

This Time It's Personal

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 September 2023

Preacher: John Lowrie

[0 : 0 0] all for leading our worship for those who took part, for the singers, for the musicians. Phil, I'm just looking at my, I've got a flashing battery here, hopefully that'll last out okay.

I don't know if that's something to confess to, but that's the state of play, hopefully we'll be okay. Turn with me please to Philippians 2, Philippians chapter 2, and I only want to consider two verses this morning as we work through the book of Philippians. We've been in this book for a wee while, there's so much in this book, it's a great book in the Bible, one of my favorites.

Over the past couple of weeks, Paul, as you know, is in prison, he's wondering about his life, whether he's lived a life worthy of the gospel, whether the gospel is really advanced, people are accusing him of all sorts, and he's anxious that whether he's with them or not, that the people are united, and that's what we've been looking at over the past week or two, the importance of being united in one heart and mind and love and spirit, and we see this right at the start of Philippians chapter 2. But let's put verses 12 and 13, that's the two verses I want us to consider, but let's put them back in context. If you've not been with us, it's good for you to see where they come. So let's read from verse 5. This is our attitude and our relationship with each other should be the same as Jesus, and then Paul presents us the attitude of Jesus, and then he goes on. So verse 5, in your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Two small verses, but they are packed with so much, and we'll try and make sense of these just now. Let's come before God. Let's ask for his help.

Our loving Heavenly Father, we thank you for the service this morning. We thank you, Lord, for all that's happened to this point. We thank you for the worship. We thank you for the songs that we've been singing, warming our hearts, encouraging us once again in our faith. We thank you for just being here this morning, Lord, for the fellowship that we enjoy with each other, encouraging each other in our mutual faith and our love for you. And Father, we come to your word now, and we pray, Lord, that you would speak to us as individuals and also as a congregation. Lord, your word is open before us, Lord. Help us to understand what Paul means when he writes these words, what the Holy Spirit would want us to know even this morning. So, Father, lead us and guide us, we pray. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

[3 : 36] Amen. Amen. I wonder if there's anything that you worry about. If you're a natural worrier, some of us are. We worry about loads of things. Some of us worry if we're not worrying. We feel we should be worrying, so we worry and find something to worry about. I wonder if there is anything you're worrying about, anything that you're fearful. I'm mildly fearful about Friday and the wedding of my daughter.

I must confess it's looming large, and it just fills me with a wee bit of dread. I'm sure it'll disappear and it'll be filled with joy. But anything that you're worried or fearful about, is there anything that if I asked you personally, you'd say, this is something that I'm usually quite anxious about. Do you ever worry about your salvation? Are you saved? Are you not saved? Salvation is a big issue. It's the salvation of your soul. We're not just talking about your church membership. We're talking about, are you saved in the presence of Lord? Paul tells us in many ways in the two verses we read that it's something we should be worried about. There is something we should be fearful and even trembling. Look at verse 12. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation.

And he tells us how to do this with fear and trembling. As I came across this verse again this week, I must confess, I don't have any fear and trembling about my salvation. Is that a good thing?

Am I complacent? Do I take it seriously enough? Do I just go, well, I'm saved. I made a profession in 1980. That must, that's fine. Everything's okay. I'm on the way to the celestial city. Is it something that I ask myself, am I really saved? After all, it's a big thing, our salvation. And that's what Paul is saying to this church here. Work out your own salvation. Something for you to do, something for you to consider. It's to do with your salvation. And do so with fear and trembling. So that's really what we're looking at this morning, our salvation. We're continuing our series of studies in the Philippians about principles of church growth, shining as stars in the universe as we hold out the word of life. As I said before, Paul has evaluated his life, his gospel ministry. In the face of death, he's in prison. He doesn't know what's going to happen. And he's saying, have I lived a good life?

Have I really advanced the gospel? I'm banged up in prison here and so forth. And he comes to the conclusion, looking at his own life, I've been a faithful servant of God. The gospel is advancing, even while I'm in prison. But he says to them, make sure you stand firm. We looked at this a few weeks ago. Stand firm for the faith, not just for your personal faith, but for doctrine, for teaching, for the Bible, for the gospel. Stand firm. Stand united. Stand together for that gospel. Stand united in the gospel. And then over the past couple of weeks, watch your attitude. Churches don't explode, they implode. And so he says, don't just think about standing firm from opposition outside. Think of the difficulties that you could face inside and watch your attitude towards each other. It is very, very important. Now, what he's doing when you come to verse 12 and 13, although he's speaking to them as a church, he's speaking to them as an individual. This time it's getting personal. He's asking them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. That's a very personal request.

