

Philippians 10-05-28b

Let's pick up our study now in Philippians chapter 2. We spent some time looking at verse 12 and what obedience really signifies here. We looked at Romans 6.17, where Paul says just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. You might think on a superficial reading that that's just following the commandments or adhering to a set of rules.

But this is, as he says in Romans 6, committing yourself to a way of life, committing yourself as a slave with a view to obedience. There in Romans 6.17 you see a similar idea in 2 Corinthians 10.5. Paul says as he's preaching the gospel and teaching the truth and the doctrines of the knowledge of God, he says we are destroying speculations and every lofty thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God. These are, in our day, philosophies, alternate religions, scientific molehills that are pitted against the mountain of God's truth.

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Many times you hear that verse quoted, take every thought captive for Christ, it's not what it says. Taking every thought captive to the hupakoe of Christ.

The obedience of Christ. This is that lifestyle, that point of view that Paul has been describing throughout this letter. That's what obedience is.

In Hebrews 5.9, talking about the Lord Jesus himself, it says although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and it's very emphatic in Greek. Hebrews 5.8 says, and indeed being a son, he learned. This is from the same word that you get the noun disciple, mathete, mathetes.

This is a mathen, this is from manthano and it means to learn, disciples are learners. And he learned from what he suffered the obedience. Indeed being a son, he learned from what he suffered obedience, hupakoe.

Jesus himself entered into this mindset which he had committed himself to when he was still up in heaven. We study that in our chapter. And having been perfected, having been completed, this is from Talayo in verse 9 of Hebrews 5. Having been completed, he became to all those obeying him the cause or source of eternal salvation, eternal deliverance.

So through his obedience, he becomes the source of deliverance to those who are obedient to him. And you have hupakoe again. So these are critically important to understanding what obedience is.

This isn't do what I say. I said this, you do it. It is entering into a way of life that is based on a perspective, that is based on a view and a point of view that Paul has described for us in

Philippians.

Our vocabulary in English is really insufficient to express these concepts. We just don't have big enough words. It takes phrases, it takes paragraphs to explain what Paul is saying here.

So that's the idea. It doesn't make sense to say Jesus learned obedience through the things that he suffered. Jesus didn't follow the rule and so God made him suffer and then he learned to obey.

That doesn't really make any sense, does it? Jesus entered into this mindset. He lived out this selfless devotion to the plan and purpose of God in and through the things that he experienced. Remember that pathos, that whole pathé idea of experiencing through the things that he experienced.

It's not just his suffering, it's all of his experiences in his earthly existence here as one of us. He entered into, Montano has the idea of not just learning a thing by rote, but of being full of a thing, entering into it and absorbing it and sort of becoming one with it. That's what happened with the Lord Jesus and he is our example.

Those who follow him in that hupakoe, for them he is a source of deliverance, deliverance out of this present evil age, out of the corruption and the defilement and the sin into which we are born and of which we partake by nature. We're delivered. So here's the thing.

That's a lot of lofty talk, but here you and I are, we're encountering circumstances, we're talking with people, we have things we have to get done, we just have the normal concomitance of daily life and we say, well, so what? I heard a lesson on Philippians last night, last week, whenever, and I'm a believer in the Lord Jesus. He's coming back someday. I want to do well with the judgment, I want my life to reflect God's glory, obviously, but so what? What's the bottom line of all of this? It isn't easy for us to just make a decision and say, okay, I'm going to be a quote, better Christian, I'm going to be more spiritual, I'm going to be more obedient, I'm going to be less sinful, I want the narrow road and the straight gate and the whole nine yards.

We can say that, we can especially get a glimpse of it and really want to do it while we're in Bible class, but you know what's going to happen. We're going to close our Bibles, we're going to scatter, we're going to go back into the daily circumstances, and the normal stuff is going to ensue, it always does. And we're vulnerable to our weaknesses, we're going to fall into some of our patterns.

