

Philippians 2:12-18

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[0 : 0 0] If you have your Bibles, you can turn to Philippians chapter 2. We're continuing our trek through Philippians last, not last week, but the week before that.

Chris preached on Philippians 2, the first portion leading up to verse 12. I will be talking today about verses 12 through 18.

And before I get started here, I'm going to pray. Lord, we thank you, God, for your word.

Thank you that we have it, Lord, and we're not in the dark. Thank you, Lord, that you lead us always. Pray, Lord, that you would bless this teaching, Lord, that you would speak, Father.

You would give us more reverence for you, more of a bold witness, Lord. You would teach us how to live a life free from grumbling, complaining. Lord, encourage us this morning.

[1 : 0 6] Lift us up. Lift any burdens, I pray, by your Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen. Okay, so Philippians 2, starting in verse 12.

Before I read the text, the very first verse says, therefore, which to give some context, what he's referring therefore to, is the past bunch of verses that actually Chris read.

So I'm just going to go back and read that as a backdrop for what Paul is about to lead into here. So let's start at the beginning here.

So chapter 2 begins with verse 1. It says, Let each of you look not only...

Not only to his own interest, but also to the interest of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus. Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[2 : 5 9] Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

So that's the context for what we're about to read. Amazing text that Chris expounded upon.

If you want to go listen to his sermon, it may help with the interpretation of the rest of this. But Paul here starts off by saying, therefore, or since, or because of everything I've just said here, my beloved, in verse 12, as you always have obeyed, so now not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God in you, both to will, it is God in you who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Verse 14, Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent children of God, without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

[4 : 35] Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering, upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise, you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

Okay. So here Paul is setting up his segue out of essentially giving us this image of God in Christ Jesus, humbling himself, taking the form of a servant, not counting equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptying himself, him giving us this example of humility to follow in his steps.

He then exhorts them and says, As you have always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

That's the first thing I'm going to discuss here, is what it means to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. But before I do, one quick thing to note is that he says at the beginning, a little bit of a buzzword nowadays, which is, he says to them that they have always obeyed.

Obedience. You know, it's clear in Christianity that we're supposed to obey God. It is a little bit of a triggering thing for someone to require obedience to a man.

[6 : 09] And here Paul says, As you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, do such and such. And so it's important to realize that God has appointed authorities that are to be obeyed.

You know, there are other places in scripture that, um, the scriptures say to obey your leaders and submit to them, things like this. And this is one instance where he references, uh, maybe his authority, which can sometimes be a very difficult thing, depending on, uh, your experience with leadership or your experience with authority.

But I would just say really quick, before we head into the next portion of this, that Paul's leadership and authority is very different, um, than the hurt and the existing authority or so-called authority that many of us have experienced or can experience or other people have experienced, because he's doing it in a way that not only is appointed by God, but is as a father would have over his children.

You can see he starts off by calling them my beloved. You know, this isn't like a master slave relationship. He prefers for it to be father and son.

And so just a quick note, uh, on leadership and even Paul's relationship, the Philippians, that he's endearing like a father. He's not requiring things of them like a harsh taskmaster, uh, but he's actually representing godly authority, um, which requires obedience.

[8 : 00] So, he says, as you have always obeyed. So now not only in my presence, but also more in my absence, you know, this, this kind of means that, um, he's not looking for approval, seeking obedience.

You know, if you were to seek approval, um, there's a temptation to be more adamant about obeying when someone's there versus when they're gone.

Okay. If you have obedience unto God, um, it's consistent across the board, whether they're there or not, you're obeying because you know, uh, that it's the right thing to do, that it's from the heart.

And so Paul is affirming that. He's saying, not only in my presence are you doing this, but much more in my absence. Okay. So as they have always obeyed, now much more do what?

He says, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

[9 : 14] That's the first thing I want to talk about is fear and trembling. Okay. Um, there's probably a somewhat unfortunate, uh, misreading of the fear of the Lord throughout, uh, evangelical Christianity, which, uh, fleshes itself out, maybe in the phrase of like, well, you should never be afraid of God.

