

Philippians 10-05-28a

This is Friday, the 28th of May, 2010. We continue our study of the book of Philippians. We are in chapter 2 and we will resume at verse 12.

We will take a moment as is our custom to go to the Lord in prayer individually and then collectively. It's an opportunity to make sure that we've prepared ourselves for this great opportunity. We have some fascinating things to see in this passage tonight.

I am reasonably certain that you will be interested in what comes out of our study this evening. I certainly was somewhat taken aback and agog at it, so I suspect you will at least find it of interest. We'll begin as we always do by going to the Lord in prayer.

Father, it is such a privilege for us to be able to assemble without any fear of persecution or harassment and to enjoy fellowship and the up-building and the blessings that come through the things that you have distributed in our group, the wonderful giftings and the manifestations of your presence in each life benefits each one of us who come to refresh ourselves at the wellspring of truth that is found in your word. We thank you for this opportunity. We thank you for each one here and we ask your blessing on us as we study your word together.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, you remember the flow of thought here.

I won't go all the way back to the beginning, but in this most recent section we've kind of seen this movement of thought, this very skillfully woven presentation from Paul. He has talked about himself in distress and duress. Not many people would look forward to imprisonment with the possibility of a death sentence such as Paul is currently experiencing and people are concerned for him.

They know him personally. He has lived in their midst in the past and they have a loving care for him. You can imagine someone close to you who was unjustly imprisoned and was facing potential execution and how concerned you would be and how aggravating it would be to think that this is unjust.

Paul is not a threat to the Roman Empire. He's not a threat to anyone. He's preaching the good news of salvation and the love of God in Christ and for this, because of the opposition of unkind and unjust people and because of Jews who feel threatened that their old religious establishment is somehow going to be swept away by this new and in their minds heretical teaching, he has been unjustly imprisoned.

He's unjustly accused and he could very well be executed all as a huge injustice. So they're concerned and their minds run on this and they are close to him and as he says at the beginning, they have been with him from the beginning in the apologia, what they translate as the defense and the bios, the confirmation, the establishing of the gospel. They've been in it with him from the beginning and a threat to him is a threat to them.

They love him and they're greatly concerned and he says, look, don't think of it that way. He says, this is how I look at it and then he proceeds to talk about all of the benefits that God has brought through this difficulty and through this trial. It is hard and it is a trial, but Paul chooses to look at the positive things that God has wrought in it and through it.

He says, I encourage you to think this same way. Don't worry about yourself and your own interest. Think about benefits and blessings for others.

Look for commonality of mind when there is virtue, when there is praise, when there is all of these good things and he says, this is the kind of thinking that Jesus Christ himself exhibited and he gives the example of Christ. He starts with himself. He talks about the Philippian believers and then he gives the example of Jesus Christ.

It's a nice interleaving of himself and then their opportunity to think the same way and the encouragement by looking at the Lord Jesus who is the ultimate example. In English it says, let this mind be in you, but it's stronger than that. He says this is the thinking of Jesus when he endured the cross and so on and didn't grasp to himself the status quo of his divinity with all of its privileges and powers and because he was willing to set that aside for a time, God has highly exalted him and has given him this name which is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow of those who are in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

All of these things ultimately work together to reveal God's nature. God in perfect environment, God in holy glory, God surrounded by unfallen angels is not as well known to his creation as the God who deals with this problem of sin, of rebellion, of departure and how many facets of God's character would never be known if they weren't seen in dealing with this crisis. I've mentioned the example before where you find out what someone is like when they're under pressure.

It's one thing to be on a date, young people go out on a date, everybody's got their best foot forward, got their nice clothes on, on their good behavior and everything is sort of programmed to be an appealing presentation, but that's not the best way to get to know someone well enough to decide if there's a future in it. You would like to see this person in other than ideal circumstances. How do they handle a setback? How do they handle a disappointment? How do they handle a controversy or a disagreement or an argument or a threat or a crisis or a problem, any number of things.

This is where other facets of character and personality are revealed and it's the same in God's self-revelation. People have often wondered why did God in eternity past ever bring creation into being knowing that the angels were going to rebel, that man was going to fall. If God knew this ahead of time, isn't it kind of his fault that there are going to be demons and unbelievers going to the lake of fire? It's God's fault for ever bringing them into existence in the first place.

Well, it actually is in one light and that requires the further question, well, what would be worth that to God? There is a two-part answer to that which I'm not going to develop, but I will suggest. One is that what I've just stated. There is a self-revelation of God in Christ that would have been unnecessary and impossible without this problem to solve.