Where is the power to change? People read books, it's kind of like diets. People say, oh, I just got the latest, it used to be the Pritikin diet, that's long gone, isn't it? The grapefruit diet, the apricot pit diet, there's been every diet known to man, well, try this, try that, and you get on the web now, and if you search on anything having to do with anything, I was trying to find out about this fat pattern underneath Elizabeth's knee, you put the word fat in there, all you get is diet ads, burn belly fat, Plano mom learns ancient secret of burning belly fat, and I'm thinking, why do they put

Plano? Because they trap your IP, and figure, oh, well, if I was browsing from Walla Walla Washington, it would say Walla Walla mom learns ancient secret of burning belly, but they've got all this fat, and people try all these different diets, but it's really hard to find one that actually works, once in a while people do, God bless them, it's great, it's wonderful, but most of the time, you try a thing for a while, but stuff happens, and it doesn't fit your lifestyle, and well, I've got other people to feed, and they can't live on this bird seed and lettuce that I'm supposed to be eating, and it just doesn't work, I can't live on peach pits, I can't get by on sawgrass milk, or whatever this stuff is, it just doesn't work, and you can't really change, there's too much momentum going the other way, well, how much more so in our spiritual life? Hear me now, this whole set of lessons that we've done out of Philippians, this is the deal, work out your deliverance, you can escape your besetting sin, I can escape, this is great news for me, it's great news for people, it's even greater news for people around me, I can escape my besetting sin, it doesn't matter how long you've been studying the word of God, it doesn't matter if you go to seminary or not, everybody is fraught the weaknesses of the flesh, this is where the deliverance is, and it's an exciting truth to me, it doesn't matter how old you are, how set in your ways you are, there is deliverance from sin, from darkness, from failure, from all the things that we're sick of in ourselves, so sick of that we sometimes just try to turn a blind eye to it and say, well, it's just the kind of hairpin I am, I'm not going to be able to change, yes, we can, work out your deliverance with fear and trembling, that's pretty much the opposite of pride, proud people don't fear and tremble, that's what the phobos and the tremors are here, phobias and tremors doesn't sound healthy, but if you're going to work out your own salvation, it has to be in humility, recognizing, that's the key to these AA and the big book and these programs that do have some ability to help people break horribly bad habits, what's the first step? I must recognize that I need help beyond myself, the first step in these step programs is humility, people who will not admit that they have a problem, who will not admit that they need help from outside, higher power, whatever they want to call it, if they will not admit that, they're hopeless, humility is the first step, that's what the fear and trembling is, it's humility, work out your salvation, take advantage of the grace of God and how does it actually work? You say, okay, fine, I'll be humble, I want to be delivered, I don't want to be a flaming pain in the backside to the people around me and a failure in the eyes of God and a lukewarm dim bulb spew out of the mouth Christian, I get it, I want to do the successful Christian thing, so how do I get there? This is the passage, this has the actual answer, just as you have always obeyed, first of all, you're not going to get there if you're not already an obedient Christian, if you're not already committed, if you're not self-starting at this point, if you're coming to Bible class because you're riding in the car, if you're coming to Bible class because it's a ritual and you know it looks better if you do than if you don't, if you're coming and it's just kind of gliding over and you're waiting for it to be over, you are not obedient from the beginning and you can tune me out because the rest of this will not apply, for this to happen, you have to want it, it was the most pungent thing I read in the whole Naval Academy catalog way back in 1974 when I applied, they said if you're going to go to this place and make it through and graduate, you have to want it, you can't go because somebody else wants you to go, you can't go

because you think it sounds cool, you can't go because you like the uniforms, you can't go because hey, it's a guaranteed job when you graduate, you have to want it and believe me, once you get there, you find out the truth of those words on a daily basis, you have to want it and you have to want it bad or you will bomb out, that's just the way it is, it's the same in the Christian life, you have to want it, that's what hupakuo is, I submit myself as a slave to this program, I willingly dedicate myself, I am signing on the line with a view toward fulfilling the plan and purpose of God, that's me, I want to be defined by, I want to be challenged by, I want to be guided and sustained and fulfilled by the plan and purpose of God, that is me and there's nothing else and if that's not you, forget it, it's like people who say, well, yeah, I want to lose weight but I ain't giving up what I eat and I'm not exercising, well, forget it, if you're going to keep eating the same way and not exercise, there is no diet short of a bullet in the head that's going to make you lose weight and that's just going to blow out a bullet's worth, you have to commit to a thing for it to work, it's pretty much that way with anything. So then my beloved, and he's talking to people who have been hupakuo-ing from the beginning, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence now, much more in my absence, you are the ones who are going to be able to work out your deliverance, your soteria, your extraction from the kingdom of darkness, from the control and grappling hooks of sin and failure and darkness, you can work your own salvation out, you do this.