You know, um, you should, you should never feel like you can't come to God, which is true. We should be able to approach God, but it's not true that we should not fear God.

God absolutely, without a doubt, needs to be feared. God is, uh, holy, and he is supremely holy, meaning that there's no one above him.

Everything falls below him. There's no king on earth, no government, no nation that will contest the Lord's will. He reigns above them all.

And, uh, similarly to authorities that we experience, like governments, or maybe take it down to local level, like the, uh, local authorities, police, what have you.

[10 : 28] Um, if we regard them rightly, we shouldn't fear them as we would, um, if we hadn't.

For example, I don't, I'm not afraid of the police or the cops because, um, I don't live in constant terror of them because I know what they're there for.

I know that they're there for good. They're a good authority. However, if I'm a criminal, I probably should be afraid, you know, because even the scriptures say, you know, that the authorities are not a threat to good conduct, you know, but to evil, you know, and you should stand in fear.

Similarly with God, we should have a relationship to God as the utmost supreme authority that lives our life in fear and reverence of him, because there is no one other than him.

If we, uh, die on our way home, we will stand before the highest authority, uh, not only over earth, but also in heaven.

[11 : 33] Um, and in that day, um, we will have to give an account for all that we've done.

But the question is, how will God deal with us? And I think it would be a mistake for us to live in such a way as though the fear of the Lord, the supremacy of God doesn't exist.

Or maybe even what's happened is that through Jesus Christ, the fear of the Lord is eliminated. You know, I think it's possible that amongst, especially young people, that when they come to the Lord, what it means is, well, God and Christ has done everything for me.

You know, uh, I can just live how I want because he gave me mercy. He loves me, you know, um, which are all true. But, the Lord's works that he did for you is not a license to forget about the Lord.

Uh, we see in the whole Old Testament narrative that God constantly was reminding them, don't forget the God who brought you out of Egypt. Okay?

[12 : 49] And they, they forgot him. You know, they didn't regard God as holy. They didn't regard God with fear. And God brought serious judgment. Things didn't change in the new covenant in terms of the fear of the Lord and God's holiness.

They actually brought, God brought them to its antithesis, or it's, uh, or excuse me, it's completion in the new covenant by giving man no excuse to come to God and to fear him and regard him as holy.

And so, when Paul says here, to bring it back to our text, he says, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Pretty much every experience of the holiness of God and the, uh, uh, encountering God in the, uh, in the Bible has resulted in someone actually trembling before him.

You know, in Isaiah 6, when Isaiah comes to the Lord, doesn't even encounter all of the Lord, but just his train, his robe, he falls prostrate trembling. You know, he's immediately aware of his own sin in his life.

And, uh, what's interesting is that God is not just to be regarded as, uh, we shouldn't fear him in a sense that leads us to terror always.

[14 : 12] Like, Isaiah trembled before the Lord and then what did the Lord do after he said that he was a sinner? He touched his lips and cleansed him. Right? So, we should live in a, in a terror that, in a fear of the Lord that is right, but not at the expense of his other attributes, like his mercy and his love, because he is the one who cleanses us.

Right? He's a good authority. We shouldn't fear him because he's a bad one, essentially. He is indeed good. But what does it mean to work out our salvation with fear and trembling?

I was confronted with this as I was preparing and I'm like, do I live, I ask myself, do I live my life as though I genuinely fear the Lord as the supreme authority compared to any other authority or person at all?

You know? Or do I regard man in competition with God? Do I say that I fear the Lord but really I'm afraid of the things of this life?

And I was, I was probing myself, I was asking, Lord, give me more genuine fear of you as the supreme God who rules. You know? Paul says to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

[15 : 36] Similarly to in Exodus when God delivers the Israelites, you know, he gives them Moses as a leader, parts the Red Sea, leads them out of slavery and that was their salvation.