[7 : 26] The other one was looking at them as a church. Stand united. Stand together. One heart, one mind, although there are many hearts and minds, make sure they're one. But now he's coming to them as an individual. It's the only way that your salvation is a personal thing. The Lord doesn't say, well, this side here, they're 51% saved. You guys are a waste of space. So the whole church is just saved.

It doesn't work that way. He looks at the majority and says, oh, I'll just save Western Hill Baptist church because most of them are saved. Your salvation is a personal thing. So Paul is now zooming in on them, the wee microscope, and saying, work out whether I'm with you or whether I'm away.

It doesn't matter whether I'm with you or whether I'm away from you. Make sure you're saved. That really is what he's asking them to do. It is such a big thing. I've read many books on pastoral counseling and pastoral leadership. So, so many. I've read articles on them, and they're all roughly the same.

Watch your quiet time. Serve the Lord. Do this. Pray. But occasionally you read one that has something in it that no one else has. And there was one I read many years ago about what it means to be a pastor, for instance. And, and it said, you need to pray, you need to do all the usual stuff that you've read in so many articles before that. But there was one that's always stuck with me.

There is no cavalry. It really struck me. And I thought, that is so true. There is, although there'll be brothers and sisters to help as a pastor, there's no cavalry. It's between you and God. It's always between you and God. And although we have brothers and sisters who help us and lead us and guide us, even in our own individual ministries, there isn't ultimately no cavalry. You, it is, you're, God has saved you for a relationship primarily with him. And we need to make sure that that relationship is real and that our salvation is real. And that is something that as an individual, we need to consider and we need to know. And we need to even be fearful about it and think, am I really saved?

[9 : 38] Your, your faith, your salvation depends on this. So in this passage, I've divided this into two, Paul divides it into two quite easily. It talks about work. There are two works happening here. It's mentioned twice, God's work and our work. And then this is a passage that has been a battleground in some ways for Christians that deals with God's sovereignty, the work that God does, but also a work that we do. It talks about here that, that God does a work, who God who works in you. So you work out your salvation. So that's what I want us to look at this morning, to encourage us in God's work and to challenge us in the work that we do. So first of all, then God's work. That's what Paul presents to us here. We've seen earlier on, as we've looked at this letter, Paul has reminded them that God does a work, not just for us in the gospel. He saves us, something we cannot do for ourself. He does a work for us, but he also does a work in us. He is the God who changes us, who regenerates us.

Ephesians 2, we are God's workmanship. A Christian, if you are saved, that's a description that the Lord gives you. You are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Philippians 2.13, the passage we're looking at, for it is God who works in you, not just for you. These are, these wee words are so important. Whole doctrines hang on wee words like in and for. So we know Jesus did a work on the cross for us. We will remember this as we gather around the Lord's table. But if you're a Christian, God has been doing a work, not just 2,000 years ago for you, but on the day and in the years leading up to your salvation, a work in you to bring you to him. Our salvation is a work of God. And there are many things that we could mention here.

We could talk about God's choice of us. The whole of the Old Testament speaks of a God who chooses. He chose a whole nation. He chooses to lead and guide. He's the God who makes choices.

And he adopts us into his family and so forth. But I want to consider what Paul is really mentioning here. So first of all then, the work God does is new life. That's the first thing. He gives us new life. Verse 13, for it is God who works in you. For us to become Christians through repentance and faith, God has to do a work in us. He has to work. And the Bible uses words to explain this.

It uses words like regeneration. We need regenerated. It uses words like new birth. It uses words like made alive. It uses words like born again. You must be born again. No wonder the disciples or Nicodemus is confused. How can I be born again? How does that happen? So the Bible is very clear that God does a work in us. And it's this new life, this new birth. Before we are saved, the Bible is clear. We are dead in trespasses and sins. And we are no concern about our sins or our holiness. God is just so far from us. And we are not really. We are spiritually dead by nature.