Now verse 13, and this is the punchline of the whole argument, and I'm going to give it to you in the Greek, theos-gar, you all know what that is, theos is God and gar is the post-positive conjunctive particle, it means for, for, God, is, and this is emphatic because you've got the word is in there, esten, theos-gar esten, for God is, ha-energon, this is a present active participle, masculine, singular, nominative, God is the one working, He is ha-energon, ha is the, theos-gar esten ha-energon, God is the working one, en-humen, we talked about this in the last couple of weeks, what does en-humen mean, humen by the way is plural, and when you have the plural and en, it means among you all, among you all, the kingdom of God is en-humen, it's in your midst, it's, it's among you, God is the one working among you all, in your group, hasn't this whole context been about the group, look out not only for your own interests, also remember I belabored that last week, you have to have at least one other to fulfill the one another commands, this is why fellowship is so critical, association in a meaningful way with at least one other believer, it could be your spouse, it could be your mother, your father, your daughter, your son, your cousin, your friend, your co-worker, somebody in some way, you cannot fulfill the second great command which is half the law and the prophets, if you don't have another to do this with, among you, God is in your midst, where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst, God is the one working in your midst, it's a good way to translate this, to catch the force of the plural, God is the one working among you, chi, and then we have another chi, we have chi to thelein, chi to energein, thelein is to will, energein is to work, chi, chi means both and, whenever you have a sequence like this, it's just always done the same way, both and, fellow means to will, to want, to desire in the sense of purposing a thing, energein, ergo, this is where we get the word energy, energy accomplishes work, if you've ever taken physics, you've got a formula for

work, it's measured in foot pounds or joules, energy, right, energy moves mass through space, moves at a distance, you've got formulas for that, energos, energy makes things happen, so you purpose and then you fulfill the purpose, you formulate a plan, you execute the plan, you figure out the something that needs to be done and then you do it, you will and you do, right, that's the idea, God is the one working among you, both the willing and the doing, these are infinitives and it's a funny thing that in English we do an infinitive, to will, to work, but the force of the infinitive in Greek is best expressed in English by a gerund, the working, the willing, so you have God is the one working in your midst, both the wanting or the purposing, fellow, this is often used of God, he has a will, both the willing and the doing and here's the *cupitigras*, the final three words in this verse, *huper teis eudokias*, *huper teis eudokias*, remember I told you there's a difference between *hupa* and *huper*, *hupa* by itself means under, it can mean by means of, a hypodermic needle, it goes in, it goes under, it goes sort of beneath, it can support a thing, but the commonly, when it's used as a preposition, *hupa*, h-u-p-o, like we had *hupakuo*, you hear under, you stand under someone's speaking and you assent, you agree, you commit yourself as a slave to the whole program, this is not *hupa teis eudokias*, this is *huper*, which we bring into English as *hyper*, h-y-p-e-r, that is a different thing altogether, *huper* by itself as a preposition means for the sake of, sometimes in the place of, but it generally means for the sake of, and that brings us to the final word in the verse because here's what we have so far, for God is the one working in your midst, both the willing and the doing on behalf of something, and that something is *eudokia*, now your English says for his good pleasure, do you notice anything about that in your New King James? Got any words in italics there? What's the word in italics in this verse? *His*, *his* is not in the verse, if that is what Paul had meant, it would be in the verse because it would be emphatic, it almost looks emphatic when you see it in italics, we often use italics for emphasis in English, but rub it out, it's not there and I would submit to you it should not be there, that is an interpretive, and by interpretive I mean Calvinist interpolation, there is not any justification for *his* being in this verse, so everything hinges on this last word *eudokia*, and the prepositional phrase *hupertes eudokia*, so what does it mean? Well, it is translated as pleasure, or good pleasure, and then the Calvinist lexicon also puts in will or decree, but here is what it means, and the easiest way to find out what a word means without relying on somebody's interpretation in a lexicon, lexicons are good up to a point, but sometimes lexicon people are kind of crafty and their theology starts leaking into their definitions and they read their theology into words and settling the words, and the best thing to do is do a word study, look at the words in context and see how the author meant them, how the author used them in other passages, because this is how the lexicographers are supposed to get the meaning that they put in the lexicon, but everybody's got a little bit of coloration and sometimes we need to back up a little from the lexicon, and I'm not arguing, the lexicon is fine on this particular word, but for example, go to Romans chapter 10 verse 1, brethren, the *eudokia* of my heart and the request to God on behalf of the Jews is with a view toward soterion, deliverance, salvation, our same word, *adelphoi*, amen, *eudokia*, *teis*, *emes*, *kardias*, *kai*, *hei*, *deesis*, that's the request, the desire to God, *huper auton*, on their behalf, *eudokia*, *eudokia*, on behalf of or in the interest of or for the sake of them, *huper*, *is eis soterion*, with a view toward