It wasn't salvation necessarily unto bliss yet. You know, he led them in the wilderness and eventually he was going to lead them into the promised land but similarly to us in the new covenant, God has saved us not by delivering us out of slavery of Egypt but maybe as a spiritual slavery, right, Egypt of the heart, right, and saved us into the new covenant through his own blood, parting of the Red Sea of his blood, right?

And so we should regard him even more. You know, God dealt with the, what seemed to be the outward circumstantial oppression of Egypt on his people and now God has not only dealt with those things but in our hearts he's dealt with the thing that we never could, you know, and we should tremble at the Lord for doing this, you know.

There was no other person, not in ourselves, no Savior out there that could do that. God himself had to be the one to take us out. So what does it mean to fear and tremble?

I mainly was thinking when I was preparing about the holiness of God, that, do I regard God as holy? And just to remind us this morning, not only that God is holy, but that holiness means apartness.

[17 : 33] God is other than us. We're not like God. You know, the scriptures say, the Lord actually rebukes the people in the scriptures and said, you thought that I was one like yourselves, like a man, like I would reason, you know, which is not so.

A.W. Pink says, on God's holiness, he is so, speaking of his holiness, he is so because the sum of all moral excellency is found in him.

He is absolute purity, unsoiled by even the shadow of sin. All us creatures live underneath the shadow of sin. We're being saved out of the shadow of sin if we're in Christ, but God is completely other than us in that he is untainted, not affected.

He rules over sin with utmost purity. And because of that, we have to regard him as holy. We have to regard him as high and lifted up.

We have to fear him who is utterly perfect, without any flaw at all. What is home? Habakkuk, Habakkuk 1.13 says, the prophet says, you who are of pure eyes, purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong.

[19 : 03] God's eyes are purer, so much so that he can't stand to look at evil. He's so far other. We need to treat God this way, Christchurch.

Not at the expense of his other attributes, obviously. but we shouldn't forget that he is always holy. We should fear him.

We should work out our salvation, the salvation that was purchased by Jesus Christ. We should work that out with reverence and fear to him. I talked a little bit about the narrative of the Old Testament.

This is Deuteronomy 6. In verse 10 it says, When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to give you with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant, and when you eat and are full, then take care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

It is the Lord your God you shall fear, him you shall serve, and by his name you shall swear. So the Lord is actually to be feared. You know?

[20 : 36] We should approach God with reverence and fear. We shouldn't run away from God out of fear. We should approach him through fear, knowing that he will take us in, he will accept us, he will love us, he will show us mercy, but we should approach him rightly.

Paul says to work out our salvation this way. Here's another one in regards to our salvation. Romans 11, verse 18 through 21 says, do not be arrogant towards the branches, speaking of Israel.

If you are, remember, it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.

That is true, verse 20 says, they were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not be proud, but fear.

There it is. Do not be proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. This is a warning to regard God as holy.

[21 : 52] He dealt with his chosen people, Israel, in a way that he kept telling them, understand this, that I'm the holy one. All others might share in holiness resulting in God.

Okay? God does not possess holiness, merely as something that he takes up and puts down. God is holy. He's the very definition of holy, right? So we should not be proud, but we should fear.

Being grateful, being thankful in Christ that we were actually grafted in. This was a miracle, according to grace. Paul says to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

This one really struck me. I was asking myself, I'm like, do I live my life so that others, if they were to be kind of a fly on the wall, you know, can look at me and say, that guy really, he has a really high regard for a supremacy that is outside of this world.

You know, that guy follows a God that is much higher than just the president, that is much higher than anything on earth. That guy is in submission to the Lord, right?

[23 : 23] Do we live our lives like we actually fear the Lord? Okay, verse 13.

He says, for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. So Paul expounds, he says, when you work out your salvation, do it with fear and trembling.

And the reason why you should fear and tremble is because God dwells in you. You know, like I was just saying, if God is completely other, completely holy, that his holiness is so removed from the sinner, he can't dwell in a sinful vessel.

