

# Philippians 4

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now we looked a fortnight ago at the first part of chapter 2 in the Philippines and we began reading this evening at verse 12. Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

But we need to remember the immediate context of this verse 12 is the preceding verses 5 to 11 where we have the great example of Christ held forth to the Lord's people.

The context here, verses 5 to 11, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God thought it not robbery, not something to be grasped at, to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation.

And took upon him the form of a servant that was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Now because of this great humility of Christ emptying himself and coming down into this world, into the tidy form of the infant in the womb of the virgin, being constricted so much more in the body, even though he's anointed above measure with the spirit, so much more constricted than he would have been when he simply filled the vastness of the heavens as God the Son.

[ 1 : 23 ] Now because of this great emptying of himself, this great humility and as well as the perfect sacrifice of a life devoted completely to the filling of God's law in every detail and the sacrifice of himself upon the cross.

God has highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

And the subtext of that verse 9 if you like is that if we ourselves would seek to be exalted to heaven's glory, if we would desire to be with the Lord for all eternity, in other words to enter into the purpose, the meaning, the reason for our creation in the first place, to know God, to enjoy him forever, to glorify him, for which we must ultimately be in glory to do that, then we must ourselves likewise empty ourselves, be humble, take upon ourselves the form of a servant as Jesus did.

It is no shame to be as he was. It is no shame to be like him. And even if we lose something of our own pride or our own reputation as we may think, he himself made himself verse 7 of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant.

And because of that, the Father has so exalted him that there is no higher name in the heavens and the earth than the name of Jesus. And every tongue shall confess it, every knee shall bow.

[ 3 : 04 ] That means, as it says, things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth. In other words, all the angels and the redeemed and glory will not be a problem for them. They are already worshipping and delighting to do so.

Things in the earth. And the earth, remember, will include those who are at enmity with the Lord, those who hate him. All those of false religions, all those of atheists and antagonists to the gospel. They will be compelled to acknowledge, to confess, well, yes, okay, Jesus is Lord. Fair enough, we acknowledge it. And to bow the knee before things under the earth.

In other words, the dead, as well as the living, will be brought to see and to recognize this reality. Whether they are lost souls in a lost eternity, that is, in hell, who know the truth painfully by now. Or those who are themselves gone from this world. The redeemed and glory already know it. The lost will know it by now. But Jesus himself said, remember, John 5, 25.

[ 4 : 04 ] Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that hear shall live. Well, every tongue will confess.

Every knee shall bow. Whether they were at enmity with Christ. Whether they love Christ. Everyone will be compelled to acknowledge. This is part of the glory the Father is giving to him.

Now, as I mentioned a fortnight ago, some commentators take this to mean, oh, well, you know, because of what we read in 1 Corinthians 12, you know, I give you to understand, verse 3, No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed.

And no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. So the Holy Ghost will have been acting in all these demons and all these lost souls. And so they too will be brought and it will be all be one happy family in heaven.

So, in other words, universal salvation is what some people take this to be. That, of course, is not what Scripture teaches at all. It is a compulsion. It is, yes, from the Holy Ghost.

[ 5 : 09 ] It is the power of God compelling, if you like, wringing this confession from them. This acknowledgement of the bare simple truth. Yes, he is Lord after all.

It is like the centurion who himself supervised the hammering of the nails into Christ's hands and feet. Who no doubt was present because they called together the home battalion of soldiers. When he was mocked and beaten and knocked over and spat upon and crowned with thorns. And he said, hail, king of the Jews. And that centurion would have been present and probably had a good laugh with all the rest of them.

And finally, at the moment of his departure from this life, as Christ gave up the ghost and said it is finished. He is compelled to acknowledge, truly this man was the Son of God.

And every tongue shall be compelled to confess this. Every soul. That will include yours and mine. It will include the mouth, the tongue, the knee of every Muslim and Hindu and atheist.

[ 6 : 16 ] Every false worshiper of false gods that has ever lived. They will all be there. All the pharaohs who lashed the Hebrew slaves. All the Chinese communists who murdered and executed the Lord's people.

All the North Korean guards who are brutalizing them just now with the concentration camps. All the members of ISIS and Al-Qaeda. All the people of Israel.

