USE WHAT GOD GAVE YOU!

(Putting Salvation to Work)

Philippians 2:12-18

2-12-2025

- **PUT TO USE THE SALVATION GOD GAVE YOU!**

How does a believer rightly put to use the salvation God gave him?
By <u>following two requirements and achieving two results</u>
(If we follow 2 COMMANDS God will produce 2 RESULTS)

I. ***REQUIREMENT:*** **You need <u>PERSONAL INITIATIVE</u>** (v.12)

II. ***RESULT:*** **You will have <u>DIVINE ENERGY</u>** (v.13)

A. GOD PROVIDES THE <u>DETERMINATION</u> ("will")

B. GOD PROVIDES THE <u>STRENGTH</u> ("work" - do)

III. ***REQUIREMENT:*** **You need a <u>WILLING MIND</u>** (v.14)

A. NO GRUMBLING ABOUT GOD'S WILL

B. NO QUESTIONING GOD'S WILL

IV. ***RESULT:*** **You will have a <u>SHINING TESTIMONY</u>** (v.15-18)

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INTRO: Illus. of receiving a gift (for birthday, Christmas) and not using it. (letting it rust, collect dust, etc.).

God gave you salv. that you might use it and fulfill God's plan for your saved life. God is the Master Architect (he planned your life of salvation) and He is also the chief builder (He accomplishes you life of salvation).

God's purpose for you is not complex and impossible. It only takes humility to do it.

v.12 - **"wherefore"** - Consequently; so then; Paul is building a practical application to the previous context:

Previous context: Christ's humility in his - 1) surrender, and 2) submission to His Father's will (v. 5 - 11) should prompt us to follow suit.

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I. ***REQUIREMENT:*** **You need PERSONAL INITIATIVE** (v.12)

"Not as in my presence only" - it is sad to see some ministries fall apart after the change of church leadership. The reason: the ministry was built around a personality, not around God's Word.

Paul is not teaching salvation by works (cp. Ro. 13:11; Salvation is not only a point and time but it is a life).Paul is writing to saints (1:1).

NOTE: He does not say "work for it", but "work it out." The point is - You already have it, so use it!

Just as we mentioned before, when you receive a gift it should not just sit on a shelf. God did not save you to sit on a shelf. But to grow and serve.
"Your own salv." = you must work out your own Christian life (and do God's will) not what somebody else wants you to do (illus. Tim Hoff - did not go into family business because God called him to preach).

No two flowers are exactly the same; no two snowflakes are the same--and God has a special will just for you to fulfill.

"With fear and trembling" - Why? Because many people are not working their salvation out though they may think they are.

"With fear and trembling" (emphatic)
"fear" - (A holy reverence and respect for God)
"trembling"- (The resultant shuddering caused by the "fear")

Heb. 12:28-29 - "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

This attitude of "fear and trembling" necessitates that you:

1) Be serious - it's not your own life you're spending if you belong to God. "You are not your own . . ." I Cor. 6:19

2) Be careful - Not reckless (Don't be flippant or haphazard with the priceless, sacred spiritual life God gave you).
Illus. of a surgeon with a delicate operation.
"Fear and trembling" is the awareness that God is watching. Illus. of a boss looking over your shoulder.

Faith in God's promises and obedience to them is what releases God's power. Illus. Man with the withered hand could not stretch it out, but when he obeyed - God worked! (MT. 12:13). `

Ex. also Peter`s walking on the water. (Mt. 14:22-23).

II. ***RESULT:*** **You will have <u>DIVINE ENERGY</u>** (v.13)

Compare God's working in (energizing) believers with Satan's working in (energizing) unbelievers. Eph. 2:2

A. GOD PROVIDES THE <u>DETERMINATION</u> ("will")

"Will" - (DESIRE)
It is God who gives believers the desire to do His will.
When you yield, God's will becomes your will and God's work becomes your work.

Verses 12 & 13 are perhaps the clearest N.T. statement showing believers exactly how God reveals His will to them.

When you yield, God's will becomes your will and God's work becomes your work.

We must <u>yield</u> our heads, our hands and our hearts to God.

There are problems in life, but God will help us to "work them out."

Illus. - A man went to Mr. Spurgeon one time and said, "You require too much of flesh and blood!" "I require nothing of flesh and blood," replied Spurgeon. "I am preaching to people who have the Holy Spirit indwelling them."

B. GOD PROVIDES THE <u>STRENGTH</u> ("work" - do)

"Do" - (energetic WORK)

No believer can live the Christian life by his own strength. We fail because we (in pride) lean on talent and ability. What was Christ's example? (v. 7) He surrendered his all to his father in humility.

"Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 124:8).

**SEE Col. 1:29 Heb. 13:20, 21.

"God which worketh" - Phil. l:6 - "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

You are a tool that God wishes to use, but some of you are not plugged into the power that is available and necessary.

