

WORD SECTION SUMMARY AND Q'S 31/05/09

Read *Philippians* Chapter 2:12-16

Summary:

1. **Therefore:** Paul sets the tone by painting a picture of who Jesus is and what He's accomplished, he talks passionately about the Son of God, who humbled Himself, came into the world as a man, identified with us, ministered on the earth and then died a horrific death in our place for our sins. We should have paid the price but instead we enjoy complete forgiveness from all of our sins, relationship with the living God and, we can receive the Holy Spirit in our lives!
2. **'...as you have always obeyed-not only in my presence but now much more in my absence...'** Paul was 800 miles away in prison in Rome; his church family missed him and were divided and depressed. Paul himself was in a miserable situation yet he encourages the Philippians to be obedient in their faith in his absence. Our faith can sometimes depend on who or what is around us, but, in the absence of 'securities' who do we turn to? How do we react? Paul could have written a depressing letter, but he instead he turns away from his problems, inspires the Philippians with talk of Jesus and encourages them to be obedient, even when he's not there and things aren't going well
3. **Working out your salvation with fear and trembling:** We have salvation as a gift from God because of the sacrifice made by Jesus. But how are we working it out? How are we enjoying its benefits? Paul does NOT mention working for one's salvation (we don't have work for it, it's a free gift from God), but working it out- it's the natural response to what God has already placed in us, it's not an objective to be achieved but a possession to be enjoyed! Paul instructs his church family to press on in their faith and get the most out of it
4. **God who works in you to will and to act...:** It's not about us but about Jesus! He is ceaselessly at work in all of us- touching, changing, and shaping our hearts, minds and desires. Sometimes it may feel as though we lack the passion or the drive or discipline in life and in our faith; but God doesn't choose to work in us only where He sees a desire or get's a response, He works in us constantly for His good pleasure and He will complete the work He has started in us!
5. **Do everything without complaining or arguing:** Paul appeals to the Philippians to calm down, to resolve their differences, to let go and move on! He reminds them that whole world is watching their every word and move and that the only place a crooked world would see Jesus is in them. Are their actions and words a good witness to those around them?
6. **Holding out the word of life...:** Paul's final encouragement in this passage is to the Philippians to hold out, or to hold on to the word, their faith and the hope that they will all see Jesus face to face one day, Paul wants to know that his efforts in starting and building their church as well as encouraging them from a distance (in prison in Rome) was not in vain

Questions:

1. Was there anything that was shared on Sunday that needs clarifying?
2. How much of our faith is dependent on other people? Why is this?
3. In what ways are you 'enjoying the possession' that is your salvation?
4. Name three areas of your life where God is at work in you right now?
5. How quick are we to complain and argue when an issue arises, rather than look to Jesus and talk to Him?
6. Where will you be in the next 7 days? Do you see yourself shining as a star during that time? (Pray for the help of God's Spirit in this area)