[13 : 08] Ephesians 2, as for you, you were dead. Dead in your transgressions and sins. And therefore, God has to choose us. I was reminding you of the wee verse where Jesus says to the disciples, you did not choose me, but I chose you. If you are here this morning, that should thrill you.

And there are some Christians that just don't like that, that God chose them and didn't choose somebody else. And therefore, you miss out on the joy of the fact that you are choosing. I remember, and I think maybe I've mentioned to you, there was a woman in Nidre, and she had two daughters, and they were adopted. And I remember asking her, how do your daughters feel about being adopted?

And she says, well, they felt special because other kids, they're just lumbered with them. That was the ones that they had. But we chose you, she said. We went out and chose you. We saw you.

And we've had, in both churches, last two churches, somebody who's been adopted. To be chosen, to be looked at. The social services don't come around and say, there you are. You see the baby.

You consider, and you think, that is the one I would like to adopt. That's quite special, to be chosen. I'm born into my family through, well, my mother and father, so forth. But they never chose me in that sense. They might have chose to have a baby, but they ended up with me.

[14 : 32] But to be chosen, to be chosen is quite something. To have a wee bit of history and think, I'm still going to choose them. And the Lord chooses us. He chooses us to make us alive, to quicken us, we who were dead in trespasses and sin. And this is the work that God does in us. He regenerates us, and he makes us alive. Philippi, Ephesians 2. Because of his great love for us, God, who's rich in mercy, made us alive. Even when we were dead, even when we were dead in transgressions and sins, it is by grace you have been saved. You are special. You are chosen. You are made alive. And Paul even knows the magnitude of this. He compares this new life in us to the same power that was shown at creation. For God who said, 2 Corinthians 4, 6, for God who said, let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. The God who simply said, way back, let there be light. And light floods the earth and the world's created, came to you and says, let there be light. Let John see. Let John understand. Let John understand and know who Jesus is. Let him respond. Let him see his sin. Let him see

Jesus as Savior. That is quite exciting. That is just, that is wow. When I first discovered this, years after I became a Christian, it wasn't down to me in the Kelvin Hall on May the 12th, 1980, just deciding, I have decided to follow Jesus. It was all down to me. There was actually a work that God had done in me long before. That should humble us and fill us with great joy if you're a child here.

And as a result of this, we are, when God chooses us and makes us alive, Paul says to Timothy, opponents must be, must be gently instructed in the hope that God will grant them repentance. If you have repented, it's because God has granted you this. But as a result of this, we have what Jonathan Edwards said. He wrote an excellent book called Religious Affections, a whole book on how do you know somebody is saved? And the Puritans years ago, when they wrote a book, they really wrote a book, heavy duty. It's not bedtime reading, I'll tell you. To get into some of these old books, they're packed with teaching. And he wrote a book called Religious Affections, because there were people making professions of faith. How do you know? And he boiled it all down to, as a Christian, you now have new affections. You now have these new affections for God. You love God. You want God.

And that's what Ezekiel prophesied, wasn't it, when the Lord spoke. And he says in Ezekiel 36, I will take you out of the nations. I will gather you from all countries and bring you back to your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities. I will give you a new heart, put a new spirit. I will remove. There's so many I wills. I will put the spirit within you. That will happen to God's people, happens to us. And we are his workmanship created. So he does a new work in us, first of all, choosing us, giving us new life. And this is not just justification, it is sanctification. That in many ways is what Paul is dealing with here.

This aspect of our salvation, it proves that it's real, not that we're justified, but that we are sanctified. There's a change within us. So secondly, not only new life, but along with this new life, we have a new will, a new desire to serve him. For it is God who works in you to will, he says in verse 13. And John and Paul, the apostles, testify to this as well.

[18 : 47] Paul says in Romans 7, for in my inner being, I delight in God's law. I was saved in May the 12th, 1980. If he saw me a month before, I did not delight in the law of God. I was dead in my sins. I couldn't care a jot. I was half wondering about God. And I put God in the dock and I would weigh him up.

And I would decide whether I would choose him, not realizing that he has to choose me. It was just pride and arrogance of the highest level. God could have abandoned me. But he didn't.

He gave me a new heart, a new mind. He chose me. He regenerated me. He gave me new birth, new life. And from that point on, I delighted in the law of God. I had a new desire, new batteries, to want to please him. Paul says this, even although the old nature's still there, he desires God. And if you're here this morning, that is your heart's desire, or it should be. And examine yourself. If it is, maybe you just like coming to church. It's not that you love God or serving him.

