

**LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN IN A CROOKED AND PERVERSE
NATION—PART 2
PHILIPPIANS 2:12-18**

Introduction

We said this morning that this is a crooked and perverse nation that we are living in! We only have to look at the news or read the headlines and we will know it is true!

This is the second part of this sermon that we began this morning.

Let's review just for a moment what we said this morning:

WE HAVE A DUTY TO WORK OUT WHAT GOD IS WORKING IN US!

Has God worked His salvation in your heart?

If God has worked His salvation in your heart, are you working it out?

We Have Been Predestined To Be Conformed To The Image Of Christ!

We Have Been Commanded To Put Off The Old Man And To Put On The New Man!

We Have Been Instructed To Work Out Our Salvation With Fear And Trembling!

WE HAVE A DUTY TO WATCH OUR CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY!

We Are To Do All Things Without Murmurings!

We Are To Do All Things Without Disputings!

We Are To Be Blameless!

We Are To Be Harmless!

We Are To Be The Sons Of God Without Rebuke!

We Are To Shine As Lights In The World!

There are some additional duties we have as being the God's children, lets look at them:

III. WE HAVE A DUTY TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION! (Vs 16)

The two words "*Holding forth*" were translated from words that convey the idea that the Christian will make "*the Word of Life*" continuously available to unbelievers; i.e., he will hold out the light of the Gospel, offering it to the unbeliever.

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The Gospel is called "*the Word of life*" because it reveals and offers to us eternal life through Jesus Christ. Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel.

It is our duty not only to **hold fast**, but to **hold forth** the Word of life! We are to not only to **hold it fast** for our own benefit, but we are to **hold it forth** for the benefit of others!

We are to hold it forth just as one would hold forth a torch to light the way for someone!

We are to hold it forth just as a lighthouse continually shines to protect ships from crashing into the shoreline! We are to hold forth the light of the Gospel to reveal the dangers which stand ready to destroy the souls of men. We are to light the way for the souls of men who are tossed on life's sea to be able to make it safely to the shore!

This duty rests on us as Christians!

Christ said in *Matthew 5:14*—"*Ye are the light of the world. . .*" and in *Matthew 5:16*—"*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*"

We cannot escape from this obligation.

A. We Are Duty Bound To Do This!

- 1. We Are Duty Bound Because We Are Commanded To Do It!** On more than one occasion Christ commanded it! In *Mark 16:15* he said— "*. . . Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*"
- 2. We Are Duty Bound Because We Are Called To Do It!** *Isaiah 43:10*— "*Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.*"

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Acts 1:8—“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

3. **We Are Duty Bound Because We Are Debtors To Do It!** *Romans 1:14-16—“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. 16For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

4. **We Are Duty Bound Because We Are Kept Here For That Purpose!** If it were not so, we would have been ushered into heaven the moment we were saved!
Ephesians 2:8-10—“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

What is a good work? It is a work (any work!) that Jesus is involved in!

Luke 19:10—“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

2 Corinthians 5:18—“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

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20Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

5. **We Are Duty Bound Because There Are No Others To Do It!**

The frivolous ones will not warn the fools, nor will the proud warn the proud, nor the scoffer the scoffer.

The thoughtless and the vain will not go and tell others that there is a God and a Saviour; nor will the wicked warn the wicked, and tell them that they are on their way to hell.

There are none who will do this but Christians; and, if we neglect it, sinners will go unwarned and unalarmed down to death and hell! This duty rests on every Christian.

There is not one member of the local Church who is exempt from this obligation! And there is not one Christian who cannot do something in this work!

B. **How Then Are We To Do It?**

1. **We Are To Do It By Our Example!**

Dear Christian, do others see Jesus in you? If you were the only Bible that folks read, what would they know of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Every one of us who name the name of Christ is to hold forth the living Word by our example!

We are either pointing men to God by a good testimony or we are giving them an excuse to live their lives away from God by a poor testimony!

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How is your Christian testimony? Do you have testimony that Christ would be pleased with?

What does your involvement in the things of this world and the lack of involvement in the things of God say about you as a Christian?

Let's get specific:

- a. What does your Church attendance say about it?
- b. What do your leisure activities say about it?
- c. What does your attitude and actions at work, in school, in the home and in the market place say about it?
- d. What does your checkbook and your spending habits say about it?
- e. What do the places where you go and the things you do say about it?
- f. What do the things you watch, the things you listen to, and the things you read say about it?
- g. What does your conversation—the things you talk about—say about it?

We Are To Do It By Our Example!

