**No Matter What – A Study In The Book Of Philippians**

**~Philippians 2:12-30 – Being A Light For God And Investing In Others~**

**\*\* As we begin:**

* Though **vss. 12-18** and **vss. 19-30** are two separate thoughts, we will see how they work together when it comes to living out the Christian life.
* The word “therefore” in **vs. 12** is known as a “logical inference” conjunction. Thus, what follows, specifically in **vss. 12-18**, is connected to what Paul has said about unity in **Phil. 2:1-11**.

**Two Main Thoughts To Consider Today**

**Never stop learning – vss. 12-18**

* The word “work” in **vs. 12** is a command. This does not mean working to gain salvation.
* The word “work” means “to effect, produce, or bring out as a result.”
* God wants to conform us to be like Christ **(Rom. 8:29)**.
* The words “fear” and “trembling” should not make us worry about God judging us. “Fear” has the idea of respect for God, which is a catalyst for us to pursue holiness.
* “Trembling” has to do with us seeing the responsibility we have to pursue holiness.
* **Vs. 13** reminds us that God helps us to grow in our faith through the Holy Spirit. We must study, pray, serve, care.

**\*\* Vss. 14-17 remind us of our attitude and the results when we never stop learning.**

* **First**, **vs. 14** says we will not “grumble” (murmuring, secret discontent, complaint.”
* “Grumbling” leads to “disputes” (a questioning, hesitation, doubting). A person who grumbles causes disunity and doubting in people who are trying to follow the Lord.
* **Second**, **vs. 15** tells us that we are to live a “blameless life.” Live in a way where do not have to be censured. Our word is our bond. We are above board, taking the high road when we need to.
* A **practical** application to this is to be a good worker, pay our bills, do not lie, be ethical in all things.
* **Third**, vs. 15 tells us we are to live an “innocent life.” The word “innocent” means “free from deceit.” It means that we are untainted by sin, living in a way that honors God.
* A **practical** side to this means we deal with sin issues. Do a spiritual examination regarding any areas that hinder us in our walk with God.
* **Fourth**, “actions speak louder than words.” **Vs. 16** tells us to “hold fast” to the Word of God, hanging on firmly to Scripture so that we can shine as lights to the world around us **(vs. 15)**.
* In vs. 17 Paul talks about his life being a “drink offering” for the Lord. That means that Paul could look at his life and all he went through in serving God. He is not complaining. He had honored the Lord.

**Be personable and invest in others – vss. 18-30**

* We are to invest in the lives of others and there is no one way only to do that.
* Paul mentions two individuals, Timothy and Epaphroditus, whom Paul put time and energy into.
* Paul sent Timothy to the church at Philippi. Paul said in **vs. 20** that no one like Timothy will “genuinely” (faithfully, sincerely) be “concerned” (feel an interest in, care) for the Philippian believers.
* Timothy had proven himself to be faithful, ethical, and caring **(vs. 22)**. The phrase “proven worth” means that his character was approved, he had shown himself to be trustworthy.
* We also must be the same way. Be people of our word and stay the course for God.
* Note how Paul describes Epaphroditus in **vs. 25**.
* This man had come from Philippi to bring things to Paul **(Phil. 4:18)** while he was imprisoned. He was possibly the pastor, or a church leader at the church at Philippi.
* He became very ill while helping Paul and was concerned for the people at Philippi **(vss. 26-27)**. He missed his church family. He was “distressed” (full of anguish and sorrow).
* He wanted the people at Philippi to know he was okay. It was a forty-day journey from Rome.
* I think there may be more to what we are reading than just his unknown illness. Let me explain.
* **One**, note that Paul did not heal him. **Two**, his illness was not because of sin. **Three**, he was not sick because he was out of God’s will.
* **Point:** It was not Epaphroditus’ fault that he fell ill. When Paul sent him back to Philippi **(vs. 28)** he did not want the church thinking that this man had failed in his mission. He was to be honored **(vs. 29)**.
* **Point:** Sometimes when we see things not happen or be completed as we were hoping, even if the circumstances were not anyone’s fault, we can get frustrated. Guard against that.
* **Vs. 30** is not a put down of the Philippian church. They sent help to Paul through Epaphroditus.
* **Point:** Invest in people, especially believers, but be personable with all. We need to make a difference and touch the life of individuals. Help others grow. Pray for them, encourage them.