



World Christian Fellowship

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Book of Philippians

Lesson 15

Humility and Exaltation of Jesus Christ

Philippians 2:12-13, *Therefore, my beloved, as you 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; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

What is the believer's role in sanctification?

What is God's role in believer's sanctification?

Is it faith or is it effort?

Is it trust or is it obedience?

You ask yourself about the following questions.

When you were saved, was it you or was it God?

If your answer is that, it was all of God then does that mean you just one day said, "God, do whatever You want to me. I'm ready?"

No! You had to turn from your sin, acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, and place your faith in Him. There are

many calls in the Bible to the sinner to repent, to believe, to commit himself to Christ.

So, it really was all of you, it was a total change of direction for you to turn from sin to God through Christ. It was a change in our belief. It was really taking your life and putting it all in the hands of Christ, and yet it was all of Him.

Difficult to understand tension.

If your answer is yes. You are a 100 percent God person.

You may say that I don't understand that. You don't have to understand it and that it doesn't mean it isn't true.

Not all truth is understandable to you. If you understand every truth, then you will be equal with God.

As we are reading the letter to Philippians and ask yourself a question.

Who wrote the letter to Philippians, is it God or Paul?

- Every word is out of the heart of Paul,
- Every word is out of the vocabulary of Paul,
- Every word is expressing what Paul wants to say, and yet Every word is from the Holy Spirit.

So, we can say that it is all of Paul, with his heart, and passion, and yet every word is right from the mind of the Spirit of God.

So, when we come to this matter of sanctification or spiritual growth or spiritual progress, and we ask the question: is it us or is it God?

An apparent paradox which cannot in and of itself be resolved in the mind of man.

Two opposite views

Quietism:

Meaning: calm acceptance of things as they are without attempts to resist or change them.

The believer is quiet and passive.

You let go of yourself and let God do everything in your life. One of their bywords was, "I can't; He can."

In a moment you accept the Lord you totally surrendered to God that you would never sin again. They believed that the work of sanctification does not involve any effort on our part except surrender.

In fact, they say that our striving effort is a hindrance to the process of sanctification.

- You got to get self out of there,
- You got to die to self,
- You got to crucify self, and
- You got to put self on the altar.

Your proper role is to surrender to God and let Him give you a life of victory over sin.

You give our life to God and He moves in, He lives in us, and He produces victory.

Pietism:

17th century religious movement originating in Germany in reaction to formalism and intellectualism and stressing Bible study and personal religious experience.

It is a diligent effort toward personal piety.

The Pietistic Movement was a strong emphasis on

- Bible study,
- holy living,
- practical Christianity,
- spiritual exercises, and
- self-discipline.

The Christians have got to be involved with all his faculties, all his abilities, all his members, his mind, his heart, and his soul in the matter of pursuing godliness.

- It takes everything you are all the time to pursue it.
- It stressed the need for good works.
- It stressed the need for usefulness.
- It stressed the fact that if there was a belief that didn't lead to works, it was not a saving belief.

2 Corinthians 7:1,

Their main verse and their motto are that this is our task, and this is our duty.

Contrasts:

- ✓ Quietism you are passive.
- ✓ Pietism you are active and aggressive.

Galatians 2:20,

“For I am crucified with Christ,” Paul says, “nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me.”

He was in the same tension.

It is I live, yet it's Christ lives.

The quietist just says, “Not I but Christ,” trying to eliminate that balance.

In the event that that Christian does sin, whose fault is it?

If I surrendered my life to Christ and in that moment of surrender, He came to live His life through me, and if He is living His life through me and I sin, whose fault is it?

It can't be my fault because I surrendered.

But it can't be God's fault because God is not the author of sin. It's never His fault.

What the answer from Quietism?

Their answer say is this that you took yourself off the altar. You de-surrendered. You left the place of surrender by which you placed yourself in God's hands.

How could I be tempted to do that if He's in control of everything?

If I surrendered my life to Christ and He is living His life through me, then how could I ever sin?

How could I ever not surrender if I surrendered once and He's now in charge, then He's in charge, and He's going to prevent that, right?

Because He is not going to sin.

Analogy by Quietism:

You are clay and the potter does everything. All you do is set the lump of clay down. You just climb up and get on the wheel, sit there and he will make you into what he wants you to be, and you have no part.

What happens when a believer sin?

Whose fault is it?

Response: When a believer sins, that means that the believer took himself out of the hands of the heavenly potter.

What kind of clay, it's jumping up on the wheel and then jumping back off again?

If the Christian at one moment in the moment of crisis surrendered is a piece of malleable clay,
completely soft,
without any will of its own,
it places itself under the total care of the Lord,
the Lord is doing all the shaping,
how then the same piece of clay decides to jump out of the potter's hand?

If I give my life to Christ and He's now living it all through me and I am passive, then the problems are going to have to be laid at His feet.

Pietistic view can get out of balance because it can become an over-emphasis on self-effort.

What an over-emphasis on self-effort does?

If you believe that all your spiritual progress is based on your ability to dedicate yourself and discipline yourself towards moving yourself in the right direction, then you will experience two things.

1. When you succeed you will have pride.
2. When you fail you will be miserable.

- You will have pride because you take all the credit.
- You will have despair because you are the only resource.

Over-emphasis on the quietist viewpoint:

God does it all. what are you doing to do with your sin? You are going to blame it on God because He is in control.

Over-emphasis on the pietistic viewpoint:

I have got to do it all, so when I do it well, I get the glory and when I fail, I am miserable because I have got nowhere to turn.

There is a balance. We can find this in this passage.

Philippians 2:12-13,

It is not a new concept.

You say, "Work out your own salvation,"

Others say, "For it is God working in you."

Solomon in his dedicatory prayer and speaking to the people of Israel. They have dedicated the place that had been built for the worship of God, the temple.

1 Kings 8:54- 58,

If we are going to be obedient, who is going to have to make us obedient?

God.

He says, "I am pleading with God to incline our hearts to Himself." That is a man who is saying our ability to obey

is built on God moving our hearts toward Him. It is the work of God.

1 Kings 8:59-61,

In verse 58 he says, “O God, we depend on You inclining our hearts to Yourself.”

In verse 61 he says to the people, “You let your heart be wholly devoted to the Lord our God to walk in His statutes, to keep His commandments.”

So, I want you to imagine that you were standing there that day and you were listening to Solomon. Someone came to you afterwards and asked you to tell about spiritual living and holiness.

How does it happen?

Is it something that we do or something that God does?

What would be your answer?

You would say, we pray, “O God, incline our hearts to You.” And then, we exhort, “You better wholly devote your heart toward God.”

Look at the prayer of Peter to churches in Galatia.

Peter has just talked about God, our Lord Jesus and he speaks about the Lord's divine power

2 Peter 1:3-4,

Peter says that everything related to life and godliness is God's gift to us.

His divine power does it all.

- It was by His divine power that we literally were saved,
- that we became partakers of the divine nature,
- that we escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

You say it is all of God.

2 Peter 1:5-7,

Peter says that you better be diligent to produce all these things.

Hold on!

- V3, Peter is a Quietist.
- V 5, Peter is Pietist.

Peter says that it is all of God on the one hand, and on the other hand it takes everything you have got it.

We can see that,

- ✓ Apostle Paul says the same thing.
- ✓ King Solomon says the same thing,
- ✓ Peters Says the same thing.

Let us come back to same question again.

What is the believer's role in sanctification and what is God's role?

Two points in this outline:

The Christian working out, God working in.

V12, The Christian working out.

V13, God working in.