Secondly, I think the argument is overblown when they say, well, but God is responsible for untold millions of living creatures boiling around, dancing like water droplets on hot grease for all eternity. You know my view on the lake of fire. I think that this is simply they didn't exist before God created them and they're not going to exist at some point after the lake of fire.

They just cease to be. That's my view. If it's heresy, I'm sorry, but that's what I believe.

That's what I understand from the word of God. I think in that light, their existence serves a purpose. It's a negative example, but God's decision to bring the universe into existence, to bring sentient creation into existence, to allow free will to function, to allow a third of the angels to rebel, to allow vast numbers of humanity to follow them in that rebellious attitude and to reject God, doesn't result in an eternal torture outcome.

I just do not see it, I don't find it, and the idea of it is incomprehensible in the light of the rest of Scripture to me. Other people are comfortable with it. My great-granddad and several of his brothers and forebears who were primitive Baptist preachers were totally comfortable with the hell, fire, and damnation for all eternity, and if that's your understanding of Scripture, God bless you, and I wouldn't argue.

I'm just telling you my understanding, and it's my best understanding, and I've spent a lot of time and a lot of work investigating it, because I don't really have a vested interest or an ax to grind in what the truth is. I just want to know what the truth is, and I want to try to believe whatever it is, and if hell, fire, conscious living, screaming torment for all eternity is the truth of the Word of God, if that's what I got out of the Scriptures and studying them with all the tools available to me, that's what I would tell you, and I'm just telling you that with everything that's available to me, and the fruit of my best work in the Scripture isn't that. That's not what comes out.

What does come out, when you look at *apolia*, *apolumi*, and that word group and things in Greek, because it's only in the New Testament that we even have the lake of fire, it means utter and total loss, and these things are no more. And if the heaven and earth as they currently exist are going to be no more, I think people who have vested themselves in this heaven and this earth, apart from God, who like the fallen universe, who like the distance and the separation, who don't want reconciliation, don't want the bridge that is represented in Jesus Christ, are going to get their wish.

And my belief, my best understanding of what Scripture teaches is that those people are going to go to the same place that this present heaven and earth goes. When the elements melt with fervent heat and the heavens roll up like a scroll, those angels and those unbelievers, whatever that fate is, that's their fate as well. And the new heaven and the new earth does not contain the rebellious angels and the fallen and unrepentant humanity who reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

The wrath of God is removed along with the first heaven and the first earth. There is no night, there is no darkness, there is no sea, there is no chaotic force of darkness. And if the lake of fire is a lake, and the Bible says in the kingdom of the Father there is no sea, well then I think that's just my view.

Be that as it may, and feel free to disagree, nobody is ever going to agree 100% on everything, and it doesn't affect our faith and practice as believers, some of these eschatological, we'll find out, and if I'm wrong you can come by and poke me in the ribs and say, told you, and I'll say, yep, I screwed that up, sorry. But what's important is our faith and practice, and this is what Paul is addressing. What kind of thinking do you engage in? Are you of the same kind of thinking as the Lord Jesus? Because the goal is to take us out of our inherently selfish, inherently self-centered, inherently subjective thinking, and make us supernatural thinkers, hyper-natural thinkers, above nature, beyond ourselves.

Only God can do a work in our soul to change our thinking. Support groups can't do it. Drugs can't do it.

Self-hypnosis can't do it. Therapy can't do it. There is only one way to enter into Christ-like thinking, and that is Christ formed in you the hope of glory.

It is a ministry and work of God the Holy Spirit in tandem with, in the presence of, utilizing the power in the Word of God. It is the Spirit of God and the Word of God that wreaks permanent and eternal change in our thinking. Nothing else.

You can get temporary changes. There's mood-altering, mind-altering things that you can do. I promise you, if somebody hooks a bungee strap to you and throws you off a high bridge, your mind will change briefly.

You can get plastered on alcohol and your mind will change briefly. You can go to an emotionally uplifting event and your mind will change briefly. But you know the kind of change that the Bible speaks of.

True transformation and renewing of the mind only comes one way. It comes at the manufacturer, God Himself. That's what Paul is talking about.

The reason he can look at his imprisonment in a completely strange light to the mortal eye is because he has been transformed by the renewing of his mind. He has offered himself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. And if it's God's will that he be executed in Roman prison, to live as good and to die as gain, and you can't get that any way other than the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Word of God.