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. This is the context. This is the background.

Because of his emptying of himself, the Father has exalted him. Nobody ever gave a greater sacrifice than Christ. Nobody ever reduced themselves.

Not even, we say it with respect and reverence, not even the other two persons of the Trinity ever emptied themselves the way that the second person of the Trinity, God the Son, did.

[ 7 : 45 ] Therefore, his name is the most highly exalted in heaven and in earth. It is against that backdrop that the Philippian Christians, and every Christian in every age thereafter, is exalted in Christ.

Wherefore? Because of this. Because of the example of Jesus. And because of the exaltation of Jesus, which everybody is going to come to see. You know, if you think about it, it's kind of like you're sitting in a maths exam, and there's hundreds of people in the room, and nobody can get the formula, the problem, and you manage to see it, you work it out, or your neighbor gets it, they can see it's all worked out, all the workings, and it's perfect.

And eventually, everybody's going to be compelled to say, oh yeah, that was how you did it, that was how it worked out, so and so got it. They will all acknowledge the fact, everyone will come to see it.

It's almost like Paul was saying, you guys, you're getting a head start. Everybody else is going to have to see this eventually, whether they do it in love, or whether they do it in bitterness, whether it's his servants, his friends, or his enemies, they will all have to acknowledge this.

They will all be made to see it. But you have the opportunity to see it now, to grasp it now. You already understand something of it. You already believe.

[ 9 : 05 ] That wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. So, the sense of this here, is, first of all, he's not saying, you better do this now, because you've been rocking at it before.

He's saying, you always were good. You always were obedient. You always were faithful. But, when I was with you, maybe you might have said, you had some incentive to do it, to please me, or because I was watching over you, because my watchful eye, you might have thought, well, you didn't want to put a foot wrong.

If I was there, oh, I'm not going to be there always, but not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. Because I'm not there, you have greater opportunity to show your faithfulness. Jesus teaches parables several times, about, you know, masters and their servants, and when the master is there, well, of course the servants are going to do everything they're told.

They're under the watchful beady eye of the master. If they put a foot wrong, he sees it. If they disobey his commands, he's there on the spot. He can see, and know which of his servants, is not pulling their weight, not being faithful, not doing their duty.

[10:17] But if he's away, if he's away in a far journey, Jesus says, well, which are going to be the faithful servants? The ones that say, ah, he's going to be away for ages. You know, let's crack out the wine cellar, let's have a good old party, let's eat and drink with the drunken.

Anybody gives us a hard time, says you shouldn't be doing that. We just beat them up. Begins to smite the manservants and the maidservants, and to drink with the drunken, spending his master's money, because, you know, he's going to be gone for ages.

We've got plenty of time to tidy up and clean up. Even if they do tidy up and clean up, even if they replace whatever they may have used, they will nonetheless have shown themselves to be faithless servants.

Because in the master's absence, their true colors come out. What we are in secret is what we are in truth.

When we think nobody is looking, when we think nobody can see us, that is when all the inhibitions may go, and the true colors come out.

[11:21] And what Paul is saying here is, look, as you've always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now, much more in my absence. I'm not there with you now.

This is how you can show even more faithfulness, because I'm not there. And you can show how faithful and good you are. Now, the reason for this obedience, as you've always obeyed, is not because I'm Paul, and I'm telling you to obey, but it's the context we've just looked at.

It's Jesus himself. Verse 8, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This is what Jesus was like. This is what you must be like. This is what Christ is like. Therefore, this is what a Christian must be like. If a Christian means anything, it means belonging to Christ.

This is what he does. This is what we must do. As the head goes, the body must follow. But now, much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

[12:31] Now, you might think, ah, justification by works. They say, well, you do whatever you want, and you try and get yourself to heaven, and you do your own thing. No, what he means is, put into practice that which is the work of the faith.

Put your faith into action, your faith into practice. It is all about Jesus, the great ultimate example. So, carry this out, your faith into action, to its full perfection.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. It has to be worked out through obedience, through the faithful, but ordinary use of means.

