Repentance Tabernacle Church
RepentanceTabernacle@gmail.com
www.RepentanceTabernacle.org (984) 369-5171

Shine Like Lights in a Dark World!

Scripture: Philippians 2:12-16

Paul wrote this letter from prison, joy in serving. The Philippian Christians needed to be especially careful to obey Christ, now that Paul wasn't here to continually remind them about what was right. **We, too, must be careful about how we believe and live, especially when we are on our own**. In the absence of cherished leaders, we must focus our attention and devotion even more on Christ so that we won't be sidetracked. Philippi was a cosmopolitan city which reflected great diversity with people from a variety of backgrounds and walks of life. Paul encourages us to guard against any selfishness, prejudice, or jealousy that might lead to dissension. Showing genuine interest in others is a positive step forward in maintaining unity among us.

While the phrase "***Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling***" (Philippians 2:12) is often read as an individual mandate, the original Greek pronouns and context are communal—calling for our church families to work out their salvation together in unity (Ephesians 4:11-14), humility, and peace rather than bickering or selfish ambition (Phil. 2:3-4). Our oneness in Christ does not destroy our individuality. The Holy Spirit has given each saint special gifts for building up the church. So that we all become full grown in the Lord.

This is a cooperative effort: We must make an effort to be obedient, rejecting sin, and pursuing love, because God is actively working inside you to give you both the desire and the power to do it (Philippians 2:13). God has not left us alone to do His will. He helps those who want to obey Him and then gives us the power to do it. **The secret to a changed life is to submit to His control and let Him work.** To be like Christ, we must condition ourselves to think like Christ (Philippians 2:5; 4:8-9). To change our desires to be more like Christ's, we need the power of the Holy Ghost, the influence of faithful saints, obedience to God's Word (not just exposure to it), and sacrificial service (Romans 12:1-2).

"***Work out your own salvation***" means to actively live out, practice, and bring to daily completion the internal salvation that God has already given you, rather than trying to earn or work for your salvation. We are saved through God's unmerited grace, not as the result of any effort, ability, intelligent choice, or act of service on our part. **Even though no action or "work" we do can help us obtain salvation, God's intention is that our salvation will result in acts of service**. We are not saved merely for our own benefit but to serve Christ and build up the church (Ephesians 4:12). **Working out Salvation (Sanctification):** To continually bring something to completion, fruition. **Sanctification** (the ongoing process of growing to be more like Christ) (2 Peter 1:5-10).

With "Fear and Trembling": This does not mean living in terror of God's punishment. Instead, it describes a deep, reverential awe, humility, respect for God's holiness, and a healthy self-distrust of your own ego. If you do not watch, pray and continually depend on God, your enemies will surprise you, and your light and life will become extinct. Peter 1:5:8 warns us to watch out for Satan when we are suffering or persecuted. Feeling alone, weak, helpless, and cut off from the church, so focused on our troubles that we forget to watch for danger, we are especially vulnerable to Satan's attacks.

Remember, salvation is by grace through faith, is a free gift, and wholly without works. The divine order is first salvation, then works. To work out your salvation is a shared—calling for our church families to work out their salvation together in unity, humility. **The Three Tenses of Salvation: Past (Justification):** Act by which God declares us a guilty sinner to be righteous, innocent, and fully accepted in His sight. Our sin debt is canceled. **Present (Sanctification):** To be set apart for God and made holy (this is where "working out" happens). It's a daily, life long process where the Holy Ghost works inside us to make our actual behavior and character like Jesus Christ. **Future (Glorification):** The final stage of our salvation where we are completely transformed into the moral and physical likeness of Jesus Christ.

People of God, Shine Like Lights in a Dark World!
If you are lost nobody's fault but your own!