There is nothing that gives that type of thinking. Now there are people who will martyr themselves, but I promise you, they do not have the state of mind that the Apostle Paul has as reflected in this Philippians passage. So he goes on and in verse 12 we pick up, So then my beloved, or therefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure. This is one of the featured billboard passages for your Reformed and Calvinist types. God is working in you to will and do what he wants, what makes him happy.

He is working, willing and doing. You're sort of a vessel that he has filled. It's kind of like a positive version of demon possession.

Instead of the demon coming in and taking over and making you do bad things, this is God coming in and willing and doing good things. That's how it is understood. And really, even your not so Calvinist, not so five point thinkers tend to understand the passage this way.

So, I will be interested to see what it says if we just translate it using the normal values of the words in this verse. Let's read it in English, these two verses, one more time. Therefore, any time you see the word therefore, what is it therefore? Therefore always refers to what has preceded, what just preceded this.

Jesus Christ has manifested and evidenced and lived out a kind of thinking that pleases God to no end. God is so pleased with the kind of thinking and the kind of attitude and the kind of life

that the Lord Jesus Christ possessed that he is going to raise him up and say, this is the example. He is going to be above everyone.

His name surpasses and exceeds all other names because he so fully reflects and so fully manifests this kind of thinking that looks out for the interests of others at one's own expense when those come in conflict. If it's a choice between me and you, I choose you. If it's going to be beneficial to you and not so beneficial to me, then so be it.

That's what we'll do because this is what pleases God. Therefore, agapetoi, this is ones who have received agape, which is the active form of love, the love that manifests itself by doing. Somebody can send a card.

You've seen these sort of fictional things where the guy calls his secretary in, Mildred, go down to the store and buy my wife a gift for her birthday. Mildred goes down and gets a bottle of perfume and wraps it up and says, from Bob, love on your birthday or something. He really had nothing to do with it.

That's not agape. At best, that's philos. It's, well, I'll do something friendly.

But agape is an intimately, personally involved, actively manifested love. I love you and because of that I'm doing something. Children in generations past got agape love when they got spanked or when they were otherwise severely disciplined because their parents loved them.

Whom the Lord loves, agapes, whom the Lord agapes, he chastens. Chastening is a part of love. If you really love your child in an active way, you will train them up in the way that they should go and use whatever means is necessary.

Foolishness bound up in their heart? Beat it out of them. Drive it from them like a stray goat. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod will drive it far from him.

It's become so politically incorrect to even mention. Somebody walking by probably called child protective services on me just for quoting that verse. But that's the biblical view.

As my dad used to say, that's the way I was raised. There's nothing wrong with me. With me.

With me. So the idea is that this is an active love. And here it's agapetoi, you recipients of God's active love.

You are beloved. Beloved by Paul, beloved by God. Who is the subject of this verbal noun here? Take your pick.

Does Paul love them in an agape kind of way? Yes. Does God love them? Does the Lord Jesus love them? Yes. All of the above.

They're all true. I'm sure Paul didn't really stop to think. Who is the actor in this? Yes.

It's anybody in view. But he says my agapetoi. He doesn't always say this.

Here it says agapetoi mu. My beloved. So now we know who the actor is.

They're beloved by God. They're certainly beloved by Paul. He says therefore.

Now there are a couple of different words in Greek for therefore. And here we have *hoste*, which doesn't so much, I mean *un*, O-U-N, that's one of the ways you say therefore. It's the most commonly translated particle.

And it literally means in view of what I have just said, here's, you know, that was prothesis, here's the hypothesis. Therefore, because of what I've stated, this is what will happen. This is not *un*, this is *hoste*.

And it literally means so that. And there's more of a result idea here than, well, therefore *un* means in the light of what I have just said, you know, here you go. But *hoste* means that there's a causative flow out of what I have just said.

He says every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of the glory of God the Father because of this great viewpoint and attitude and way of life that the Lord Jesus manifested. God has exalted him and given him this high name so that. And there is an outflow from the life and work of Jesus Christ.

So that, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed. The word obeyed, you've heard before in Greek, it's *hoop akuo*. And this is *akuo*, which is to hear we get acoustics from this.

Hoopa is the word that means a couple of different things. The U becomes Y when it comes into English and you get *hypo*. And so there's *hyper* and there's *hypo*.

But *hoopa* in the sense, and it's important that we understand this because we are going to see it again in this passage. And it is going to be very important to understand exactly the difference between *hoopa* and *hoopair*. So *hoop akuo* means to obey.