deliverance, the eudokia of my heart, Paul says, the good desire, the thinking, the beneficial thought, the good thought in my heart for them, is with a view toward deliverance. That's kind of a double whammy because two of our words are in that verse. And this is willing that he has in his heart on behalf of someone else, right? He goes on to say they have a zeal for God and so on, you remember back up in chapter 9, he said, I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart, I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ, for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen.

That's his eudokia. He says, I would sacrifice all of my heavenly rewards, all of my future inheritance, for the sake of my brethren, the Jews. If they could see the light, I would give up all of my future stuff.

That's basically what he says. And in chapter 10, he says, my eudokia for them is that they be delivered. It's the same thought re-expressed.

It is a good thought on behalf of someone else. That's what it is in Romans 10.1, right? My good thought on behalf of them in my heart is that they be saved, right? Look at our own book, Philippians chapter 1. We've already hit this word twice. Look at chapter 1 verse 15.

You remember when Paul says, I'm imprisoned and because of it some of the brethren have far more courage in verse 14 to speak the word of God without fear. Some, to be sure, verse 15, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife. Some also from good will.

Guess what the Greek word is translated good will? Eudokia. Some have this envy and strife, which he goes on to say in verse 16, the former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely. So envy and strife, selfish ambition, not sincerely is the opposite of those who are preaching out of eudokia, out of a genuine concern for people who need to hear the preaching of Christ.

Their good thought in the interest of others is to preach Christ. The latter, he says in verse 17, those who preach out of eudokia are preaching out of love. What is love? Sacrificial toward self, beneficial toward others, right? So just out of these two passages, Romans 10.1 and Philippians 1.15, what's your impression of eudokia? It is good will toward others, right? Take a look at Luke chapter 2 verse 14, and you do need to turn to this one.

Luke chapter 2 verse 14, you've got the shepherds, and the angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. I can hardly read this passage without hearing the Charlie Brown Linus voice reading it. Remember that? Best back when cartoons could quote the Bible.

Isn't that amazing? The angel said to them, Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings, glad tidings, great joy, which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be the sign to you.

You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, among men of good will. Not selfish men, not ambitious men, not envying and striving men, men of good will, eudokia, men who get it, men who understand the plan and purpose of God, those who are interested in working out their salvation with fear and trembling, eudokia.

It's an attitude. It is a selfless interest in something more important than self. It's everything Paul has been describing in this previous section of Philippians.

Eudokia. My heart is full of eudokia for my brethren the Jews. I would give up my inheritance for them, Paul says.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace among men of good will. A lot of people were disturbed by the birth of Christ, like Herod. Were the shepherds disturbed? They couldn't wait to get there and see Him.

Were the wise men disturbed? They couldn't wait to get there and see Him later. Eudokia. It's a great happening.

