

Philippines 2:12-30

5-5-10

“Practical Christianity!”

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 **thanking** 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 **unfits** 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!

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·ab·ol·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)