Because it is to hear and then *hoopa* by itself, which comes from *hoop akuo*, which means obedience. This is to hear and enter into what you heard. You're listening to me right now and I'm talking but you don't have to do anything.

I haven't said anything that requires you to get up. I didn't say there's a bomb under your chair. I didn't say your hair is on fire.

I didn't say get me a drink of water, make another pot of coffee. Nothing I have said requires any over action on your part. You don't have to obey me.

I'm explaining a passage and you are listening. You are doing the *akuo*, you're hearing, but it's not *hoop akuo* because *hoopa* means sort of upon. Actually it's more like into.

A hypodermic needle goes into your dermis. I don't remember what *hypoallergenic* means but it has something to do with entering into your allergies. It has the idea of entering into a thing.

It's not ice. It's opposed to *hyper*. There's *hypo* and *hyper*.

If you are a hypochondriac versus a hypochondriac, there's two different meanings. Suffice it to say that we have here the idea of obedience and obedience. Why would this come up? He's been talking about attitude.

Let this thinking take place. This is the kind of thinking that Paul has, the kind of thinking that Jesus had, the kind of thinking you ought to have, be of one mind, have the same soul. Now he's talking about obedience.

He says, as you have always obeyed. To get the idea of what Paul means when he talks about obedience, we can look at some of the other places where he uses this same word. If you keep your finger here and turn back to Romans 6. Paul is talking to the believers at Rome and he says, should we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? May it never be, God forbid, in verse 15.

That's your meganoita. Do you not know that when you present yourself to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves to the one whom you obey? This is all hupakuo, hupakue. This is our word.

When you present yourself to someone as slaves with a view toward obedience, ace hupakue. Remember ace when it's not in a literal view means unto or with a view toward. They used to sign letters back in a couple hundred years ago, you're humble and obedient servant.

If they really meant that, they would be presenting themselves for obedience. But it was just a form. They didn't really mean, tell me what you want me to do and I'll do it.

It was just a form of courtesy, a politeness. When you present yourself to someone as slaves with a view toward obedience, you are in fact slaves, douloi, to whoever it is that you hupakuo. Whoever you obey, you're his slave.

You presented yourself for obedience and when you obey him, you're his slave. That's how it works. Slaves obey.

Thanks be to God, verse 17, that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient, hupakuo again, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed. This is literally the type of teaching. It's tupon, tupos, remember you becomes y, that's typos, to the type of teaching.

Here it means type in the sense of example. Old Testament types, figures, and these are the examples of teaching. It doesn't mean that it was a kind of teaching.

The way we use type today. So you became obedient from the heart to that exemplary teaching, those forms that were the content of the teaching to which you were committed. And having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit resulting in sanctification and its outcome eternal life, down in verse 22.

So this is what obedience is. You hear what the nature of life is in God's view, according to God's plan, and you get with it. You hear it and you say, okay, I'm sold out for that.

I'm going to present myself as an obedient slave to that philosophy of life, if you will. That tupos, that form, that perspective would be the mindset that you get from the teaching. That's what he means by hupakuo.

So back to our passage, and there's a lot of others that we could look at, but he says just as you have always obeyed, and they have been this way from the beginning. Back in chapter one he said you have been in this fellowship of obedience from the very start. When he first went to

their town and met them down by the river, and there was Lydia the Seller of Purple and all the rest of it, and they just glommed on to it from the beginning.

There are some people that might sit and assent and not contradict and not argue, but they don't really. This reminds me of children. As parents in particular, and as a pastor who has watched children in a number of different contexts and a number of different churches, children will go along with their parents and go to church, go to Sunday school, learn the stories, get to a certain age and sit in with the adults.

There is not any overt rebellion or disagreement, but they are just going along. They don't really have any kind of personal investment in it, but they wouldn't disagree with anything that is said. They think that's fine, and they learn a little bit here and there.

But in my observation, there is often a point at which the individual, and this happens of course to believers who are older as well, but I notice it particularly somewhere in the teenage years. All of a sudden, it becomes personal, and it starts to matter, and someone becomes self-starting. I want to come because I am myself interested.

I am interested in it. I am not coming because you brought me. I am coming because I want to go.

I am curious. I am invested in this for myself. It is a little threshold of interest and of the beginnings of maturity where you suddenly begin to realize the importance for yourself.

You take ownership of your spiritual life, but you become self-motivated. It's not someone else dragging you along. The idea here is that this obedience, that point was reached in Philippi very early.

