I. **INTRO:**
   A. Happy Cinco de Mayo - When 4000 Mexican army defeated the 8000 strong French army in 1862. Not Mexico’s Independence day.
   B. National Day of Prayer - *Prayer room* open all day. Pray at the *Pole* (City Hall 12-12:30).
   C. Title: Practical Christianity!

II. **PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY!**
   A. **WORK OUT** (12,13)
   B. **WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION!** (14a)
   C. *Work out your own salvation. Do not depend on others. Buddha*
      1. Sorry Buddha, I’m depending on **One**!
   D. Q: Well So here it is, it says we must work hard to earn our Salvation right? NO!
      1. #1 He’s addressing **Christians** (They are already saved)
      2. #2 It doesn’t say “work for” but “work out”!
      3. #3 We must read the next verse (He must work 1st in you before you can work out!)
         a) Also, remember *salvation* is talked about **past, present, & future** in the bible:
            (1) **Past** - We are saved from **sins Penalty**!
               (a) For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made **unto salvation**. Rom.10:10
            (2) **Present** - We are being saved from **sins Power**!
               (a) Having now been justified by His blood, **we shall be saved** from wrath through Him. Rom.5:9
            (3) **Future** - We will 1 day be saved from **sins Presence**!
               (a) For now our salvation is **nearer** than when we first believed. Rom.13:11
   E. **Work out** - work on to the finish (LKGNT). Like working a mine.
      1. Or, **Carry out your own salvation**(Vincent).
      2. Or, **In-n-Out** that’s what **salvations** all about! :)
   F. Formula: **Personal Obedience**(12) + **Divine Empowerment**(13) = **His Good Pleasure**!(13b)
   G. **NO COMPLAINING!** (14a)
   H. Bad attitude can manifest itself a couple ways: *Complaining & Disputing*
I. **Complaining** - grumbling, low-toned discontented mutterings.

1. Story/everyone hates a complainer! A man decided to join a monastery & 1 of the rules of the group was that you were only allowed to speak 2 words every 10 years. At the end of 10 years he said, "**Bad food!**" - 10 more years went by and he said, "**Hard bed!**" - Finally, on his 30th anniversary with the brothers, he thundered, "**I quit!**" - And the priest in charge responded, "You might as well. All you do is complain anyway."

2. Here’s a good question men, **Which does God hear?...** When you say grace before your meal **thank**ing him for the food? Or, when you say, "**this wasn’t cooked long enough**" right after it?

3. Q: Have YOU been complaining? Around the office? At home? At bible studies? At the coffee shop? With a group of friends? With certain friends?
   a) “When you **complain** about a situation…make sure your not denying either the **wisdom** or **goodness** of God.”

4. Erwin W. Lutzer “**Complaining about our lot in life might seem quite innocent in itself, but God takes it personally.**”

J. **NO DISPUTING!** (14a)

K. **Disputing** - arguing w/others, stirring up doubt & suspicions; it’s skeptical questioning & criticism. It refers to the intellectual rebellion against God (Lightfoot).

   1. It’s those who “**mountain-climb over mole-hills!**”
   2. "**Murmuring and complaining unfit**s the soul for duty.”

L. The children of Israel were constantly **murmuring & complaining** when they should have been **trusting** & **praising**.

   1. Many of them never reached the Canaan of spiritual victory & blessing.¹
   2. Still **today**, **grumblers** & **complainers** are never victorious Christians.

M. Hudson Taylor used to say, “If your father & mother, your sister & brother, yes, even the cat & dog in your house, are not happier for you being a Christian, it is a question whether you really are or not.”

   1. It is usually not the **greatness of our trouble** but rather the **littleness of our spirit** that makes us complain.
   2. These activities (grumbling & complaining) are **unworthy** of Christ’s servants, & they have a **negatively contagious effect** among a body of Christians.

¹ Bread For Each Day: DeHaan; Phil.2:14
N. HOPES OF BECOMING! (15)
   1. **Blameless** - A purity of life that is undeniable & inescapable, a character that is free from defect.
   2. **Harmless** - Unmixed, unadulterated (used of wine or milk...not mixed w/water).
      a) It is also translated **Innocence**, or “**inexperienced in evil**”!
   3. **W/o fault** - Free from blemish (used for sacrificial animals)
      a) Barclay says, “The **Christian life** must be such that it can be offered like an unblemished sacrifice to God!”