Paul's saying that, don't you realize what's happened in Christ? is that God, who is so holy, has come down, condescended, wrapped himself in human flesh, and then entered by his spirit into you.

He's like, you should fear and tremble. God dwells in you. What a privilege to even be a person who God might enter into.

[24 : 48] But what a humbling thing. You know what I'm saying? This is true, Christchurch. If God really dwells in us, we should understand the God who dwells in us.

You know what I'm saying? He says, for it is God in you. He doesn't sit idle in us, right?

What does he do? He says, for it is God who works in you. Not only does he work, but he says, both to will and to work, which means that God transforms our hearts, who previously, before he had made us born again, had left us to our own will.

If I was left to my own will, I would only reap corruption, right? I would only, the Bible speaks of sin being actually the bondage.

Our will is in bondage to sin. I would only choose sin apart from God's grace. And Paul says here that, don't you realize that God is the one who wills in you?

[25 : 56] The reason why you can bring him good pleasure is because he's the one who began the good work in you. He's willing it, you know, to come to pass, right? He's getting those desires inside of you to want him.

We should fear. Make no mistake that although we have desires, that the origin of those desires aren't necessarily ours. That when you realize that the reason that you live your life in a way that is pleasing to God is because of God, that makes you humble.

That puts you in your place and says, wow, like, Lord, apart from you, I don't think I would choose you at all. You know? In fact, I think it would be to the contrary.

You know? So far to the contrary that looking at my life now and the decisions I've made, I can only give you praise. Right?

It's both to will and to work. So God doesn't just change our hearts and then leave us, right? Doesn't make us desire good things and then do nothing, right?

[27 : 10] From that place of transformation, Ephesians chapter 2, the end of it says that he actually our created purpose was for his workmanship.

You know? He created us for good works and praise, right? Again, not wrought by us by any means, but he did it so that we might accomplish something, okay?

So Paul's saying that. He's like, you don't understand. If God, if God who is holy came down to this earth and now dwells in you, you're not supposed to be idle anymore and do nothing, but you're also not supposed to be heaping up things of the flesh that are old desires like malice and these things because God actually is transforming you both to will and to work.

So not only do you have new desires now, but they're for a purpose. They're for to do the works of God, right? And what's the ultimate end? What do all these works end in?

He concludes verse 13 by saying, for his good pleasure, okay? God gets delight from our life that he indwells. You know, it's like this circle, you know?

[28 : 33] But it's not a circle that we're removed from, you know? It's not that we're over here and God just like, all right, I'm going to take over and you're going to just kind of sit by and watch everything happen.

No, we are the means by which God actually brings completion to the work, brings some self-pleasure, right? And so when we realize, which Paul is reminding us about, that God is the one who lives in us, that he actually lives, that he's not dead in us or alive in someone else, right?

But he's living in us. Each person who is in Christ, Jesus lives in you. That produces an awareness and humility and fear.

You know, I think that's the context that we see that Paul is speaking out of. You know, he just got done saying do nothing from selfish ambition, but in humility, right?

Jesus humbled himself. He emptied himself, right? We ought to realize that he now dwells in us, you know, and be humble about that.

[29 : 54] For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. So Paul exhorts them to realize who lives inside of them, right?

To regard him with fear and with trembling, to still approach God as he is, not how he isn't, or is not, you know.

And then in verse 14, moving on, he gives an exhortation. Verse 14 says, do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent children of God, without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.

So real quick, he starts off by saying, do all things without grumbling or complaining, and that's one of my other points. So fear and trembling, realizing that God is in us, and then this exhortation to do nothing from grumbling or disputing, it says.

He says, do all things, not just church things, not just work things, not just home things, right? Wherever you are, as long as God is in you, that means wherever you go, God goes with you, right?

[31 : 25] Do all things without grumbling or disputing. How often do we complain? You know, like, seems like, honestly, it's the rule of, or order of the day, rule of the day.