You just feel, well, I've got nothing better to do. Keeps me out of the way of the buses. I'll just go along to church. Why are you here? Is it because you delight in God? Paul John says, this is love for God, to obey his commands, and his commands are not burdensome. You have a new desire, a new will. We are God's handiwork. Ephesians 2 have mentioned this, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. You now have this desire to please him, to follow hard after him. Jesus says, a good tree cannot bear bad fruit. A bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruits you will recognize them.

I've had this experience in quite a few churches where people profess faith, and as Christians, we want to just go, wow, isn't that great? They're a Christian. You want to rejoice by the angels in heaven over one sinner who repents. But you're left wondering, are they really saved? It was a particular problem in London, where people came, and they were refugees. They were fleeing another country, and they came, and they wanted to stay in the UK. And one way, they knew the way that you could stay was to profess faith. You wouldn't be sent back to your country. You would be killed.

[21 : 18] So I get sucked into that world, and I would have to, one case was coming up, and I think the guy did a runner anyway, but I had to stand out. Yeah, this guy's a Christian. Your honor, don't send him back.

Something could happen to him. And people knew how to play that game. They would profess faith. They would willingly go through Christianity Explored. They would willingly say, isn't Jesus great? I love Jesus. And the gospel is great. They would say all the right things. But the thing you were always worried about, or you questioned, was, was there this joy of a sense of forgiveness? Was there this new love for the Lord that caused them to clumsily just say, isn't Jesus great? I love Jesus. In a prayer meeting, they would begin to stumble as praying in public. They would express the desires of their heart. There was just nothing. Absolutely nothing. You were having to put the words in their mouth. You were left. There wasn't any fruits of salvation. There might be fruits of a confession.

It's not the same. They were maybe their own workmanship and not a workmanship of God. And we have every right to look at this. Jesus tells us, by their fruits, you will know them by their fruits.

Is there this growth, this desire for religious things now, for God, this religious affections? It is as simple as that. Just your spirit testifies to their spirit that they are children of God by their fruits. So you have this new life. You have this new will. You have, thirdly, new actions.

This new desire shows itself in wanting to obey him. Look at verse 13. It's God who works in you to will. In other words, he gives you this new will, but also and to act according to his good purpose.

[23 : 09] So you have this new will and you want to act. God's work is more than just renewing you. And it's more than just giving you a new desire. It empowers you to do new things. That is God's workmanship.

It's not anything short of that. You're really grasping at straws. We have every right to look, and too many people are parading as their own workmanship. When God creates, he creates something beautiful. And we have every right to expect the fruit biblically. We can be too naive in this.

Lloyd-Jones says this, God carries out on his work within us by placing these desires and powers in us. In other words, God is perfecting us. He is bringing his great purpose to pass in our Christian life, not by acting upon us in a passive state or condition, but by controlling our will, our desires, our thoughts, our aspirations, and everything. It is God who starts it and makes us do it. I do not say that God forces our will. God does something more gracious. He persuades our will and gives us holy desires. I agree with that statement by Lloyd-Jones. God works in us, gives us new desires, and empowers us to do his will. So, new life, new desires, new actions. We live a life worthy of the gospel. And then fourthly, a new purpose. For it is God who works in you to will and then to act according to his good purpose. Now, the big question here is, what is God's purpose? What is this thing that God is doing when he works in us? He has a purpose. And what is that purpose? That's the question you would ask in this question. You think, he's working on me to act and to will according to his purpose. What is his purpose? The purpose, very simply as this, is to glorify his own name. Your salvation is bigger than your salvation. Your salvation has to do with his glory. We saw this with Jesus in the passage we looked at last week. You remember that being in very nature God, he humbled himself. Jesus came.

He lived his whole life, not just to save you. My will is to do the will of him who sent me to finish his work. Father, the hour has come. Glorify your name. That's bigger than, Father, the hour has come.

I'm going to save John Lowry from Springburn. Bigger than that. Bigger than saving Westerhailes. The hour has come. Glorify your name. And that is God's ultimate purpose. It is about his glory.

