

SCRIPTURES FOR 7/15/07 LIFEGROUP LESSON

Philippians 2:12-16

12Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

14Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do..

John 13:34-35

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed



JOY in the Journey: Keep Your Balance

Jeff Browning

NOTE TO LEADERS: All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

OPENING:

ICEBREAKER or GET YA THINKIN' QUESTION: _____

OPENING PRAYER NOTES: _____

INTRODUCTION:

(have someone read Philippians 2:12-13) As Jeff said, "Therefore..." points us back to the words that preceded it, the words that ended the passage last week.

Q: What were those words? What was their central claim? (*we should be humble because Christ humbled Himself*)

Q: In verse 13, what is the main point? (*If God has something for you to do, He will give you the power to do it*)

APPLICATION:

Jeff pointed out that most people in the church want to put our salvation, our good works, and our personal mission either all on God or all on us. Neither is true.

Q: According to vv. 12-13, what's the truth then? (*work out = your part, His good purpose = His part, lesson = balance*)

(have someone read Ephesians 2:8-10) So (1) God has saved us to do the good works He has set out for us, and (2) our humble response to Jesus' sacrifice (which was His humble response to the will of the Father) should be service. Jeff asked, "Will you go to hell if you do not serve?" Perhaps not, but then Jeff shared a better question, "Who else might go to hell if you don't?"

Q: Could this responsibility to others be part of the "fear and trembling" (verse 12)?

Q: Would it be "just" to keep someone on who was hired to do a job but then did nothing?

God is love, but God is also a "consuming fire" (*Hebrews 13:29*) As Jeff said, we must balance OUR DILIGENCE and GOD'S POWER.

(have someone read Philippians 2:14-16) Paul puts these two words, grumbling and arguing, together on purpose. To argue (GR: *dialogismos*, pr. dee-al-uh-giss-MOSS) just means to have a dialog with more than one opinion, but grumbling (GR: *goggusmos*, pr. gong-goose-MOSS) means to have secret displeasure. So we are supposed to do everything not without having an opinion, but without harboring secret displeasure about it. In other words, don't be a whiner. This will help us stand out from the crowd (v. 15) and validate our leaders (v. 16). In other words, our attitude will either bless God or disappoint Him.

Q: Again, whining will probably not keep us out of heaven, but is that the real issue? Sure, God's grace is sufficient even to forgive our cruddy attitudes, but does that let us off the hook? (*read John 13:34-35*)

As Jeff said, we must balance OUR ATTITUDE and GOD'S GRACE.

CONCLUSION:

God didn't save us to serve our own interests but the interests of others. He doesn't hold it over our heads, but it is reasonable to expect you to do something about it.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

GROUP NEEDS: _____ SHUT-IN MINISTRY: _____

WHO'S LEADING...

THIS WEEK: WORSHIP: _____ PRAYER: _____

NEXT WEEK: WORSHIP: _____ PRAYER: _____