Like, if you can go a day without being around someone complaining, or you yourself not complaining, it's like missing a cup of coffee in the morning. You know, it's just like, oh man, I didn't get my daily dose of grumbling, you know?

It's like, it's everywhere all the time. Seriously, like, there is a spirit that can be shared in the workforce that looks like, I'll just gripe about whatever's lacking, whatever I'm not getting, whoever in authority is not doing a great job, and it's contagious, you know?

It's just like, if you're not griping at work, like, what are you doing, enjoying work? You know? And, but it's not just work, it's other areas of life, you know?

It's at our home, you know, when people aren't with you, you know, how do you talk about your wife? You know, how do you talk about your kids?

[32 : 38] How do you talk about your roommates? How do you talk about, you know, insert your personal thing to grumble about, right? And at bare minimum, although people might not see it, it comes out still, right?

But I think to hold to this text a little bit more specifically, in the context of grumbling and complaining, he is talking about the onlooking world, looking at our life, right?

So he says, the reason that we shouldn't grumble, complain, is that we might be blameless, and that we might shine as lights in the world, right? So if Adam goes to work, you know, works with all of his city buddies, and all of them are in a huddle, grumbling about such and such, or how the new codes are terrible, or the person in authority is this or that, but he's not participating, grumbling, or maybe he says something to lead the conversation away from grumbling, maybe towards some type of gratefulness for something, that's going to be weird to them, right?

That light's going to shine a little bit, and people are going to be like, wait, you're not joining in the fun, you're not joining in the obvious thing that we should grumble about, right?

That's one example, but we're served many examples. Every day that you wake up, there's opportunities that are directly on your plate to complain and grumble, and in the context of this verse, it seems to me that through Jesus, we really have no excuse to grumble.

[34 : 21] Everything is gift, right? Everything is gracious, right? Not to say that there shouldn't be things that we should address, that are issues, but we shouldn't gripe about our life, we shouldn't gripe about others, we should, in humility, address those things, right?

So my question to yours is where do we complain, you know? We're a church. We're striving to be, as the Lord said, which is a light on a hill, right?

Nobody takes a light and puts a basket over it. You let your light shine, you know, he says, right? And recently we have been talking a lot about culture building as a body.

I think this is one value to throw into the mix of culture, especially given a lot of us have strong opinions, ideas about things, not even that any of those are bad, but let us take care of not to grumble, period.

or to use the things, maybe that are good ideas, as a way of grumbling, you know? But it also doesn't say just grumbling, it says disputing, too, you know?

[35 : 41] Maybe you avoid grumbling, but maybe you just like to fight, too. Maybe you like to dispute, maybe you like a good dispute, you know? Yeah, some fights are worth it, right?

Honorable, honorable disputes, but a lot of times we can get caught up in stuff that is not worth it, you know? So, do all things without that, without grumbling or disputing.

Why? Why do we do that? So that you might be blameless, innocent, children of God, without blemish, in the midst of a twisted and crooked generation, okay?

So the reason that Paul exhorts them to not grumble, not dispute, is because the onlooking world already has enough to blame each other for, right?

The church unfortunately has enough egg on her face to be blameworthy, it seems, many things, maybe some not true, maybe some misrepresentations, maybe things that are actually true, right?

[36 : 50] Paul is exhorting them to live a life that is free from blame, right? And someone will say to me, like, geez, blameless, innocent, without blemish, like, we're sinners, man.

You know, like, we're never going to be blameless, never going to be innocent, right? Like, it's true that all of us have sin, and all of us can be worthy of blame, but Paul is talking specifically about your life being free from the blame of the world, right?

Like, Paul says that elders must be above reproach, right? They should be free from reproach, not that they should be completely innocent or free from sin, right?

But if the world looks at us and they were to do just a brief survey of the areas of our life, well, they'd be like, oh, man, there's really not many areas of blame, you know?

That's what Paul is getting at. We know that because he literally says, among whom you shine as lights in the world, right? Just for the purpose of staggering an unbeliever, being like, what is wrong with you?