[26 : 04] God raised Jesus, verse 11, to the glory of God the Father. It's not that he needs glory. It's not that he needs worship. He just simply needs recognized for who he is. He's a glorious God. And this is what God's ultimate purpose is. That's why he chose us. He mentions this in verse 11, Philippians 2, verse 11, to the glory of God the Father. Peter says the same thing to Christians. Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and do what? Glorify God. Glorify God on the day he visits us. Sometimes we are too busy interested in our own glory. But Peter says, may they see your good deeds. May they see how you live, what you desire, what your actions is. Why? Because it fulfilled God's purpose to glorify his name.

And that is what this is all about. The shorter catechism. You know that, don't you? You're being well catechized. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. That is God's ultimate purpose. That's why you're here. It's not to do with kitchens. It's not to do with other things.

It is to bring glory to his name. And that is what his purpose is. It's God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. He does a work in us to bring glory to himself.

And that's why Paul mentions this here. It's why just before this verse, he begins to talk about the work that we need to do. So secondly, very quickly, let's look at our work. Our work.

When God saves us, he doesn't make us robotic. He does, he, as I says, he persuades our wills. And, but within us, we, we still have the old nature. And although God does this work, there is a work that we have to do. God works in us. It says, for it is God, verse 18, who works in us. Verse 12. That's why he says in verse 12, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, this was a good church. They were very commendable, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Don Carson says here, in this wee, it's the best wee commentary on, on Philippians, and it's such a tiny wee thing.

[28 : 43] But he says, it is vitally important to grasp the connection between God's sovereignty and our responsibility. In verses 12 and 13, the text does not say, work to acquire your salvation.

For God has done his bit now, and it's up to you to do yours. Many Christians believe that. Nor does it say you have already been, you already have salvation, but now persevering, persevering in it depends entirely on you. Still less does it say, let go and let God. Just relax, the spirit will carry you. In other words, he's not saying, God's done his bit, you need to go out and fill in the wee bit that he's not quite done. He's taken you so far, and it's now up to you to do the rest. That is not the gospel. Because if you know yourself, you will fail. Even if you were only left 5% to contribute, you would fail. I would fail. Our righteousness is his filthy rags and his sight left to ourself.

We sin. That's why we gather around the Lord's table. Not just to remember his death, but to remember our sin. Since we last gathered, we are aware of our sin. And the closer we get to God, the more sinful we become aware. So there's nothing. Salvation is from God from beginning to end.

We're only like a beggar, like the person who has the, settling the big issue. All we're doing is putting out our hand and saying, can you give me something? Can you give me this? We've got nothing to offer. We're poor beggars. And that is what's happening here. We can't earn our salvation.

We have not to, he's not done his bit and we have to do our bit. You're not saved and lost, you're saved. And this is the dilemma. Christians try and figure this out. Scriptures teach it very clear. God, sovereignty, human responsibility. We still have to repent. We still have to live a life worthy of the gospel. But God works in us towards that end as we work with him. Paul mentioned as writing for chapter one, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it on to completion. That should thrill you, but it doesn't make you complacent. That's why Paul now says he's confident that God who began will bring it to completion, but you work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Make sure you are saved. And so there are two things that Paul mentions here, obedience. Very quickly, obedience. One sign that we are saved is our obedience. Remember when Jesus died, he rose again before he even ascended to heaven. He says to them, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and not just preach the gospel, make disciples. Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And he tells us what a disciple is, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. That is the task of the church. It's the task of the elders, not just to preach the gospel, not just to furnish the church, but everybody that makes a prophet, to preach the gospel, everybody that makes a professional faith, to bring them on as a disciple.

[32 : 02] It's a responsibility to do this for herself and to help the church do this. Teaching them to obey. When somebody becomes a Christian, we have a new heart, a new will. Jesus is not just our savior, he is our Lord. I remember in the 80s, there was this whole big debate, or I have books on it. Could you accept Jesus as savior, but not as Lord? In your dreams. It doesn't happen. It cannot happen.

I don't mind being saved, but I'm just going to do my own thing. It doesn't, it's, it's, it's just bonkers. It just, just doesn't make any sense whatsoever. These folks were wasting time even writing a book in this, and Christians were wasting time reading it. You just, it just doesn't make any sense.