No sooner did they hear what Paul was teaching. They said, I want this for myself. It wasn't just a fad.

They didn't do it because Lydia was doing it, or Luke was doing it, or somebody else was doing it. They recognized its value, and they were invested in it, personally committed to it from the beginning. This is a great point to reach.

Parents, friends, and relatives of believers who are listening but aren't really invested just have to be patient and pray because it's different for different people. Some of us get to that point real early. Others of us come to it later.

But if we're going to get anywhere in our Christian life, if we're ever going to start making tracks on the narrow road, you have to reach that point. Nobody goes down the narrow road being dragged by other people. You can't drag anybody down that road.

You cannot pull anyone, not your spouse, not your child, not your parent, not your friend, nobody. The only way to walk that narrow road that goes through the straight gate is to start making steps on it your own self. You can grieve for people who would be so much better off, and who would be blessed, and who would find peace and fulfillment and all of the great blessings that come from that life before God if they would just go there.

But you can plead, you can talk, you can expostulate, you can expose. Oh, just listen. They won't hear with the ears that you hear with until they're ready.

They won't respond with the response of your heart until they're ready. They just won't. And you can't force it, you can't can it, you can't put a tube down their throat and pour it in.

You just have to wait and watch and pray. That is the work of God the Holy Spirit. Part of that convicting ministry is each one of us eventually, at God's time, God knows the optimum time, place, and circumstance to bring us to that point of figuring out what's going on, smelling the coffee and getting with the program.

Well, he says, just as you have always obeyed disobedience, and really this is what hupakuo is. I commit myself to this. I recognize that it's important.

I am turning myself over as a do-loss to this plan and purpose of God. I'm not doing it for anybody but me. It's between me and the Lord.

He says, you all got there early. I'm extrapolating from some of Paul's other letters. This didn't happen in Corinth.

It didn't happen in Galatia universally, not with the whole group. I'm sure there were believers there, but the group as a whole had problems. Paul had to write two great long letters to Corinth trying to get them to straighten up and fly right.

The Galatians were shot through with legalism and trying to fall back into Judaistic forms and functions. He said, if you keep doing this, you're cut off from Christ, fallen from grace, and so on. The Philippians never had that problem.

They got it right away. By God's grace, some of us as believers just get it right off. That's a great blessing because some of the rest of us, it's the four by four to the head before we get it.

You have always obeyed, he says. You did that first in my presence, Paul says. So that, my beloved, just as you have always had that hupakuo thing going, not as you have always in the presence of me.

This is when he first came. There was immediate rapport, immediate fellowship. They just loved Paul because he brought them this word from God.

They thought, oh, this is what I've been looking for all my life. But now, much more in my absence. This is a second step of growth.

Many times when we do come to that recognition and realization and we start to kind of get it, we are sucked into the momentum of whatever that initial exposure is. For some of us, we heard a good teaching pastor on tape. That was the alarm going off.

That was the light shining into the darkness. We get sucked into that wake and we get caught up in that momentum and God uses that pastor or that teaching or that insight or whatever it is. Some people just get this reading their Bible and the Holy Spirit reveals a thing and it's like, oh, wow.

And you go in that for a distance. Then it reminds me of these rockets they send off at Cape Canaveral, Cape Kennedy, whatever they are calling it now. They launch them and they go off and the first stage booster gets it up through the initial layer of the atmosphere and it starts that curve.

Then it's run out of fuel and they've got to jettison the thing. They blow the bolts and there's explosions and that first stage rocket falls off. They're hoping that the next engine will light and take off and get the thing up where it needs to be for its orbit or the moon or wherever it's going.

But the first stage carries it so far and then there is a necessary separation and a new engine. This is a common thing and this is what Paul is talking about. He says when I was with you, you caught it right off the bat and I was able to impart to you a lot of that initial truth and that momentum and the common cause and the like-mindedness and the same-souledness and we were doing great.

But now I'm in prison and at some point God is going to take me out of the picture and you were obedient in my presence but now much more without me, you need to keep going. A lot of us started out with a pastor or some teaching or something that got us initially interested and initially fed and motivated and moving in the right direction and there is inevitably and for some people it may be me. I may be that first guy that gets some momentum going and then there's a point at which that rocket is used up its fuel and this guy has taught me everything I can learn from him and I need to keep going.

There is a necessary continued obedience without maybe that first push. Paul says much more in my absence, now you've got to do this on your own. Not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence, you work.

