

**Philippians 2:12-13**

**The Focus of this class:**

1. A brief look at what is meant by “work out your salvation”.
2. A brief look at what is meant by “fear and trembling”.
3. The nature of obedience.
4. The obedience of Christ to the Father.
5. How God works in you to will and to do.

**What is meant by “work out your salvation”?**

1. This must be understood in context to where this command began. Phil. 1:27
2. This is commanded as a way in which we are to obey.
3. The book of Philippians is addressed to believers who possess eternal salvation. 1:1-11, 28
4. Salvation can be used as eternal salvation or temporal deliverance in time. Phil. 1:19-20
5. Salvation is something we must live in after we accept our Savior by faith.
  - a. As a man set free from slavery is responsible for what he does with his freedom so a believer who has been saved is responsible for what he does with his salvation.

**What is meant by “fear and trembling”?**

1. Fear is something inward and trembling is a something outward.
2. “Fear and trembling” is an expression which Paul often used.
  - a. Paul had fear and trembling when he taught the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 2:3
  - b. Paul was pleased by the obedience with “fear and trembling” the Corinthians showed toward Titus. 2 Corinthians 7:15
  - c. Paul instructed workers to have “fear and trembling” in their manner of serving their boss. Ephesians 6:5-6 <sup>5</sup> Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters (kurios) according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity (singleness) of your heart, as to Christ; <sup>6</sup> not by way of eyeservice (serving to look good), as men-pleasers (seeking favor), but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart (soul). Notice proper service to man is not seeking the favor of man.
  - d. Paul says this is the attitude the believer should have in obedience to the Word of God. Phil. 2:12
3. “Fear and trembling” is connected to obedience.
4. When respect or fear is based on Truth it is rational and in compliance with true good rather than by compulsion caused by another person or entity, which tends to be fear based on pragmatic reasoning.

### **The nature of obedience:**

1. Obedience is connected to listening. **u`pakou,w** Acts 12:13 (doorkeeper)
2. Obedience requires responding to the one you listen to.
3. Obedience should be based on reason.
4. Obedience should be learned and understood by children. Ephesians 6:1
5. Obedience is not merely outward compliance with mandates. Eph. 6:5, Col. 3:22
  - a. What happens when you become “dull of hearing” as per Hebrews 5:11?
6. Obedience is an act of the will and therefore requires we present ourselves to God for obedience. Romans 6:13, 16; 12:1-2
7. Obedience is first by the will followed by actions which comply with that will.
  - a. True obedience produces freedom not slavery.
  - b. Since obedience begins with the will it becomes of first importance that our will is lined up with Truth.
  - c. Obedience to God should be based on the reality of Truth rather than feeling forced to comply. Actions that are not based on a logical conclusion of Truth go against the very design of our being.
  - d. Obedience should be based on what you ought to do rather than what you must do.
  - e. Obedience is not limited to listening as true obedience requires compliance with what is heard.

### **The Obedience of Christ:**

1. Christ humbled Himself by obedience. Phil. 2:8
2. Christ learned obedience through suffering. Heb. 5:8
  - a. Christ was tested in the things He suffered. Heb. 2:18, 4:15
3. Christ had respect for the Father. Heb. 5:7
4. The prayer life of Christ was intensified through suffering. Heb. 5:7
5. Christ would have been more attentive to the Father during suffering and temptation.
  - a. God whispers in prosperity and shouts in adversity. Why? Is it because we hear a louder voice or because we are more focused on listening?

### **How God works in you to will and to do.**

1. Usually when theologians refer to the will as an element of a person they are referring to volition, the ability to choose good or evil.
2. When the term “will” (being translated from the Greek word *thelo*) is used in Scripture it usually refers to what you want something to be.
3. The will is what we think is good and therefore wish that we would fulfill. This is part of the nature of a rational being. “The will is good when it conforms to the truth of being” – Don
4. What we think is good usually stems from what is in our heart. The heart is your philosophy in that it is the way in which you think.
  - a. The heart contains what you want in life. Matt. 6:19-24, 12:34-35
  - b. God works on the will first because to realize truth enables the mind to discern goodness and therefore becomes attracted to true beauty.
5. The part in which God is working in you “to do” is basically to fulfill or execute the good that He reveals to you.

6. The will and act being referred to in this passage closely relates to what we have learned as second order will and first order will. A summary of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order volition and desire is as follows:
  - a. Second order volition: A desire that a certain desire would become volition.
  - b. Second order desire: A desire that you would actually desire something.
  - c. First order volition: That which you do.
  - d. First order desire: That which you desire to do.
7. Consider 3 things working in Galatians 5:17.
  - a. The flesh produces lust. 1st order desire.
  - b. The Spirit produces lust. 1st order desire.
  - c. You have a will which God is working on. 2<sup>nd</sup> order will.
  - d. When walking by the Spirit, the Spirit illuminates truth, which reveals what is good, which then can mold your second order volition as you take in more and more truth. When that good is connected with beauty it also produces a 1st order desire for that good. In this way, the lust for good comes from truth and reason.
  - e. The lust of the flesh does not stem from truth and goodness, and therefore the mind will often rationalize a "good" in order to fulfill that lust without the problem of internal conflict.
  - f. By transforming the mind, we develop a stronger lust for good than that of the flesh. Romans 8:4-6, 12:2 "Generally speaking, beauty usually has the most power and that is why the only cure for an evil passion is a stronger passion for the good. The only thing that can break the power of perverted 'beauty' is a true beauty." - Don
  - g. When you are out of fellowship the light that was shining on truth goes out so that you know the truth without seeing its goodness.
8. Consider the words of Jesus, "not My will but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42) and "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John 6:38)

**Summary:**

6. Why did Paul state that God is working in you for the good as a motivation to be obedient by working out your salvation with fear and trembling?
  - a. So you would make sure you earn your salvation?
  - b. So you would be frightened even more?
  - c. So you would listen to and comply with that will which God is working in you?
7. This is why we should be alert that God is working in us to will (will of the mind) and to work (accomplish the will of the mind). Obedience to what God is working in our mind.