How about Simeon and Anna in the temple? What was their attitude? Those were people of eudokia. They got it. They understood what a great thing this was.

You remember the great prayer of Simeon. He says, I can go in peace. My eyes have seen the salvation of the Lord.

The Soteria of the Lord in Greek. This is eudokia. So now, go back to our passage.

God is the one working among you, both the willing and the doing of eudokia. God is at work in your midst so that we will purpose and carry out this good will. For you obedient ones, you've been obedient from the beginning.

You need to continue to be obedient even when I'm not around. Work out your deliverance with fear and trembling for God is the one working in your midst for the willing and the doing of eudokia. There is a sense in which it's His eudokia, but it's eudokia that we identify.

It's like the eudokia that Paul identified when he said, my heart's desire, my good will for my brethren is that they be saved. Is that God's good will for them also? Of course. But Paul has that in his heart.

His thinking is like God's thinking in that regard. The people on earth who are glorifying God for the birth of Jesus, is that the will of God? Is it God's will that Jesus be born and bring salvation? But people who have entered into the thinking of God share that view. What is God doing in the

midst of obedient believers? What is God doing? He is enabling us to purpose and carry out this good will, this selfless kind of thinking that puts the interests of others ahead of our own, that is like-souled and like-minded and matches the thinking of Paul and approaches the thinking of Christ, who emptied himself and took on the form of a *doulos* and came in the likeness of men.

And having emptied himself, having done all these things, he was obedient even unto death. That's the *eudokia*. The Calvinists have eviscerated this passage of its beauty and its meaning.

It isn't God at work in your midst to make sure his will gets done in the sense of his sovereign plan and purpose. God is transforming us by the renewing of our minds. God is enabling us.

God is teaching us. God is edifying us. God is blessing us.

He is giving us grace and provision so that we can think in these terms. It doesn't depend on us. Tomorrow, when I'm back in my circumstances, I'm crawling under my van trying to put my shift rod coupler on.

When you're out mowing your lawn or washing your car or whatever it is you're going to do tomorrow, Memorial Day weekend, it doesn't all depend on you and me. We don't have to lift ourselves out of the muck and mire of our sin by our own bootstraps. God is at work in our midst.

He is at work among us to enable us to purpose and carry out the *eudokia*. Is it his will? Yes. Should it be our will? Yes.

It is the good. It's kind of like all things work together for the good in Romans 8. Well, *eudokia* is in that same semantic ballpark. EU means the good.

But it's *eudokia*. It's got content of thought. It is contextual.

It's something that can be done in these circumstances. While I'm working on my car, while I'm mowing my lawn, while I'm doing whatever it is I have to do tomorrow and the next day and the next day and the next day, I have to engage in thinking. It needs to be *eudokia*.

It ought to be woven into the plan and purpose of God. It ought to be as a slave would carry out his duties in the light of his master's desires. God has enabled us.

He's given us what we need to do. We're not on our own. We don't have to generate this out of whole cloth.

God is the one working. Paul says, I've given you a big piece to bite off and chew here. Entering into the kind of thinking that Christ manifested and exemplified is a pretty tall order.

But he says, you can work out your own salvation for God is the one working in your midst for the purposing and the carrying out of this *eudokia*, this selfless attitude. Now, I don't know about you, but to me, that is an extremely hopeful message. There are times when you see your besetting

sin beset yet again, and you think, man, after all this time and all this Bible study, etc., why am I still failing? Well, it isn't as though God has got a shortened arm or a deafened ear.

It's my iniquities separating between me and my God. It is my sins that are hiding his face from me so that he is not hearing and he is not the one working in that particular aspect. Here's the other thing.

You can have things that are working great. If your gift is hospitality or if your gift is encouragement or if your gift is financial or if your gift is leadership or if your gift is parenting or if your gift is some other, you can be knocking it out of the park on a daily basis in that area, and there can be some other area where you are just a dismal failure. There are people who can't get over worry.

There are people who can't get over gossip. There are people who can't get over impatience. There are people who can't get over whatever it is.