[38 : 06] Like, how do you live so free from reproach? Like, I feel like my friends are all, like, all of us are, you know, blameworthy. He's saying, do this in the midst of a generation that isn't like this at all.

In the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, right? This generation is so perverse in so many ways, and honestly, a lot of it results in just being ungrateful.

Part of the reason why many people in my generation are the way that they are is because a lot of lives were laid down for them to live the life of ease and freedom that is now being squandered.

A very entitled life, an ungrateful life at the root is saying, you know, it doesn't matter what our fathers did, you know, it doesn't matter what the age it did, I'll live my life how I want.

So incredibly ungrateful. you know, and maybe you're among the ages of that generation and you can see that whoever we are, we're still exhorted to be blame-free of this sin of grumbling, complaining, right?

[39 : 36] verse 15 ends with among whom you shine as lights in the world.

So that's the purpose. Let the world see our good works and actually turn to God to glorify him, right? Verse 16 says, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ, I may be proud that it did not run in vain or labor in vain.

So, Paul is building many churches, Philippi is one of them, and I think in Corinthians, Paul expounds upon the work that each person builds will be tested one day by fire, and only that which passes through the fire will remain, right?

So he's saying, like, if we as a church are building one another, right, and we are spurring each other on to love and good works, that's going to result in something that either is eternal or will be burned up, right?

And so Paul's concerned, he's like, hey, don't do anything with grumbling or disputing, be blameless, shine, you know, so that when my work is tested, I wouldn't have built you guys in vain, you know?

[41 : 12] I want to build God's house, not any other house, right? But he says to do it in a specific way, which is to hold fast to the word of life.

Holding fast, I love that image. A parallel passage is in 1 John 1.

I should have written it up here, I don't have it, but it's 1 John 1, it starts off by saying, that which we have heard from the beginning, which we have seen, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life.

life. There's this phrase, concerning the word of life, speaking about Jesus, right? Jesus, the person, not necessarily the word of life as the message, but more specifically, Christ as the word of life, completely embodied.

Same thing here, it's the same thing in Greek. So, when we read holding fast to the word of life, you can probably just insert holding fast to Jesus as the word of life himself.

[42 : 26] love. And, man, it is hard to hold fast sometimes, you know? I was reminded of that yesterday, this morning, and, or this week, but we must hold fast as if our lives depend on it, you know?

The scriptures exhort us to fight the good fight of faith, not to say that it's not a fight. It is a fight. Okay? Which means there will be days that you feel like you have to give extra energy to something to fight, and not give up.

If you're in a battle, you can't just call it quits, right? You gotta keep fighting. Same thing, if you're in the middle of a storm, if you're in a boat, you know, the spray is holding fast with the sailors' phrase, you know?

Hold fast! You know, if you're in a storm, okay? Grab the mast, captain goes to the helm, right? We have to hold fast to Jesus, because if we lose him, we lose everything, you know?

Holding fast to the word of life, holding fast to Jesus, so that in the last day, the day of Christ, Paul says that I may be proud of you, right?

[43 : 46] that I may know that it didn't run in vain. If we exhort each other to hold fast to Jesus, sometimes we need a little bit more teaching on what that looks like, you know?

Holding fast to Jesus, holding fast to God as our refuge, right? But if we exhort each other to hold fast to Christ, that is a word that in the last day will not be burned up, right?

Verse 17 says, even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

Likewise, you also should be glad and rejoice with me. This last part, um, I you know, I talked in the beginning just a little bit about like the dynamic of leadership nowadays and, uh, how we should really look to the scriptures for what godly leadership looks like.

This is, this is it, you know? Pretty much summed up in, in Paul's fatherly heart, his fatherly authority, apostolic authority, he says, even, even if I'm to be poured out as a sacrificial offering of your faith, I'm glad about it.

