

*I press on
toward the goal to
win the prize for
which God has
called me
heavenward
in Christ
Jesus.*

Philippians 3:14

Following the upward call through Philippians ...

Your Salvation

Jesus' part in our salvation is so immense as to be incomprehensible. The price He paid on earth was great, but what He did to accomplish His resurrection and ascension was even greater. Without Jesus' power to save from His exalted position on the throne, His death on the cross would have been in vain. There is major significance, then, in His words uttered while He was still on earth: "No one has taken [My life] away from Me," said He, "but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again" (John 10:18).

He died on the cross; He raised Himself from the dead; He ascended to glory; and He continues His powerful work from that lofty position at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

- ▼ **Work out your salvation** — But the Lord Jesus expects that, since He is working, that His spiritual children should be laboring also. "So then, my beloved," the apostle Paul introduces his next thought, "just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). Our salvation is a covenant relationship — a contract — with God through Christ. Just as His side of the contract required much effort on His part, so our side requires much on our part. The Philippian brethren, to their credit as contrasted to many of those early congregations, had always obeyed the apostle's instructions when he was present; the exordium is for them to excel in that obedience while he is absent. But their end of that contract was going to require intense and prolonged work; they were going to have to go through sufferings and privations for the gospel to continue to go forward, and they needed to be faithful until death. These brethren would also need to be conscious that they were carrying these things out in the sight of the Lord; they would need to exhibit the proper respect in an attitude of fear and trembling before the awesome and mighty God.

- ▼ **God's working within** — But the loving God is extremely interested in the success of the disciples of Jesus. He is willing, therefore, to give the saints the type of assistance they need in overcoming the obstacles they face in the good fight of their faith. "It is God who is at work in you," observes Paul, "both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). What an uplifting promise: God is at work in you! This is so encouraging to the Christian who is fighting his way through his own personal inner battles as well as waging external warfare on behalf of Christ his King. Sometimes in the midst of the carnage, it seems as if there is no progress; this promise makes the exciting point that there has been progress because God has been at work within. The Almighty is in the process of strengthening the will of the saint that he may gain mastery over self and that he may be the master over challenging people and situations. The Father is also energizing the Christian so that he can continue to power forward through the intense labor of seeking and saving the lost as well as the challenges of conserving the saints.

**THE SAINT MUST
CONTINUE TO WORK
OUT HIS SALVATION,
WHILE GOD WORKS
WITHIN!**

The intensity of the battle for the souls of men cannot be overemphasized. One way to measure that intensity is to consider that it cost God the death of His only begotten Son to effect the general rescue of mankind. The individual must also be active in his salvation; he must believe and obey the gospel. But just because the saint has been immersed into Christ does not mean the battle is over. He must continue to work out his salvation, while God works within!

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