpose of this joyful obedience is that they may be “blameless and innocent” when God and others look at them. There should be nothing in their conduct, nothing in their hearts or motives that ought not to be there. They are to be children of God, undamaged by their contact with a world they can not avoid, a world that is crooked and twisted. Truth alone is straight, lies are crooked and bend in all directions. The world has left the straight paths of the Lord and gone in every direction. But what is the key to being so different from the world? Joyful obedience to God.

Why does Paul say they will shine like lights in the world? Is it because their lives are so obedient and Godly? No, Paul is telling them they should be obedient and Godly, but he is saying they already do shine like lights in the world. Why? Because they have the Gospel, the word of life. In a world of death and darkness, they hold light and life because they hold Christ. It's like the flame in a lamp - the cleaner we keep the glass around that flame, the easier it will be seen, but even in dirty lamps, the flame is still there.

When Paul stands before Christ he wants the Philippians as the evidence that he has not run and laboured for nothing. Paul knows that he can die for his faith, and he knows this will bring sorrow to those who love him. But there is a bigger picture here. Paul writes to Christians who have caught the vision he has that whether in life or in death, God can and will be glorified, and they rejoice in that.

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Philippians

Day 15 - Philippians 2:19-24 - Paul

The picture we have painted for us in these verses is that of men following the example of Christ. Jesus Christ is so obedient to God the Father that He pours Himself out for others. The men here are doing the same.

Paul tells us a little bit about himself almost by default. He says that he and Timothy are like father and son. One is the natural leader, the other the natural subordinate. But Paul does not say that Timothy serves him, he says that they serve together, they are co-slaves. The idea of slavery sums up Paul's attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ - the slave's attitude of obedience. We see Paul's slave-like submission here in three ways. First, Paul submits to God's plan. Both whether or not he is able to send Timothy to the Philippians and whether he himself will end up a prisoner or a free man, is described as being in the hands of the Lord. Paul knows that God is in control of all things: freedom, imprisonment, comfort, discomfort, sickness, or health. Paul will accept without question what the Lord has ordained. The Lord had chosen Paul to serve Him, and He has chosen the circumstances Paul is to serve Him in.

Secondly, Paul submits to do God's will, not to sit on his hands and do nothing. Paul is active on behalf of his Master. Along with Timothy he is slaving for the Gospel. Christ Jesus became a slave to obey His Father even to the point of death, so we might have the blessings of salvation. Paul's slavery is directed towards obeying Jesus Christ and telling others the Gospel.

Thirdly, Paul submits to following Christ's example. Jesus took the form of a slave as part of His pouring out of Himself for the benefit of others. Paul follows His example and puts others before himself even at great cost.



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Philippians

Day 16 - Philippians 2:19-30 - Timothy and Epaphroditus

Paul says he has no one else like Timothy. First of all Timothy genuinely cares for other Christians. Secondly, Timothy puts Christ first before all others. Paul considers Timothy to be unique in this. Too many people are letting their own interests interfere with Christ's. On their agenda of what is important to them, Christ is not at the top of the list. But not for Timothy. Timothy seeks the things of Christ first. The third mark of Timothy's character is his ungrudging acceptance of second place. Timothy's job is to be second-in-command. And he is ok with that. Fourthly, Timothy is a slave for the Gospel. He is a person whose whole life is given to the Gospel and who accepts and obeys its total claim upon himself. Timothy puts the Lord first by seeking the spiritual good of others through a sacrificial gospel ministry.

The relationship between Paul and Epaphroditus is full of affection, praise, and concern. Epaphroditus places his gifts at the disposal of the church. Paul calls him his brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier. Epaphroditus is the one the church singles out as their messenger, and Paul commends him for the way he performs his task. Epaphroditus sees his work not just as a job to be done. He almost loses his life in his zeal to minister on the Philippians behalf to Paul. Behind his caring towards others is Epaphroditus' devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. He spends all he has of himself in response to Christ.

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Philippians

Day 17 - Philippians 3:1-3 - Joy and Warnings

Paul tells the Philippians to find their joy in Christ alone. This is especially relevant in light of those who want to add all sorts of terms and conditions to believing in Jesus Christ. Paul is going to go on and talk about how wrong they are, but for now he wants the Philippians to rejoice, not in their good works, not in who they are, but in Christ Jesus their Saviour. Paul has no problem repeating himself because he wants to drive home the point to these Philippian believers that Christ is to be everything to them.

Paul describes as dogs - as excluded from the fellowship of the people of God - those who put a plus-sign after Christ in their teaching about salvation. These are men who teach that you need to believe in Christ plus do certain things in order to be saved, specifically these are men who are teaching that you must be circumcised and follow the ceremonial laws in order to be saved. These men are taking away from what Christ has done, and saying that it is not enough. This isn't just a problem then, but even today people think their salvation is based on how nice they are or how many times they go to church, instead of the work of Christ.

Paul explains to the Philippian believers that they are the "real circumcision". What does this phrase mean? Circumcision was the sign that God gave to His people to show that He was their God and they were His covenant people. With the coming of Christ the sign of circumcision was replaced with baptism, and being one of God's chosen people no longer meant you had to become a Jew. The true people of God, the ones whose hearts have been circumcised are those who have put their faith in Christ. They are those whose hearts have been changed by the Holy Spirit, who seek the glory of Christ, and who recognise how sinful they are.

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Philippians

Day 18 - Philippians 3:4-8 - Greatest Value

Paul knows that we all have the tendency to think that we can get in God's good books by what we do. He wants to make it clear that do-it-yourself Christianity just doesn't exist. To drive home this point he sets himself forth as an example. If anyone should be able to earn his way into heaven, it should be Paul. Paul is a true Jew, circumcised on the eighth day of his life, as a mark of being one of the covenant people, in perfect accordance with God's law. Paul is born of the tribe of Benjamin, one of the two tribes that stay loyal to King David. He is a true Hebrew, not a blow-in. But besides all that he has been born into, Paul has achieved much as well. He is a Pharisee, the strictest group in the Jewish religion, whose overriding concern is to follow God's law down to the smallest detail. He was willing to put to death those he saw as opposing God and His Law. In the eyes of other Jews, Paul is blameless. But when Paul adds up all his accomplishments and draws a line under them the sum total is zero. In the eyes of God they are worth nothing. All that matters is Paul's relationship with Jesus Christ. Christ is the only thing on the gain side of Paul's account. And Paul hasn't earned Christ, Christ has been given to him by the grace of God, and without Christ there is no hope.

In the years that have passed since his conversion Paul has come to an even greater understanding of who Christ is. As he has grown in the knowledge of the Lord, he has grown in understanding how precious and valuable Jesus Christ is, and how, even at the cost of suffering, to know Christ, to love Him, to grow in a relationship with Him, is of more worth than any other thing.