

## SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 2:12-16

Tonight we are receiving communion together. Please do not feel pressured to complete this entire guide in your House Church. Be mindful of your time and make sure that communion is not rushed or cut short.

### MAIN TAKEAWAY

Through God's empowering work, we now work to grow and make progress in our own salvation.

**Opening Discussion:** We are now four weeks into our series in Philippians. What has stood out to you the most so far? What areas do you sense God growing and maturing you?

**Read:** Philippians 2:12-16

**Commentary:** Paul recalls their obedience when he was present among them, a likely reference to their initial acceptance of the gospel (vs. 1:5). As his beloved friends, he desires they continue this obedience in his absence and thus work out their salvation. When Paul says work out, he does not mean work for. Quite the contrary. God began the good work in them (1:6), and His work in Christ is always sufficient and effective. Here, Paul is emphasizing the human role in their ongoing progress and growth in their salvation. They are to cooperate with God, but this cooperation is not equal on both sides. Human obedience is always a response to God's initiative. We should also note the plural language Paul uses here. "*Your own salvation*" is not singular, as if this were an individual command to be worked out in isolation from the community.

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### Teaching Point 1: Work Out Your Salvation

**Read:** Philippians 2:12-13; Philippians 1:5-6

**Discussion:** Paul saw the Philippian Christians quickly obey the gospel and begin to follow Jesus (vs. 1:5-6). Now, years later, he is urging them to continue in their obedience and changes the language to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." We might say he means here: keep reverently and humbly obeying Jesus. But we can only do this because God is working in us and empowering us to humbly obey Him.

*Why do you think Paul references fear and trembling? Why is this posture toward Jesus important for our obedience? What does this look like in real life? Give specific examples.*

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## Teaching Point 2: Don't Grumble and Complain

**Read:** Philippians 2:14

**Discussion:** Paul likely had in mind the grumbling of the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16:6-12). Paul wanted the church to be free from these sins which can only spread and have a negative impact on the church. In so doing, they would shine like stars in the dark!

*Think of the last few things you've grumbled or complained about recently. What heart sins are at work when we grumble? Why might grumbling cause us to look just like the world around us rather than standing out like stars in the night? Think of how this impacts our use of social media as well as ordinary conversation.*

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## Teaching Point 3: Hold onto the Gospel

**Read:** Philippians 2:16

**Discussion:** For the Christians to truly work out their salvation, avoid grumbling and complaining, and shine and make progress in their faith, it would require them to hold fast to the word of life, the gospel. In other words, they are to keep believing the gospel and holding onto the truth that is in Jesus.

*What are some things we hold onto instead of the gospel?  
How can we help each other keep the gospel first in our lives?*

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES:

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## RECEIVE COMMUNION

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