O. SHINE! (15)
P. Lights that stand out like stars in the midst of a dark world.
Q. Don’t expect God to use you as a **lighthouse** somewhere else, if He can’t use you as a **candle** where you are!
R. Your choice: You can burn up your energy grumbling/disputing, or shining as lights!
   1. Like a **flash light** - guiding those walking in darkness!
   2. Like a **Lighthouse** - signaling those caught in this worlds **fog**, to see the rocks
   3. Like the **Sun** - beaming **sunshine** on a darkened cloudy day.
   4. Like a **Star** - cutting holes in the darkness!
   5. Like the **Moon** - reflecting light from a different/greater source!

S. But things are getting **spiritually darker** in our day...what then?
   1. Well, what happens when it starts getting dark in our city? The darker it gets hundreds of street lights around our city click on, dispelling the darkness.

T. RUN! (16)
U. Nobody wants to look back on their life & think it was a wasted effort!
V. **Holding fast the word of life** - All life is valuable, but not all life is equal.
   1. There is **vegetable life** (which is above mere **matter**).
   2. There is **animal life** (which is above **vegetable** life).
   3. There is **human life** (which is above **animal** life).
   4. **There is spiritual life** (which is superior **human** life).
      a) This is that **word of life**, or the **word** that gives eternal life!
      b) We are told we can, **not only have** **life**, but have it **more abundantly**.
         (1) It is a dying souls only remedy!
W. Paul gives a **dual image** here:

1. **Run in vain - Like an Athlete.**
   a) Like the runner who trains & trains, then pulls a hamstring right before the race, all that running was **futile**!

2. **Labored in vain - Like a Field Worker.**
   a) After the exhausting work of tilling the ground & sowing the seeds,…torrential rains come & rip up the field, the seeds float to the surface,… **all for not!**

3. **Paul says, I don’t want to end that way!**

X. **POUR OUT!** (17)

Y. A drink offering, usually a cup of wine, was poured out on the ground to honor deity.

   1. Paul is again referring to the prospect of martyrdom which he faces, & thinks of himself, **his life’s blood**, as a libation poured forth to God.²

Z. Paul says even if his ministry results in **death** it’s worth it for him!

   1. F.F.Bruce describes the drink offering, “When a **burnt**-offering was accompanied by a cereal-offering at the temple, a **drink**-offering of wine or olive oil might be poured over it or beside it.” [This was added last, to complete the sacrifice]

   2. So, Paul says, “If my life’s blood is to be poured out, let it be poured out on the sacrifice that your faith offers to God.”

AA. **TIMOTHY!** (19-24)

BB. There are too many **believers** that are not **workers**.

   1. **Zeal w/o knowledge** is bad; but **knowledge w/o zeal** is worse!

   2. **W/o workers** the **cause of Christ** would drag to a full-stop.

CC. **THE MESSENGER!** (19)

DD. There is 1 friend of Paul’s he mentioned more than any of the others (Timothy about 24 x's)

EE. vs.20 - Paul commends Tim for 3 reasons:

   1. **Like-minded** (20a) - or, equal-souled; same-souled [as Jon & David]

   2. **Sincerely Cares** (20b-21) - Genuine concern. Speaks of his inner character.

   3. **Proven Character** (22) - approval after being tested.

      a) J.H. Jowett said of character: “The real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money.”

      4. “You get Timothy...you get me” was Paul’s point!

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² LKGNT; pg.553
FF. **EPAPHRODITUS!** (25-30)

GG. We’ve had some good Examples so far:

1. **1st was Jesus** (but some say He’s hard to relate to...He’s **God**)!
2. **2nd was Paul** (but he was an **Apostle**)
3. **3rd was Timothy** (but he’s a **Pastor**)!
4. Well then, here’s a layman... **Epaphroditus**!
   a) A Brother; a worker; a soldier; a messenger; & a minister.
   b) Yet he became deathly sick. God healed him. Paul is sending him back home.

HH. Both in P.I. & Haitian jails, family or friends must take care of you. (food, clothes, supplies)

1. **The Situation:** The Philippian church sent Epaphroditus to “stay” w/Paul, but now he needs to go back early.
   a) Will they call him a quitter?...Not if Paul can silence any criticism.

II. (30) **Not regarding his life** - παραβολή [par·a·bol·ay] To risk or gamble; to expose oneself to danger.

1. In the **post-apostolic church** there was a group called **Parabolani** (the riskers, or gamblers!) They ministered to the sick & imprisoned. They risked their lives by nursing the sick & burying the dead.
2. **Epaphroditus** was the forerunner of the **Parabolani**!

JJ. Why do we exist?....it’s called **Living Beyond Me**!

1. If you take **no risk**...you’re **not alive**!
2. Like Epaphroditus, we need to **unwrap God** for them!
   a) We as His church shouldn’t be a **coconut** (hard on outside & hollow inside)
   b) But a **peach** (fuzzy outside sweet inside)