What do we mean by means? Well, you've got your Bible. You've got the opportunity of prayer. You've got the services of God's house. Now, it doesn't really matter, provided, you know, that there's faithful, as far as possible, proclamation of the word.

It doesn't matter whether you've got a Spurgeon in your pool, but whether you've got just an army, Joe Bloggs doing his best. The point is that gathering with the Lord's people at the appointed times in God's house is part of how we glorify him.

[13:48] Reading his word is part of how we feed and instruct our souls. Prayer and communication with the Lord is how we involve him more in our lives.

It's not just how we shopping list and we tell God what we want, you know, like little kids writing their letter to Santa and a shopping list and say, well, I didn't get that one. He didn't answer me. He did answer this one. No, it's about communicating without any relationship gets into trouble when people stop talking to each other.

Let's say, a husband and wife have an argument and they go cold and they don't say a word and they don't even pass the salt and the longer that coldness and that lack of communication goes on, the more that relationship is in trouble.

Friendships deteriorate and people stop talking to each other. You know, the worst thing that you could have in an international situation between governments is what they call breaking off

diplomatic relations.

In other words, not only are people arguing behind closed doors are not doing that anymore, the ambassadors got fired from the country and diplomatic relations are cut off.

[ 14 : 55 ] You're practically in a state of war when that happens. Now, if we don't feed our relationship with the Lord, if we don't maintain that communication, we are not going to have the strength to be able to work out our salvation and put it into practice.

Now, it's not complicated. This is the thing. We like to think, oh, well, you know, this is a matter of great complexity. We're talking here deep spiritual things here.

Yeah, okay, that's rather like saying, you know, the process whereby the body breaks down food and nutrients in the stomachs and all the acids work on it and the enzymes break it all down and it gets translated into all the different nutrients we need and the blood that courses through our veins carries it to every part of our body.

My goodness, you'd be a PhD in biochemistry and microbiology to understand all the ways that it works. but it's not complicated just to take ordinary commoner garden food and eat it, to take ordinary water or decent liquid nutrition and drink it.

That is how we feed our body. That is how we maintain its health and strength in the ordinary course of doing these things. We don't need to understand every detail and you and I don't need to understand every detail of the spiritual complexity of our relationship with the Lord.

[ 16 : 23 ] We just need to feed it. We need to read God's Word. We need to become more familiar with its contents and then as we pray about it and pray over it or ask and discuss it with people we become more understanding and other depths that we haven't seen perhaps are revealed to us.

We have to be in prayer. It doesn't have to be complicated. It doesn't have to be spectacular or sounding terribly religious. God knows who you mean.

He understands the groans of your heart. You've got to feed that relationship though. You've got to maintain the witness. Now it is a witness no matter what anybody says.

If you're at home watching TV on the Lord's Day or on the prayer meeting night or whatever when the Lord's people are gathered that is a witness in itself that the Lord isn't as important to you as these other things.

we need to maintain our witness. We need to maintain our relationship with the Lord. If anything else is more important than God then that is a distorted relationship.

[ 17 : 32 ] We've got to feed this and it's not complex. It's not difficult. It's just that it takes application. We've got to keep at it. Work out your own salvation with fear and travel.

Now the fear is not to be like a sort of slavish fear of oh we're terrified of God and what do we do if we don't make it or if we put a foot wrong. It's rather fear in the sense of a fear of falling away.

Hebrews 4 verse 1 puts it this way let us therefore fear lest a promise being left with us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come sharp of it.

Have you drive your car or a vehicle or whatever up and down the road to stormy? Most of us have driven that road hundreds of times. But it doesn't alter the fact that if you take your eye off the road and you're looking about all over you you are likely to go off the road.

Now the fact that you should fear that whether it's because you fear to hit something or you fear the headache of the insurance bill or dragging the car out the ditch or whatever that should keep you vigilant.

[ 18 : 40 ] It should keep you watchful for hazards that you mean that you're careful as other vehicles are passing you not because you're incompetent as a driver but because you have to keep your eye on the road.

You have to be watchful against failing against veering off this way or that. That's what it means. It means working out your own selfish with fear and trevay mindful that the very best and godliest of men and women may yet fall if they are careless or thoughtless.

