

Sermon Discussion Questions: Act the Miracle - Sanctification

Philippians 2:12-13

The following outline and discussion questions have been prepared to accompany the sermon from May 13, “Act the Miracle: Sanctification” (Phil 2:12-13). The questions can be used for discussion in small groups, family devotions, or for personal reflection.

Main Idea: *If you really understand who Jesus is and what he has done for you, work out the salvation that he has already worked in you!*

Sermon Outline:

- I. The Nature of this Work (Phil 2:12)**
 - A. We need to begin with A Necessary Clarification**
 - B. We need to understand that this “work” is A Mandatory Action**
- II. The Miracle of this Work (Phil 2:13)**
 - A. A humbly Dependent Act**
 - B. Sanctification is a glorious paradox**
- III. The Pursuit of this Work**
 - A. We Become what We Behold**
 - B. Sanctification is not Sophisticated... we need to see Jesus clearly**

Discussion Questions:

1. Review the three parts of Philippians that Pastor Mark started out his sermon in order to call out the importance of “therefore” in Phil 2:12. [Phil 1:27; Phil 1:28–30; Phil 2:1–11]
2. What does Paul mean when he calls the Philippian Church (and our Church) to “work out” our salvation (Phil 2:12) if he is already convinced that they are truly Christians (Phil 1:6)?
 - How does the agricultural picture behind the Greek word “work” help clarify this “work?” [The Greek verb translated “**Work**” (κατεργάζομαι) here was commonly used to describe the process by which farmers worked their land in hopes of a fruitful harvest.]
 - So is Paul talking about Justification or Sanctification here? In your own words describe the difference between the two.
 - What is Paul telling us about activity and effort in this “work”?
3. In your own words describe what it means for us to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling.”

4. In Phil 2:12–13 Paul tells us that sanctification is not a solo human effort but a glorious paradox in which God wills and works in our willing and working. Examine the following texts in John 15 and discuss how they help us grasp the organic nature of this apparent paradox.
 - John 15:4-5
 - John 15:8–11
5. Read 2 Corinthians 3:17–18:
 - Discuss how this passage gives us insight into how God’s willing and working in our lives is not forced upon us but a willing pursuit that is motivated by our personal affections.
 - How does this passage and the noticeable contrast in Isaiah 44:9–28 help us understand the spiritual truth “We become what we behold (or worship).”
6. What are the ordinary means of grace that God has given to us to help us see him as we ought so that we might grow in our affections for Jesus and joyfully strive for obedience?
7. How do these ordinary means of grace help us pursue a vision of Jesus that will awaken our affections for him? (Give some examples of how God has used these three “means” in your life over the years)
8. Share with your group which of these three “means of grace” you are struggling with today and then pray for one another that God will grant you all the desire and ability to passionately pursue and embrace the “means” with which you are currently struggling.