

VERSE 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling (“Ὡστε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καθώς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε, μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ μου, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε; [*conj hoste “so that” + adj.voc.m.p. agapetos beloved, dear + pro.gen.m.s. ego + conj kathos just as + adv pantote always + aor.act.ind.2p. hupakouo obey + neg me + conj hos as + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.s. parousia coming, arrival, presence + pro.gen.m.s. ego + adv monon only + conj alla but + adv nun now + adj.loc.nt.s. polus much + adv mallon more + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.s. apousia absence + pro.gen.m.s. ego + prep meta with + noun gen.m.s. phobos fear + conj kai + noun gen.m.s. tromos trembling; cf. Mk. 16:2; 1Cor. 2:3; 2Cor. 7:15; Eph. 6:5 + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. soteria salvation, deliverance + pro.gen.m.p. eautou one’s own + pres.dep.imper.2p. katergazomai accomplish, bring about, work out]*),

VERSE 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας [*conj gar + noun nom.m.s. theos + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. energeo work, be operative + prep en + pro.loc.p. su + conj kai “both” + d.a.w/pres.act.infin. thelo to will + conj kai + d.a.w/pres.act.infin. egergeo work + prep huper on behalf of + d.a.w/noun gen.f.s. eudokia pleasure]*).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 12-13

1. Following the exposition of the example set by Jesus Christ, Paul proceeds to admonish the Philippians with regard to their Ph 2.
2. “So then,” (*conj. hoste* accordingly, with the result that) connects this long sentence with the preceding discussion.

3. “My beloved” (cf. Phil. 4:1; 1Cor. 10:14; also Rom. 12:19; 1Cor. 15:58; 2Cor. 7:1; 12:19; 1Thess. 2:8; 6:2; Heb. 6:9; Jam. 1:16, 19; 2:5; 1Pet. 2:11; 4:12; 2Pet. 3:1, 8, 14, 17; 1Jn. 2:7; 3:2, 21; 4:1, 7, 11; Jd. 1:3, 17, 20).
4. The vocative plural adjective (*agapetoi*) reminds them that they are dear to Paul even while separated.
5. Paul commends them for their history of obedience from the founding of the church to the present separation from their spiritual leader.
6. The verb “obeyed” (aor.ind.2p. *hupakouo* obey, adhere to, be subject to) with the adverb “always” (*pantote*) constitutes high praise.
7. The Philippians from the founding of the church to the writing of this letter proved themselves corporately responsive to Paul’s leadership.
8. Their faithfulness was always evident whether “in [Paul’s] presence as well as “in [his] absence” (v. 12).
9. The noun “absence” (*apousia*) only occurs here in the NT though the idea is present elsewhere in Paul’s letters (cf. 1Cor. 5:3; 2Cor. 10:1; 13:2, 10; Phil. 1:27; Col. 2:5; verb is *apeimi*).
10. It is the tendency of people to slack of when an authority figure is not *in situ*.
11. But not so with the Philippians; in fact, if anything, they redoubled their efforts during those extended periods when Paul was not with them as reflected in the words: “but now much more” (*alla nun pollo mallon*).
12. The last phrase in v. 12 constitutes a call to keep up the pattern of obedience with the words “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
13. “Work out” (pres.imper. *katergazomai*) also means ‘to accomplish, produce, bring about, etc.).
14. This verb is used extensively in Rom. 7 (8, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20) in connection with Paul’s STA grid.
15. It is used in connection with the sufferings of believers producing SG3 (2Cor. 4:17) and sanctified “sorrow” (2Cor. 7:10, 11); thankfulness (2Cor. 9:1); apostolic verification (2Cor. 12:12); testing producing endurance (Jam. 1:3); the ill effects of the pre-salvation past (1Pet. 4:3).
16. A close parallel to v. 12 is Eph. 6:13 “Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.”
17. Here, the idea is to persevere in what got these believers to where they were at the writing of this letter.
18. The word “salvation” or “deliverance” (*soteria*) is regularly used in connection with Ph 1 salvation (Lk. 1:77; 19:9; Jn. 4:22; Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:13; 2Thess. 2:13; 2Tim. 3:15; etc.).
19. This term is used in connection with temporal deliverance (Phil. 1:19; 1Thess. 5:9).
20. It is used with regard to our Ph 3 hope (Rom. 13:11; 1Thess. 5:8; 2Tim. 2:10; Heb. 9:28).
21. Apart from temporal deliverances, there are two major hurdles that face humanity.
22. The first is deliverance from eternal condemnation that hangs over all mankind from birth (cf. Jn. 3:16, 36; Rom. 3:23) and the second is deliverance from shame and loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and that is the “salvation” Paul admonishes the Philippians to “work out” (cf. 1Jn. 2:28 “And now, little children, abide in Him (fellowship), so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink back in shame at His coming.”; cf. 1Cor. 3:15).

23. The “fear” Paul speaks of here is sanctified (non-sinful) fear (cf. 2Cor. 7:1, 15; Heb. 4:1; 1Pet. 1:17).
24. This holy fear is an aspect of the fear of God.
25. “Trembling” (*tromos*) refers to extreme soulful anxiety the kind that for instance might result from a near brush with the sin unto death.
26. A physical shaking of the body is what Isaac experienced when he finally came to grips with his long-term favoritism of his son Esau (Gen. 27:33).
27. Paul proceeds to encourage the Philippians in v. 13 reassuring them that God will do His part to bring genuine positive volition through to the end.
28. This verse deals with the supernatural aspect working in the lives of growing positive believers.
29. “At work” (pres. articular infin. *energeo* be at work) is to be viewed as a the essential adjunct to “word out.”
30. This “work” is within the believer to accomplish that which would be otherwise impossible.
31. Cf. Col. 1:29 “For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.” (also 1Cor. 12:6, 11 in connection with spiritual gifts; Eph. 3:20 “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all we ask or think, according to His power that works within us.”; 1Thess. 2:13).
32. The dynamic of the indwelling Holy Spirit (God) and doctrine in the inner person are the essential factors that enable believers to preserve and maintain momentum to the end.
33. “To will” (pres.infin. *thelo*) refers to the volition desire to accomplish whatever it is that we are being led to think and do (cf. Rom. 7:18 “I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh, for the willing is present, but the doing of God is not.” Same infinitive form).
34. So “to will” something is to be motivated to accomplish the operational will of God with regard to all things sponsored by the word of God.
35. “To work” (pres. articular infin. *evergeo* be operative, work) refers to the overt aspect of living the Christian life.
36. Simple example: a believer desires to make it to Bible class and follows up by actually showing up).
37. “for His good pleasure” (*huper tes eudokias*) refers to pleasing God by conforming to His word and will (cf. Matt. 11:28; 2Thess. 1:11).
38. We are hear to please God in all respects even though we often fall short due to the flesh, but we keep on keeping on knowing that giving up/in is not an option.