You do it. Don't be dependent. Remember when he wrote the Corinthians and he said I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos, I'm of Cephas, I'm hanging on to this guy's coattails and he makes a long argument there at the end of which he says look all things are yours in Christ.

Take whatever you need but you do it. It's you and God. You are a Christian.

You have a relationship with Christ, with God the Father through Christ, not with a pastor, not with a teacher, not with a theology, not with a denomination, not with one particular church necessarily. God can use those things in wonderful ways. They're all fine but not as in my presence only but much more in my absence.

Paul says you ought to be able to continue without me. You should work this out for yourself. We'll talk about the working out when we get there.

You see the point that he's making. He says don't start some kind of a Paulite sect. I'm not around and I may not be back.

To live is good, to die is gain. I may be back, I hope, I think, but if I'm not you need to work this out for yourself. Don't be dependent on anything other than the Lord.

Work out your own salvation. Do it carefully, do it soberly, do it vigilantly, fear and trembling. Be constantly afraid that in the absence of your guiding light and your initial mentor, if I can use that word, you don't want to go squirrely, you don't want to go high and right, you don't want to get Maggie's drawers, you don't want to miss the target, you don't want to go off in the weeds.

Be fearful, be trembling, in other words be afraid that you're going to do a disservice to the one that initially got you going in the right direction but you've got to do it. This is deliverance.

Deliverance from what? Deliverance from our nature, from the world, our nature and the world and the devil, the world, the flesh and the devil all pitch the same message.

Look out for number one. What's in my best interest is best. And there's a fundamental conflict of worldviews between the world and the flesh sponsored by the devil to gratify ourselves, consume things on our own lusts, and the opposed view that says God is uppermost.

You love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. You love your neighbor as yourself. It's God, others, and then myself.

And you've got that cross-shaped thing. You've got the vertical post of relationship with God. You've got the horizontal relationship between fellow believers and that cross in the soul is totally separate and distinct from worldly, selfish thinking.

It's the opposite of subjectivity. It is objectivity because now you're plugged into the reality of God's universe and who God is and that name that is above every name. So, with that in mind, work out your own deliverance.

You are delivered from the slavery of self-centeredness, the slavery of subjectivity, the slavery of emptiness and the vanity, the uselessness and futility of the temporal things of this world. And you have entered into the eternal things of God. You are delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of the Son of His Agape, the Son of His Love.

It's a deliverance. But we have to take charge of our deliverance. God has given us that deliverance.

It is by grace, through faith in Christ. It doesn't impinge on salvation in that sense at all. But to implement that salvation, to exploit that salvation, we have to then do the work.

God hands it to us and He says, pick this up and run with it. And we can't be dependent on others for this. God didn't save us to be weaklings, to be sycophants, to be parasites, to be hangers-on, coattail dragging behind somebody who is trying to manfully walk up the road.

We stand on our feet. We walk worthy of the calling with which we have been called. Walk worthy.

It's a command. He doesn't say coast hanging on. Work out your own salvation.

You've got to be, don't get, you know, you've got to be don't get hubris and working out your own salvation. Do it with fear and trembling. What is the fear and trembling about? Fear of falling short.

Fear of failing the grace of God. Fear of being cut off from Christ. Fear of going in the wrong direction.

There is a healthy, you know, when I was in the service I had a fear of breaking regulations. I had a fear of failing to fulfill the orders and responsibilities that I had in my duties and the, you know, what they used to call the rocks and shoals and is now the UCMJ, Uniform Code of Military Justice. I wasn't a criminal and had no thoughts of becoming a fugitive from justice or anything, but I had a real fear of the power of adjudication under the UCMJ.

And it's healthy. You ought to have a healthy fear of the laws of this country, the federal laws that can make you a felon. Cheat on your taxes? Guess what? You're a felon.

You have broken federal law. And we ought to have fear and trembling when we're filling out our taxes that we do it right and we do it fairly and we do it honestly. We ought to have a fear of the judgment of God for willfully sinning after we have received a knowledge of the truth.

There is no more sacrifice for that kind of sin, only a fearful expectation of judgment. Read Hebrews. Fear and trembling.

Work out that salvation, but do it soberly and judiciously and thoughtfully and prayerfully, fearing to fall short. Well, that gets us to verse 13. And this is a fascinating, I learned things studying this verse that I have never seen in my life.

So we'll pause here and take our break and come back and I'll share with you the strange and wondrous things I saw in verse 13 this past week.