

# Philippians 2:12-30 - Study Questions

## Lesson 5

1. This week's memory verse is Philippians 2:13.

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

2. Read 2:12-18. How would you explain the phrase "work out your own salvation" in verse 12? Give Scripture to support your answer.

- o Why is this to be done with "fear and trembling"?

3. Write out verse 13 in the New Living Translation (NLT).

In the Greek language, the word "working" means "to energize, to work effectively." Our English word "energy" comes from it. (Kenneth Wuest). According to this verse, what two things is God working in you?

- o List some of God's provisions given to every believer to live a godly life. Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 1:17-20; 2 Peter 1:3-4
- o In what ways do believers play a part in receiving what God has provided? Psalm 37:4; 145:19; John 15:7

4. Define the following words:

- Complain
  
- Dispute

5. List some reasons people complain and/or dispute.

- What word is used in verse 14 that does *not* allow exceptions to Paul's exhortation?
  
- To whom is complaining ultimately directed? Exodus 16:1-8

6. What were believers disputing about in the following Scriptures? Mark 9:33-35; Romans 14:1-6; 1 Timothy 1:4

- Can you think of other disputes between believers recorded in Scripture?
  
- How does complaining and disputing affect a believer's witness for Christ?

7. In what ways had Paul demonstrated his willingness to be "poured out" for others?

## **A Biographical Study of Timothy**

A biographical Bible study examines the life of a person mentioned in Scripture. To get the most complete picture of the person, all Scriptural references are observed.

The Bible does not include all the details of each life mentioned, only what God chose to include. The only detail of most people mentioned in Scripture is their names (i.e. 1 Chronicles 1-9). There are some Bible characters that have chapters describing their lives and others that only have a few sentences. God has carefully chosen the details He wants given of those He included in His Word.

It is interesting to notice the details the Lord leaves out as well as what He includes. A description of someone's physical appearance is often not given. We sometimes come to conclusions about people simply based on what they look like. However, Scripture tells us that God looks at man differently than we do; He sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).

There are some details God included that may be difficult for us to understand. Some may wonder why genealogies are a part of the Bible. According to Nelson's Bible Dictionary, genealogy was very important in ancient times, especially to the Israelites. Genealogy was used to determine inheritance rights and land allotments. It was important in deciding who were qualified by birth to serve as priests. Genealogy played an important role in demonstrating the fulfillment of prophecy (i.e. Genesis 49:10; Luke 3:33). We can trust that what God has placed in His Word is important for us to know.

There is so much to learn from the lives that are recorded in Scripture. One of those lives is Timothy whom Paul regarded as a faithful servant of Christ. He served the Lord with his whole heart. The details of his life that God included in His Word have much to teach us.

8. Answer the following questions about Timothy from the Scriptures listed:

### **Family Background/Childhood**

- What was his family background? Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5
  
  
- Childhood training? 2 Timothy 3:15

### **His Conversion**

- Why do many believe Timothy became a Christian under Paul's preaching? Acts 16:1 (Paul's second missionary journey). 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:2

### **Beginning of Ministry**

- Give some highlights of the beginning of his ministry with Paul. Acts 16:1-3

### **Paul's Companion**

- Timothy accompanied Paul on most of his second and third missionary journeys. Acts 16:1-21:14. He is mentioned by name in Acts 16:1, 17:14-15, 18:5, 19:22, and 20:4. Skim through these Scriptures to get an idea of what Timothy experienced as Paul's companion on those journeys.

### **Persecution**

- On these missionary travels, Paul and his companions experienced persecution. What do you think Timothy would have learned from watching Paul's response to persecution? Acts 16:16-34, 17:2-10, and 18:1-11.

### **Sent to Churches to Minister**

- To which churches did Paul send Timothy to minister? Acts 17:10-14; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2, and 1 Timothy 1:2-3.
  
- What does this say about Paul's trust in Timothy?

### **Joins Paul in Rome**

- Paul was imprisoned after his third missionary journey. It is unknown if Timothy accompanied Paul to Rome right away or joined him later. How do we know Timothy was with Paul in Rome? Philippians 1:1, 2:19; Colossians 1:1, and Philemon 1. (Paul wrote these books, plus Ephesians, from a Roman prison.)

### **Paul's Heart Toward Timothy**

- What was Paul's heart toward his companion? 1 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 2:19-22, and 2 Timothy 1:2-4

### **Character**

- What do you learn about Timothy's character and faith? Acts 16:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17, 16:10; Philippians 1:1, 2:19-22, and 1 Thessalonians 3:2

### **An Important Detail**

- What happened to Timothy according to Hebrews 13:23?

### **Overall Lesson**

- How did Timothy's life bless you the most?

Optional: Read 1 and 2 Timothy (letters written to him by Paul) for additional information about him.

9. Read Philippians 2:25-30, 4:18. Give the highlights of Epaphroditus' visit to Paul in Rome.

- Look at a map of ancient Philippi and Rome. How difficult of a journey would it have been for Epaphroditus to make?
- How is the character of Epaphroditus seen in these verses?
- What stands out about his service to the Lord?

# Philippians 2:12-30 - Discussion Questions

## Lesson 5

1. Read Philippians 2:12-13. Explain the difference between an employee who works hard when the boss is watching and one who works hard even when the boss is away.
  - As a Christian, why is it important to fit the description of the latter and not the former?
2. Notice that verse 12 says “work out” your own salvation. What is the difference between “working for” and “working out” your salvation?
  - If you have tried “working for” your own salvation, explain what the experience was like for you.
  - Have you moved from “working for” to “working out”? Hopefully so! What brought about the change and what difference has it made in your life and walk with the Lord?

*“We fulfill out eternal purpose when our lives honor the Lord and reflect His glory. What pleases a human father more than to hear, ‘That boy looks just like you’? God takes pleasure in spiritual sons (or daughters) who reflect His character.” Charles F. Stanley*

3. Read Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 2:10 and John 15:4. What do these verses teach you about how we grow into the image of our Heavenly Father?
4. Verse 14 commands us to do *all* things without complaining and disputing. What exceptions do you find to this command?
  - What is the source of complaints and disputes?

- According to verse 15 what is the result of *not* complaining and disputing?
  
  - Paul described his generation as crooked and perverse. How would you describe the generation in which we live?
  
  - Why is it important to shine as lights in this world?
5. Paul and the Philippians had sacrificed and served together so they were able to rejoice together. In what ways can you share in the sacrifice, service, and joy of those who minister to you and with you?
6. Read 2:19-30. What godly characteristics did Paul commend in Timothy and Epaphroditus?
7. Ask the Lord to examine your heart to reveal if there are any areas where you seek your own and not the things of Christ. What steps will *you* take to bring your desires into line with His? You can be confident in the work and power of the Holy Spirit to enable you to live obediently.
- As you begin to see changes, note what you are experiencing and date it (on an ongoing basis). It is *very* encouraging to see growth as it takes place. Don't forget to thank God for the work He is doing in you.

Will you take the personal challenge to try to go all day without complaining about something? If you are willing, share your results with your group next week. 😊