Name your bag of sins, vindictiveness, implacability, arrogance, insensitivity, whatever it may be. You know what they are. Overt sins, sins of the tongue, mental attitude sins.

It's a big, long list. Everybody knows what their particular poison is. Well, we are not monolithic.

We are not one thing. We are complex. We've got many different aspects.

It's kind of like your house can all be working great and one drain can be stopped up. Well, that's going to back up and affect other parts of the house, but it doesn't mean that your walls are falling down or your roof is caving in or your door doesn't work anymore because the toilet is plugged. But the toilet is a big problem.

If your air conditioner quits, other parts of your house are fine. This is what pains me about throwing away computer parts. I replaced a motherboard in a laptop a week before last and I looked at that motherboard and I thought, you know, there are thousands of components on this motherboard that are perfectly fine.

My instinct is to desolder them and put them all in jars and save them because maybe I can use them. I can't throw any computer away without taking out the power supply, taking out the disk drives. Anything that works, I take out the fans, I take out the RAM.

Well, this still works. It's a hodgepodge. It's a complex thing.

Just because one thing is not working doesn't mean everything is broken. What we do when we look at ourselves is we say, but look at all the parts that are working. So my fan is not turning over here.

Look at all the stuff that's working. Not good enough. Work out your deliverance.

Fix the fan. Fix the broken component. Fix the clogged toilet.

We are called to be perfect, to be complete, telios, lacking nothing. I don't know about you, but I do not want to be standing in the 30-fold field line at the judgment. I don't want to be standing in the 60-fold field line at the judgment.

I want some angel or some glorified saint to walk up and say, Mr. Hull, would you please step over here to the 100-fold field line? That's my goal. Why shoot for 30%? Why shoot for 60%? Let's go for the gusto. You get one life to live in this life, so let's aim for the 100-fold field.

I want to be sprinting through the straight gate that leads to life. I don't want to be crawling through. I don't want to be carried through.

I don't want to be dragged through. I want to be marching smartly through that thing. To do that, we can't settle.

We can't decide, well, that's just something I'm going to have to live with and everybody else around me is going to have to live with. No. God is at work in our midst, and that means the sins that I commit that hurt others, God can fix it.

He's got the power. He has made the provision, and there is deliverance to be laid hold of, to be worked out with fear, with trembling, in humility, but it can be done, and it must be done. It needs to be done.

Paul says, look, I'm not going to be around to chide you and apostle you and give you all of this fatherly guidance, and you need to be obedient in my absence. You need to take charge of your own program, be captain of your own ship and master of your own fate. I can start you out like a father in Christ and get you going, train you up in the way that you should go, but there's a point at which you've got to pick up your own momentum, lay hold of this thing and do it.

It is doable. Why? For God is the one working in your midst. These are things that happen in our midst.

These are sins we commit against each other. These are weaknesses that are manifested in our fellowship, in our relationships, in our marriages, in our families, in our parenting, in our childing, in our studenting, in our employing, in all the other things we do with each other. And we hurt each other.

We sin against one another, and it is fixable. God is the one working to enable us to purpose and energeo, carry out, do. Energeo is the same word when he says, work out your salvation.

God is the one working in your midst to purpose and to work eudokia, huper, in the cause of, for the benefit of, in the interest of, eudokia. That's why the preposition is so important. That's what hyper means.

So, for the sake of eudokia, God is working and enabling us to think and to do for the sake of eudokia. That's the goal. Good willing.

Same thing that prevails on earth. Men that have that are going to find the peace of God that passes understanding. Well, that is as far as we will go tonight.

Hopefully there is enough to think about to last a week until next Friday when we will resume in Philippians 2 verse 14. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for your presence in our midst, your grace and your incredible love for us and patience with us in training us up and providing for us and enabling us to rise up out of our nature and our beginnings in darkness and in corruption. We thank you most of all for the Lord Jesus who has made all of these things possible and has bridged the gap between heaven and earth and has become our mediator, our righteousness, our peace, our sanctification. We pray that through the things that we have studied in your word we will be able to enter into that thinking and that mindset and ultimately fulfill your plan and purpose in our lives both individually and as a group.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.