"His good pleasure" (satisfaction). What matters more to you -- God's pleasure? Or your pleasure?
In latter days people will be "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

Song: "I Was Made to Praise the Lord."

We were made for God:

> Proverbs 16:4 The LORD hath made **all *things* for himself**
>
> Isaiah 43:21 This people have I formed **for myself**; they shall shew forth my praise.
>
> Romans 11:36 For of him, and through him, and **to him, *are* all things**: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.
>
> Hebrews 2:10 For it became him, **for whom *are* all things**, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

We were created and redeemed to bring pleasure to God:

> ***Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure*** [for Thy desire] ***they are and were created.***

III. ***REQUIREMENT:*** **You need a <u>WILLING MIND</u>** (v.14)

"Even as freight trains and automobiles are equipped with <u>brakes</u>, so Christians know that negatives such as "stop," "No," and "Don't" should never be erased from our vocabulary"
(Taylor, p. 80)

A. NO GRUMBLING ABOUT GOD'S WILL

"Murmurings" = to express dissatisfaction (to grumble)

Illus. God sent vipers among the gripers (Num. 21:4-9).

Paul does not say to muffle the murmurings, but to <u>abolish</u> them.

God desires that His people offer <u>praise</u> rather than complaints.
Paul was <u>content</u> in whatever state he was in (Phil. 4:11)

We are commanded: "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thes. 5:18)

B. NO QUESTIONING GOD'S WILL

"Disputings" = inward questionings; reasonings

IV. ***RESULT:*** **You will have a <u>SHINING TESTIMONY</u>** (v.15-18)

V. 15 - Illus. A little boy returned home one evening from a revival meeting where he had accepted Christ for salvation. With jubilance he said to this sister, "I have a new heart!" She replied, "Is that so? Let me see it!"
This is precisely what the world is asking.

"That" - "In order that; with the purpose or result that"

"Blameless" - externally unblamable before God and men (by not murmuring, v. 14).

"Harmless" - internally (without impure worldly questionings or disputing God, v. 14); lit. unalloyed, unmixed (not mixed with world's philosophies, goals, ambitions, mannerisms)

"Without rebuke" - faultless; without spot or blemish; Spotless.
Live such a holy life that the world can't point its finger at your thoughtless inconsistencies.

"Crooked" - curved, not on the straight and narrow

"Perverse" (Perfect Passive Participle) - twisted, distorted.

Among whom" - God does not command us to retreat from the world and go into a spiritual isolation ward.
Ex. the Pharisees isolation that resulted in self-righteousness
--Our Savior met with sinners and gave them the gospel!

"Lights" = luminaries, reflectors. Like the moon and stars, we reflect Christ!

Dan. 12:3 - "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Mt. 5:16 - "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven."

I Pet. 2:9 - "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Sin will dull and dim your reflection

"Shine as lights" - when this verse is compared with v. 14, we note: that "light is silent but effective." (cp. the wife with unbelieving husband - I Pet. 3:1-2).
We live in a sex-mad world where adultery, fornication, pornography, sensual language, etc. are so prevalent that people think it's the normal thing to do. For you to be different, is to shine as a light.

V. 16 - **"Holding forth"** = two ideas:

l) lit. "to hold upon; to hold firmly

2) to hold out; to extend and give out the Word to others.

"Word of life" - why is it called this? Because it is the word that gives life. "Word of life" - What does this Genitive construction mean: It is the "Word" that gives "life." (Just as in James 1:25, the Word of God is called the "law of liberty" since God's Word gives freedom.)

V. 17 - **"Offered upon"** = poured out.

In the O.T. sacrificial system, a drink offering of wine was poured over the burnt offering as a crowning act of its completion (Num. 28:7-8). Paul was now (after sacrificing and serving for the faith of the Philippians) ready to die (joyfully).

The pouring out of one's life for Christ's service brings joy!

"Offered" - Paul shows them the truth of verse 14 in living form. "Do all things without murmuring and disputing--even if it means death!

CONCLU: The goal of the Christian goes far beyond his pardon from sin.

Don't be satisfied with a stagnated life (going nowhere). Illus. of how nothing lives in a stagnant pond.

Someone has said: "No greater delusion can come to us than to set up a plan of our own apart from God and rejoice because it seems to prosper."

God has a blueprint for my life,
Each part is drawn with care;
He knew my weakness and my strength,`
And put them all in there.

He laid foundations, arc, and dome,`
And planned each room and door;
He marked the sills and window frames,
And lines the roof and floor.

If I should try some other plan,
I'd miss His wise design;
No temple strong and beautiful,
Would ever then be mine.

God is the master architect,
He builds both strong and grand;
I know His works, I walk His way,
And build as He has planned.