



Thank You Notes—Thank You for Salvation
Philippians 2:12-18; Numbers 21:2-9; John 3:14-16

June 18, 2023

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5-day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/25310-becoming-more-like-jesus-reflections-on-phil-2>

INSPIRATION

O, my black soul, now thou art summoned
By sickness, Death's herald and champion;
Thou'rt like a pilgrim, which abroad hath done
Treason, and durst not turn to whence he's fled;
Or like a thief, which till death's doom be read,
Wisheth himself deliver'd from prison,
But damn'd and haled to execution,
Wisheth that still he might be imprisoned.
Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack;
But who shall give thee that grace to begin?
O, make thyself with holy mourning black,
And red with blushing, as thou art with sin;
Or wash thee in Christ's blood, which hath this might,
That being red, it dyes red souls to white.

—John Donne, *Holy Sonnet IV*

John Donne's *Holy Sonnet IV* is a beautiful poem, written in 1609, that focuses on our need for salvation. Donne was a significant writer who became a leader in the Church of England, and his works are studied today. In *Holy Sonnet IV*, Donne sees his "black soul" based on his sin. He's committed treason, by turning his back on God, and faces death. But the good news—"Yet, grace." When we repent, we are washed by Christ's blood, "being red, it dyes red souls to white."

ICE BREAKER

1. Do you believe we have all rebelled against God, committed treason "and fallen short of the glory of God"? (Romans 3:23)
 2. Explain John Donne's statement, "Yet, grace...."
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DEEP DIVE

Read this out loud



An excerpt from the message this week:

“Paul is commending the attitude adjustments that have been made by these followers, and Paul insists that God is the one working in their life. It just doesn’t happen any other way. God is not doing the work, you are. You are working out your salvation. Not working for.

God is at work helping you to do good work. He is not hovering over us, doing our homework for us. Parents, you know that doing your kids’ homework is not helping them learn. Providing a good meal, some quiet space, encouraging them, helping them sort things out. They can do the work.

God is providing the tools, the environment and the power to live a life that looks like Jesus. We don’t do good things to earn points. We do good things because we have a new outlook on life. We are trying to look like Jesus in our attitude and actions. Nothing makes God prouder than when we act like Jesus.”

Read Philippians 2:12-18 and then answer the following questions:

3. We know we are saved by grace, through faith, and not by our works (Ephesians 2:8-9). What is the difference between “working out” our salvation and “working for” our salvation? Based on Philippians 2:12, explain the connection between obedience to God and working out our salvation.
4. Explain the effect that “grumbling and disputing” will have on your willingness to follow Christ. What effect does “grumbling and disputing” have on a church body? Why is this such an important issue to living out our faith, the unity of the church and the effectiveness of sharing Christ with others?
5. Would you say our world today, like the world during Paul’s time, is “crooked and twisted”? Compare and contrast Paul’s description of the world with his description of Christ followers.
6. Is Paul advocating a “holier-than-thou” attitude or is he giving Christians an important responsibility to remain faithful and represent Christ to the world? Explain.

Read this out loud

An excerpt from the message this week:

“Can you imagine anyone not looking to Jesus for salvation? Believe and you will be saved. That is all you have to do. “No man, I’m good.” “But you don’t understand.” “I think I do, but I don’t care. After all, I don’t think that God is all that good anyway.” But he wants to save you.

Now this grumbling and complaining thing, I think that God takes it way more seriously than we do. The destruction that this causes a church community, wow. Just as fire will destroy anything in its path, so does gossip and complaining.

Wilderness living is hard. It stretches you. Challenges you. The danger for the church today, like it was in Philippi, we get complacent and start complaining. Like the Israelites who just wanted to go back to Egypt, they had grown comfortable with the life that they had been living, as awful as it was.



Do not go back to the old life. Following Jesus may be harder, more challenging, more difficult. The danger? We start complaining and we start drifting.”

Read Numbers 21:2-9 and John 3:14-16 and then answer the following questions:

7. After reading Numbers 21:2-9 and John 3:14-16, what parallels can you draw between looking up to the serpent on Moses’ pole for salvation and looking up to Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for salvation? Explain how the events in Numbers 21:2-9 point forward toward Jesus.
8. Why didn’t Jesus go to the cross with “grumbling and disputing”?

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:

- Philippians 2:1-11
- 1 Corinthians 15:10
- Philippians 4:2

NEXT STEPS

9. Write down several practical ways you can “shine as lights in the world” this week.
10. What does the statement “Yet, grace...” mean to you personally? How can you share this beautiful message of salvation with others this week, in both words and actions?

PRAYER

1. God, I am eternally grateful for Jesus. His willingness to take on my sin has created a way to salvation. Based solely on Christ’s willing sacrifice for me, my soul can be pure and white in your eyes.
2. Lord, give me the boldness and the humility to share Christ with someone who needs to hear the message of grace.

SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

- **BENSON** – Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.



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- MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
 - Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.