He becomes Lord of your life, and, and yet, we, our old nature is, is still there. So Paul here says that Christian conduct, look at Jesus in verse 18, being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death. This is the one we follow. He became obedient, we become obedient.

We hear his word. We want to obey him. As you have always obeyed, verse 12, not only in my presence, continue to work. And that's how he says, working out your salvation, showing that your salvation is real. Not working for, but working this out. And the Bible describes the Christian life as not something passive, but something very active. It's a race. It's a battle. It's a contest. It's a pursuit. It's a pressing on. We don't, we're not saved and satisfied. Well, God just let go and let God. There's a struggle every morning. You don't really want to praise. Monday morning, it's pouring the rain. Probably will be pouring the rain, I think, this Monday. After the heat wave will fade, you'll wake up some Monday morning.

It's bleak. The birds are miserable. You're miserable. You have to gird up the loins of your mind and reminding you're saved. You're a child of God. That is worth rejoicing in. You're his workmanship.

[34 : 08] It is quite something. You want to obey. You want to live a life worthy of the gospel. And there's a battle that lies ahead between the world, the flesh, and the devil. You're in a battle every day. Toza wrote a wee chapter called Playground or Battleground. As Christians, we want a playground. The Christian life is a battleground. Struggling, pressing on. And every child of God wants to be obedient.

We want to be obedient because, not to save ourselves, but because we love God. We now love his word. We love him. Secondly, holiness. We serve a holy God. Be holy.

Why? Because I am holy. There's an excellent wee book called, it's an old book, I think it's by Henry Scougall called, the life of God in the soul of man. That's what happens when you become a Christian. The very life of God is now in your soul. You're no longer so-and-so from Castorfin or wherever it is you came from. You are now this person who has now the life of God poured in, not just the love of God, but the life of God in your very soul. Boy, you'd almost expect Christians to walk in water every single day. It's that, wow. But we now have godly desires. We want to be holy because he is holy. We deal with holy things. This is a holy Bible. I love looking at that now and again.

You forget, this is my Bible. It's a holy Bible. It's the holy word of God. We have a saviour who is holy. We have a holy lifestyle and so forth. And I think sometimes we can forget that salvation is not just about justification, it's about sanctification, living as he lived. Let me quote John Stott on his commentary in Galatians. The first great secret of holiness lies in the degree and the decisiveness of our repentance. If besetting sins persistently plague us, it is either because we have never truly repented or because having repented or because having repented, we have not maintained our repentance.

It is as if having nailed our old nature to the cross, we keep wispily returning to the scene of its execution. We begin to fondle it, to caress it, to long for its release, even to try to take it down from the cross. We need to learn to leave it there. When some jealous or proud or malicious or impure thought invades our mind, we must kick it out at once. It is fatal to begin to examine it and consider whether we are going to give in to it or not. We have declared war on it. We are not going to resume negotiations. We have crucified the flesh. We are never going to draw the nails. That's what it means to work out your salvation, to walk in obedience to God's commands. And they are not burdensome, but the old nature is still there. We need to fight against this. But we desire holiness.

[37 : 21] We, and God has given us this power, 2 Peter 1. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness. Through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness, for this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith. That should make us fear and trembling.

Am I adding to my faith? Or am I just reflecting back on something then and I'm no different than I was then? Have I been adding to my faith? Is my walk better now than it's ever been? It should be.

Our sanctification is a growing process. It's not really this. It should be this. There'll be bumps in it, but it might be like that, but it should be gone up. Be holy because I am holy. His divine power has given. Therefore, Peter says, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.

Make sure you're saved. He's saying the same thing as Paul. Make sure you're saved. So here is a personal part of Paul's letter. He wants, he's given us what Jesus, what he has done, who he is. We profess to follow him. He says, make sure you're saved, John. Make sure. Remember the work that God did in you.

Remember his purpose was to give you new life and new will, new actions and new purpose. You know this. You see signs of this. Make sure you are saved. Look at your obedience. Look at your holiness.

[38 : 58] Continue to work out your salvation. Prove to yourself, to our watching world, that you're a child of God. Why? That he might be glorified. Do this for the glory of God. May the Lord be glorified in each one of our lives. Let's stand and we'll sing together our closing song. It was one we learned last week. I think it was last week for the first time. I will glory in my redeemer. Let's stand and we'll sing this together and then we'll move into communion.

Thank you.