Look at King David brought down by for want of a better expression sex brought down by that lust which brought him low in the way that it has brought down a great many powerful men down the ages before and since and it's you know it's been pointed out by various people over the years it's always kind of illogical and irrational.

David at this point in his life had at least seven other wives and goodness knows how many concubines it wasn't because there was a need it wasn't because somehow he felt oh there's a gap in my life because I'm not getting the things that I need oh there's this woman who's somebody

else's wife but rather it was just pure and simple illogical irrational sin that's all it is and it comes in so easily and it comes in when we are not vigilant you know all it takes starting by the house or it takes one sheep wandering across the road you're not looking fine or a deer jumps out at night time or whatever it is so easily done if we are not vigilant work out your own salvation with fear and trembling just working out of it it's a gradual day by day thing none of us thinks oh well I went out for a meal last week I had steak

I had beautifully done potatoes I had the most fantastic vegetables and the sweet oh it was fantastic I was a meal I cost a fortune but hey it was brilliant so I don't need to eat for a month now yes you do and you might not eat quite so expensively you might not eat quite so lamishly but day by day you still need to eat it's not enough to say oh I this mountain top experience I read my bible for hours on end and so that's me well topped up now for a few weeks no it isn't just like you gotta feed your body every day you've got to feed your soul every day it's not complicated it just needs application Peter puts it this way 2nd Peter chapter 1 beside this giving all diligence adds to your faith virtue and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance self-control and to temperance patience and to patience godliness feeding that relationship and to godliness brotherly kindness love of your brothers and sisters in

[ 21 : 43 ] Christ and to brotherly kindness charity general love for a suffering mankind for if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ but he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off and have forgotten that he was purged from his old sins it's like driving a storm away on that road with your eyes shut it doesn't matter how well you know the road you're going to come off it you're going to crash somewhere along the line if you're not keeping your eyes open if you're not working at this relationship with the Lord wherefore my beloved as ye have always obeyed not as in my presence only but not much more in my absence work out your own salvation put it in practice with fear and trembling and all us faithful servants in all of us for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure it's your own salvation in the sense it's not well don't care about anybody else why are you saying your own salvation in other words it's because

I'm not there with you when I was there with you I could help you we could do it together we could help one another's faith we could nurture one another's faith but here I am banged up in Rome I've got a soldier chain to me I can't go to where you are you're in Philippi you're across the sea you're hundreds of miles away I can't reach you it has to be your own salvation that you work on now how much more in my absence you're going to work out your own salvation I'm no longer there with you not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling and why should this be encouragement to them why do they oh no we can't do it why because it is God because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure you see put this contrast contrast the complementarity of these two verses 12 and verse 13 work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure

God is working in you so you know you have the strength to work it out you put it into practice you work it out because God is already working in you otherwise you wouldn't even be interested much less believers because it is God I'm not with you says Paul but God is always with you you see you don't have to worry that Paul is in prison you don't have to worry because I'm hundreds of miles away the Lord is with you this is part of the relationship that you are feeding every day the word you're reading the prayer you're keeping in touch with the Lord he is involved in your life in a way that I can't be now says Paul yes I'm praying for you yes I've got you in my heart but I can't actively help you in the way that God is able to do every day in your life that is why you've got to feed this relationship because he's the one involved directly in your life it is God which worked in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure you see I could never understand why in

Luke 24 you know at the very end of Luke's account of the gospel says you know Jesus took them out as far as Bethany and blessed them and he was parted from them and went away into heaven it says the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy I thought this is the end of the study this is you know Jesus is gone they should be weeping they should be broken hearted I would be if I was an apostle surely but remember in the run up to that he's been saying when you take Luke's account and John's account this is what the scriptures always have been prophesying my spirit will always be with you the holy ghost the comforter which I will send after I've gone will teach you all things and will cause you to remember all things that I've done and I'm with you always even to the