2. We Are To Do It By Our Conversation!

Christ intends for our evangelism to be more than just a lifestyle evangelism!

Each of us has some influence over the minds and hearts of others and we are obligated to use that influence in holding forth the word of life.

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- a. **We must share our faith with others!**
Telling others what Jesus has done for us and what He can do for them!

Every Christian ought to know how to lead a soul to saving faith in Christ!

- b. **We must earnestly contend for the faith!**
Jude 3
That includes taking a stand for the Truth and right—even in the midst of crookedness and perverseness around us!

By Example...By Our Conversation...

3. We Are To Do It By Supporting World-wide Missions!

Do you give to Faith-Promise Missions? It takes money to get God's work done!

WE HAVE A DUTY TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION!

**IV. WE HAVE A DUTY TO LIVE IN THE JOY OF CHRIST!
(Vs 16-18; 3:1; 4:4)**

Philippians is known as the book of joy and rejoicing. Understand that true joy...real joy...lasting joy comes from two things:

A. Joy Comes From Knowing Christ!

Now I want you to understand that people who are without Christ in their lives can experience joy—I'm not saying they can't—but it is only a temporary joy, a fleeting joy, a joy in some circumstance.

There can be joy in some of the temporal circumstances of life. But as circumstances change, the joy can quickly depart.

For example, even a wicked person can experience joy in coming into a fortune!

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e.g. By winning a sweepstakes, winning the lottery,
receiving a large inheritance
But that joy can quickly pass as circumstances change!

e.g. To be stricken with a sudden illness and only have hours
to live or to have that fortune stolen in a moment!

But the joy that comes from knowing Christ **should be** an
unchanging joy because we have:

1. **An Unchanging Saviour.**

*Hebrews 13:8—“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to
day, and for ever.”*

2. **An Unchanging Salvation.**

It is described in various Scripture passages as
“everlasting,” “eternal.”
*Hebrews 13:5-6—“... for he hath said, I will never
leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6So that we may boldly
say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what
man shall do unto me.”*

I say that the joy that comes from knowing Christ “**should be**”
an unchanging joy, because so many Christians are not walking
in the joy that is available to them.

It is possible to own a treasure without ever taking possession
of it or without living in the benefit of it!

Exp— If someone were to give me a checkbook this evening
and tell me that I could write **any** and **as many** checks that I
wanted to and that they would all be covered. What good
would that do me if I never wrote a check? I could not take
possession of anything that was in that bank account unless I
wrote a check!

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If we focus on our circumstances, our joy, even as Christians,
will be fleeting, but if we focus on our Christ our joy can be
full and continual despite the circumstances of life that we
face!

Joy Comes From Knowing Christ!

B. **Joy Comes From Living For Christ!**

Jesus said in *John 10:10*—“... *I am come that they might have
life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*”

The abundant life that Christ speaks of is a life of joy and
comes from abiding in Christ!

Again, this world cannot know this joy because what they are
living for is temporal—it rusts, it wears out, it corrupts, it can be
taken away— and whatever they do have at the end of their life
they leave it all behind! Where is the joy in that? It is only
temporary! It lasts only as long as whatever brings the joy
lasts.

But, the joy that comes from knowing Christ and living for
Christ is a life that brings blessings both now and forever!

The result of the Christ life does not rust out, or wear out, or
corrupt in any way. It cannot be taken away from us.
Furthermore, it is laid up in heaven for us, so when we die we
go to our reward!

*1 Peter 1:3-4—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath
begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of
Jesus Christ from the dead, 4To an inheritance incorruptible,
and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for
you.”*

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How sad it is that so many Christians have traded a life of joy that comes from serving Christ, for a life of serving self! It is no wonder that they have no joy!

Jesus said in *Mark 8:35*– “*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.*”

If you are a Christian and you have no joy, then you have probably lost your focus on Christ and have put your focus on your circumstances!

The absence of joy will bring about a cynical and critical nature that leads to complaining and arguing and a life that winds up being miserable both for you and those who have to be around you.

Understand dear Christian that our lives are on public display each and every day! How we live our lives, how we respond and react to the many things that happen in our lives is very important because we are on public display! The people of this world are looking at us!

Conclusion

So, how do we as Christians live in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation?

WE HAVE A DUTY TO WORK OUT WHAT GOD IS WORKING IN US.
WE HAVE A DUTY TO WATCH OUR CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.
WE HAVE A DUTY TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION.
WE HAVE A DUTY TO LIVE IN THE JOY OF CHRIST!

(These duties are really privileges!)