[45 : 19] You know? Not wasted at all. You know? There's many times where we're, we kind of live our lives in terms of like assessing like what's worthy of sacrifice, what's not, should I be poured out, should I be poured out, you know, maybe something like that.

uh, but Paul's like, if your faith is worthy of me dying for, then I would be glad to do that.

You know? That's incredible. You know? That bears the image of Jesus as he just laid out, who emptied himself, it says. Didn't hold anything back. Paul says, I'm glad to do that.

You know? Doug Wilson defines true masculinity as the sacrificial responsibility or the glad assumption of sacrificial responsibility.

I think that's great because it's not just sacrifice, right? It's done gladly, right? It's an awareness that the sacrifice is totally worth it, right?

[46 : 26] That it pays way later on. And we even see that with Jesus. Although he was anxious in the garden, you know, sweating tears of blood.

The scriptures say that it was for the joy set before him that you endured, right? Do we have that same, do we share in that same vision of Paul that we're like, you know what, I'm going to spend myself for you, I'm going to spend myself for you, I'm going to spend myself for you, not under just anything, but if it's unto your faith, Paul's like, I'll gladly be poured out, right?

we're wrapping up dividends that will go much farther when we sacrifice for God for each other's faith, right?

Spurring each other on to run the race. So Paul says, even if I'm to be poured out, I'm glad to do so. But he's not the only one that's glad, he's like, you guys should also rejoice with me.

You should be glad with me. Catch this vision that I'm trying to convey to you that this is it, sacrificial giving of ourselves, spending the time that seems on the surface to not be worth it, but knowing that in the end it will reach eternal reward, right?

[47 : 57] He's like, catch this vision with me, guys. He's like, I'm glad about it. You likewise, verse 18, you likewise also should be glad and rejoice with me. Okay?

Do we have that attitude, Christ church, for one another? Do we have the attitude of glad, sacrificial responsibility? Do we have that towards each other's faith?

You know, there's a lot of things in your life that people are going to, there's a lot of needs and we can meet needs, but is it unto our faith, right?

Is it unto our love for God, you know? Helping each other to see, like, it's our joy to sacrifice for one another.

It's Paul's joy here. mix this up here.

[49 : 06] I'm almost wrapped up here. A couple more, more things before I close. I'm not, like, really good at this.

I'm not really good at that. I'm tempted to grumble, I'm tempted to complain. I imagine most of you share the same temptation.

And maybe even Paul was tempted to grumble and complain at times, but that doesn't negate the exhortation. It actually illuminates it.

It shows us that we need God. We need an awareness of God to be lights in the world. And I think one key thing here is that do we not just know, but do we regularly meditate on the knowledge of the God who dwells in us?

Okay? I know for certain that I don't enough. Okay? I know that I am tempted to forget the Lord.

[50 : 20] But the thing that draws me back is the same God, you know, that died. Right? That he's the one who will produce these things in us.

And I would just exhort us, like Paul is saying, fear and tremble before God because he lives in you. Right?

he's at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. But meditate on him. Meditate on that God. Worship him. You know?

Saturate yourself with the enjoyment of who he actually is, not who he is not. Right? Meditate on that.

I'm going to close with a scripture. In 2 Corinthians 13, really short scripture here, he says, Paul is saying, he is not weak in dealing with you.

[51 : 26] Speaking of God, God is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For us also, Christ's church, he is not weak in dealing with us.

Okay? But he lives by the power of God in us. Although we are weak in the body, Christ is strong in us. Okay? Let us go on evangelizing the world by putting away our disputes, our grumblings, our God and holding fast.

Jesus, the word of life. That we might actually be blameless in a world that is twisted and full of blame and full of a blame that wants to be used.

People are so eager to blame. Everything is just a big blame game. right? In Christ Jesus, though, Jesus Christ was blamed for us.

Right? He took the penalty of our sin that should have come to us. Right? So we can live in a world now free from the constraints and the burdens of sin and the bondage of sin.

[52 : 53] So don't forget, God is not weak in dealing with us, but he is powerful among us.