end of the world now clearly when Jesus ascended into heaven they had this overpowering overwhelming sense that yes he was physically out of their sight but now he was more present with them than had ever been the case and there's no real there's no real human analogy that you can use except you know the nearest I can think of is let's say you know you've got this young couple and the boy's anxious if a girl loves him or not and he thinks she does but he's not awful sure and she's got to go away on this journey she's been away for say three months or a long time and finally he plucks up the courage to tell her he loves her and to ask her if she'll marry him and so on and it turns out she does love him and that she does want to marry him and she'll write to him and he'll write back to her and instead of being broken hearted as he waves the ship off at the key his heart's skipping because he knows that she loves him now and that she's going to write and she'll be coming back and that that love is just going to grow and he's been so fearful and anxious before but now he's filled with love yes there's a bittersweet sort of sense yes she's going but but the love that is continuing with him her love which is always going to be there with him that's buoying him up in a way that it wasn't the case before because he didn't know it for sure now Jesus has gone physically into heaven but his spirit abides with the apostles and is upon them and he's bringing the scriptures alive to them this is why they go back to Jerusalem with great joy as Paul says you know it's God which worketh in you he's always with you he's continuously there working in your heart working in your life building your faith maintaining that relationship this is why there is joy in the disciples this is why there is joy in the

Philippian believers he is always I may be up in your way in room I have to go I can't stay with you forever says Paul and it doesn't matter how much we may love a saint or an apostle and he can't be with us forever and somebody maybe our mentor in the faith maybe a godly parent or grandparent or whatever they're not going to be with us forever the day will come when we will have to manage without them and this is part of the sorrow of human relationships and the continuity of the divine relationship as David says that's where you know though me and my parents both should leave the Lord on the uptake he will never leave us nor forsake us it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure you work out your salvation because God is working in you the complementarity of these two of his good pleasure you see with him that means it cannot fail because it's God at work in you it doesn't matter

[ 29 : 04 ] I did this bit wrong I stumbled there I made a mistake there I should never have said that I shouldn't have done that I really messed up there your salvation doesn't depend what a perfect job you make of it your salvation depends on what a perfect job Christ has made of it and he has done it all in his life and witness death upon the cross it is finished that is what you are plugging into that is what you're becoming part of his perfect sacrifice his perfect fulfillment it is God which worketh in you so even when you do stumble and this is one of the reasons people hold back so often from commitment to Christ from commitment to the Lord oh what if I fail oh what if I stumble what if I do it wrong what if I make a mistake you will make a mistake you're human you'll fall you'll stumble sometimes you will mess up really bad but there is no sin you can commit there is no mistake that you can make which can out spend the riches of God's mercy that's not a blank check to go and sin as much as you might if that's in our hearts it means that the Lord hasn't changed our hearts but it does mean that when we fail when we sin when we stumble the Lord is able and desiring and willing to gather all that up pay for it with his own precious blood set us on our feet again and enable us to go on he worketh in you both to will it's his will that you go on and to do of his good pleasure because it's him who's working it can't fail you see the point like in chapter one verse six being confident of this very thing that he which have begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ that is what this is talking about here it is

God which worketh in you both to will and to do it is his pleasure his will to complete what he has begun God's good will to us is the cause of his good work in us I'll say that again God's good will to us is the cause of his good work in us this is not something invented by the apostle on the New Testament times we read in Isaiah 26 verse 12 Lord thou wilt ordain peacefulness for thou also hast wrought all our works in us thou also hast wrought all our works in us it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure do all things that without murmurings and disputings this implies arguing amongst brethren it weakens the cause arguing amongst brethren you know like it's verse three that nothing be done through strife or vain glory in there vain glory it's a word that really sums it up even if you win you may say well I won all the arguments and I wiped the floor with all my fellow Christians and I really showed them who was top dog because I argued them all about yeah

glory you win it's vain glory empty doesn't mean you think all you've done is made enemies out of your brother but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves this murmurings and disputings it's an internal thing amongst brethren this is what Paul is guarding against just as Jesus had to guard it and amongst his own apostles mark 9 verse 33 he came to Capernaum and being in the house he asked them what was it that he disputed among yourselves by the way there's this word again like we have here in the Philippines without murmurings and disputings but they were they but they held their peace for right away they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest that's the pride that's the vain glory desiring to be the greatest you don't think about that whatever glory you get in this world who's the most famous or glorious or rich or spectacular person you can think of in the world I don't know who you'd have in your mind I don't know whether it be a pop star or a president or whether a millionaire or somebody that oh I wish I was like them however famous or fabulous they may be in 25 years your grandchildren or your own children say who was that you know but that's ages ago that's that's funny that it's your generation now we're concerned with the modern world they won't give up you won't give a clue won't give a tuppety toss for the big heroes of today they are literally here today and gone tomorrow it's big in glory think on that which lasts rather do all things without murmurings and disputings that you may be blameless and harmless the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom we shine his lights in the world that's blameless and harmless nobody can accuse you and so you do no damage the the word the Greek word there is a reference to a there was a Greek God a false God and imaginary God in their pantheon who didn't actually do anything I think it was motio or whatever he was called and anyway he didn't do anything but he just carped and moaned about what everybody else does and all those who had that kind of spirit were said to be you know motios like him so to be a motio which was the Greek word blameless harmless that even if somebody was looking to find fault with you they couldn't find anything they wouldn't have anything to put their hooks into blameless and harmless the sons of children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation I think oh yes the world we live in today isn't it terrible isn't it bad well if it is in one sense that's good news for you as a Christian because most people would say well what sort of Christian army oh I'm a very bad Christian oh I don't shine very brightly and so on well that's good news for you then because if you just burn as a dim wee bulb if it's pitch black then a dim wee bulb looks pretty bright if it's just a tiny wee candle then you think oh well it doesn't give much light but if the room is pitch black that's the only light in the place if you've got bright sunshine midday sun then you know a blazing room full of lights looks like nothing compared to sunshine and sun if you've got a power cut and everything's pitch black then the least little candle looks pretty bright now we are in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation which we are then the least shining of a true Christian witness however dimly it may burn will shine nevertheless would be a contrast with the darkness round about and my goodness we have darkness just now and every little pinprick of light like the stars in the night sky you don't see them during the day because the sun fills the fundamental when it's all pitch black oh you can see the stars and all their constellations tiny little pinpricks of light because they're so far away and you may think of yourself as so far away from a state of perfection so we are in this world and you may think your light doesn't burn very brightly it may only be a pinbrick and it will be such a pinbrick as will be picked out in the night sky of this perverse and crooked nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world the darker society is the more brightly the Christian witness will shine by contrast if it is a true Christian witness now if the world is full of Christians then we'll think oh I'm not very good compared to everybody else you might be right but if the rest of the world is pitch black well even our little witness light will be pretty bright so that should be encouragement to us to burnish up that lamp and pump up that light and keep it going and to make it bright burn even more brightly holding forth the word of life it's not just you know light the new candle keep it in the car it's like shoving the torch up into the mid-air so that the world can see holding the candle stick as it were on which the light will shine the more bright holding forth the world of life that I may rejoice in the day of

Christ I can look at you Philippians when going to glory say these are my boys and girls these are the ones that came to faith you need these are my sons and daughters and prior there it will be a sign to delight in those whom he has helped birth into the kingdom it's going to be the delight of Paul that I may rejoice in the day of Christ now yes we don't we don't have that day yet but he's looking to it that I have not run in vain nor neither labour in vain two three two images here now if you run no matter where you run whether you're running for a bus or whether you're running

because someone's chasing you or whether you're running because you're in a race if you run it implies vehemence real effort vigor energy urgency nobody runs in a race that's not moseying along everybody else is going past me well there's no problem I'm just going along here if you're running there is urgency you be sweating your sinews are straining you're pushing every nerve and fiber there is an urgency there is a vehemence in running now

[ 39 : 07 ] Paul is implying he's poured everything into his witness and his work within here but it's not just this urgent burst it's not just like a sprit because this word laboured that implies again something better it implies careful application it implies not just sort of picking up a bottle of aip and splatting it over the paper to see what shapes come up no it's the careful calligraphy like in olden times some of you might remember you know we used to teach copper plate writing that's that careful kind of beautiful script that we're at labouring here it's not just splattering the witness about it it is applied diligence careful application plodding diligence doing the unspectacular but doing it faithfully doing that which will never fill great rallies and be the subject of christian songs or huge applause but just quietly faithfully diligently plodding away at the faithful things of God how many of the jobs that are done in this world are vital but they're not spectacular you know surgeons and lawyers and advocates they'll get they'll get huge songs for the work they do yes it's vital but it's kind of glamorous work in a sense because people see it's in the public eye and if we didn't have lawyers and we didn't have surgeons yes we'd be in trouble if we didn't have parliamentarians and prime ministers yes we'd be in trouble but imagine how much difficult you'd be in if the dustman never came to empty your bin or if

Scottish water never came to empty your septic tank you'd be in trouble you'd be in real difficulty there but these are not jobs that are spectacular but they have to be done diligently plodding away doing the dirty jobs the grubby jobs the unspectacular jobs and in the christian life just like every other aspect of life you know everybody may think oh great now the dishwasher nobody really likes to clean out the filter do they nobody likes to have to do all the the the gubby kind of underside of the jobs that we do in life that's the same with the christian life and everybody may say isn't it great to be a lovely warm well at church that who sees who works or the heaters or the lights or who makes sure that everything's clean and spick and spanned and that the carpet is nicely hoovered or that everything's dusted now somebody does these jobs people don't see it much they see the effect but they only see it's not done and yet all these things in life in christian life as well as in the church we do these things faithfully this is the running and laboring the careful application the plodding diligence the oil that keeps the machinery running now you may think that you don't have gifts you may think that there's not much i can do it's only these maybe plodding unspectacular things these are vital parts of the machinery of the kingdom of god they are vital parts of what makes the kingdom what makes the presence and the witness in the midst of our communities in the midst of our lives that i have not run in vain neither labored in vain there is labor and there is there is the running there is the vehement of the kingdom it is all part of it and paul says yea if i be offered upon the sacrifice of your faith i joy and rejoice with you all now he's talking here about being offered up the word that he's using is offered up it's like i am poured out if i be poured out upon the sacrifice and service of your faith i joy now what he means by that is in pagan sacrifices when people they would stick their animal or their sacrifice on the altar and then a priest or whatever would take either take either a cup of wine or whatever and pour it over the sacrifice it was almost like sealing the sacrifice to the false gods he's using this imagery think oh well he shouldn't be using that kind of imagery that's pagan imagery but it's something people would be familiar with it's like somebody using a phrase when the chips are down or horses for courses now where do these phrases come from they're both gambling illustrations you know when the chips are down people are placing their poker chips on the table or whatever that's where they're going to be using that's where they're going to be using that illustration but there are some branches of the church that would say that's absolutely right you shouldn't make any reference to that but it's just to illustrate something horses for courses likewise talking about racing huge betting industry there it's just a phrase that's what he's using here a phrase an illustration from paganism by which they are surrounded the military pushing hugeÇ to take up or delle■■ Huawei thought they probably only what I buy the quote on my at Latte on a nonetheless wanguus where you cannot shape the loans back their exile in actual mine that was the real florid it was selling career look which the full stopput that obviously homie sees SLIDOWing look is the data convert all of everything in Germany and■■ide■■ but nevertheless it is certain it can help but then suddenly make any of the champions

approach it is the perfect holiness my remember let's sin it day this thing it's because men you see it and they don't have late state, I'm nobody like minded but I want to be there myself, I trust that I myself shall come shortly now there's a wee bit here in these closing verses of the chapter our time is gone, but we can talk about Timothy and about Epaphroditus and so on in the coming weeks, Lord willing but if we can think perhaps in terms of the sacrifice Paul desires to seal about the labour, the application the running in vain that he will not in vain that he will delight to see his children gathered he will joy at the last day there's the Philippians, Lord see these boys and girls, these are mine they are the ones that I brought into the camp, I laboured over them, I ran the race for them and here they are, that I didn't run in vain, I'll do whatever it takes to help their service if I be poured out upon the sacrifice of their service even better and I'll be with the Lord which is far better all these things we see the fulfilment of Paul's desire and ministry the Philippians cannot fail if they continue with the Lord because it is God who worked in them that they might work out their own salvation and what is true for them in the absence of the apostle is true for us in the presence of the living God let us pray church but ..

I regained the husband of all the people and he promised that I have to make for all the people that don't have that he is .

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