

## Christian Living 101 Part 2

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I invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Philippians, Philippians 2, and I want to continue to look at what we began considering last Lord's Day. I did not put a title on this last time and the title of this very simply is "Christian Living 101," and last Sunday was part 1, this will be part 2. Christian Living 101. And I don't know that we could be considering a more practical subject matter for our Christian lives today than to understand how sanctification or the pursuit of godliness works out in our lives.

I want to begin by reading the passage. Last time we looked at verse 12, today we will look at verse 13, but I want to read them together as a cluster and in reality they form one long sentence. The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Philippi,

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; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

There is a passage in the New Testament that if we need understanding regarding how our Christian life functions, this text would be on that short list. Now this passage is one of the most important passages in the entire Bible on the subject of sanctification which is our progressive, daily, spiritual growth over the whole of our Christian life.

One major commentator writes about these two verses, "Sanctification is nowhere made as explicit as here." And by explicit this word means something that is made precisely and clearly known. The word explicit means that which is readily observable. That is what we have in these two verses. Here the truth of sanctification is explicit. It is precisely and clearly explained to us and here the biblical teaching about our progressive growth in Christ's likeness is made readily observable. What we have here is Paul's teaching to the Philippians on Christian living made explicit.

In chapter 1 of this book, the Apostle Paul has already said, "For me to live is Christ," and he has already said in chapter 1 that, "I charge you to live in a manner worthy of your calling." And so the question is raised no doubt in the mind of the Philippians, "So how do I live for Christ? And how do I live in a manner worthy of my calling? How do I make this work in my Christian life?" And so what Paul gives us in these two verses is perhaps

the best synopsis of sanctification to be found anywhere in the Bible, and the unique contribution that we have in these verses is the necessary balance in Christian living.

The tendency is to go in one of two extremes and emphasize one to the exclusion of the other, and what is so wonderful about these two verses is that it puts its arms around the whole. And when we go off into extremes, one extreme, far right in the Christian life, is legalism which says that the Christian must keep man-made rules that are found nowhere in the Bible. Legalism is Phariseeism. Legalism is hyper-law. It is a performance-based religion without any heart of love for God. Legalism is on the far right and it is a deathblow to Christianity. There is no life in legalism. There is no spiritual growth where there is legalism. It has the stench of death upon it.

On the other end of the spectrum, far left, is what we can call license, and by license we mean a free pass to live however you want to live, just love Jesus. But there are no guardrails on the side of the narrow path. License is antinomianism, which means against the law or without law, meaning that there's no sense of obedience to the word of God, just love Jesus. It is hyper-grace. It is passivity on steroids. License diminishes any sense of urgency to obey the moral law of God and it discounts the imperatives in the New Testament which command us to move out in compliance to what God requires. And license abuses Christian liberty.

Those are the two extremes on either end of the spectrum and there is a great tendency in different movements and different churches to emphasize one at the exclusion of the other, and what is necessary is balance, and we see that laid out in this passage. Perhaps no other two verses in the Bible tucked so closely together provide such a perspective of the heads and tails of the same coin, the morning and evening of the same day. In verse 2, we have our responsibility to work, to work at the Christian life, to work at sanctification, and as soon as I say that, there are many people who just begin to perspire and feel nervous whenever they hear that they are told to work at their Christian life. But that is what we see in verse 12, and there is no spiritual growth for those who are spiritual couch potatoes and who are lazy in the Christian life and who have disconnected themselves from the spiritual disciplines of the Christian life. For them, Bible study is just optional. You're a legalist if you say, "I have to study my Bible every day and read my Bible, or be in prayer, or be in church." They want to cry, "Foul! Legalism!" And that is why they are spiritual pygmies and their lives are going nowhere with the Lord.

So verse 12 says work, work out your salvation. Roll up your sleeves, put your shoulder to the plow. Commit yourselves to spiritual disciplines. Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. Get off the couch. Get into the game. Get into the weight room. Begin to pump some iron and get after it with God. Laziness is a millstone around the neck of any believer. That is in verse 12, but in verse 13, which we will look at in just a little bit, is God's responsibility and God's part to also work, to work in us, to enable us to do the work that we are supposed to do. And what I want us to see is that God is at work in verse 13 in us, in no way negates our responsibility to work, in fact, it's just the opposite. Because God is at work in our lives, he produces work in us and if you're not working at your sanctification, there is a serious disconnect in your spiritual life because

God is working and for some reason there is a short circuit in the wires in your spiritual life because where God is at work, it is intended to produce work in us. And so that is what we see in these two verses that come together.

Now I want to just quickly remind us of verse 12 that we looked at last time together, and I gave you one major Roman numeral heading, I. for verse 12, our work in sanctification, our activity in sanctification, and I drew four subheadings to your attention, and some of you after the service were amazed I did not alliterate them. I've had a week to do that and they shall now be alliterated, alright? Your pen will be able to write this so much easier. It'll be more pleasing to your eye to feast upon this alliteration.

So first is the people, the people of sanctification. Notice how verse 12 begins, "So then, my beloved." We need to understand that this is addressed to Christians only. It has nothing to do with unbelievers and if you miss this, you're going to totally misinterpret the word of God and you will falsely assume that Paul is saying to unbelievers to work for their salvation; that you have to earn your way to heaven. This is not delivered to any mailbox where an unbeliever is living. This is addressed to "my beloved."

Now God has a general love for all mankind but he has a special love for his elect, and he has a special love for his own people that is far deeper and richer than his general love for all mankind, and that is why we are referred to as the beloved. Unbelievers are never referred to as the beloved. Beloved here speaks of the intimacy and the personal love relationship that exists between God and his own chosen people.

Second, not only the people but the path. We saw the word obeyed, "just as you have always obeyed." This is the path of sanctification. Every step forward in the Christian life is a step of obedience, and any step of disobedience leads to backsliding, it leads off the track, it leads backwards to lose gained ground. The path to move forward in the Christian life is exclusively on the narrow path of obedience and, in fact, every Christian, every true, blood-bought believer who is in the body of Christ, their life is characterized by obedience. Notice he says, "just as you have always obeyed." From day one, from the moment you came into the kingdom of God, you immediately began living in obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Then he goes on to say, "not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence." They are so connected to God that Paul doesn't have to be in town in order for them to live their Christian lives. Their eyes are not to be on Paul. Their eyes are to be on the Lord Jesus Christ and they can't use that as a trump card for an excuse that they can't obey the Lord anymore because Paul is out of town. No, he says, "You have always obeyed. You began in my presence when I was with you, and when I am not with you, nothing has changed. You continued down this path of obedience."

And I want you to hear me clearly say this day: obedience is absolutely non-negotiable in your Christian life, and if you live out of obedience to God, there will be a price to pay for that. There will be consequences to sin. "Whatsoever a man sows, that will he also reap." And it will also invite divine discipline in our lives that is painful to bring us back

to the path of obedience. And anytime you hear any Christian author or speaker at a conference diminish or downplay the role of obedience in the Christian life, you need to run out of the building, put your fingers in your ear, cover your eyes, and no longer hear what that person has to say because it will be in direct contradiction to the word of God.

So Paul says the path of sanctification is compliance to the written word of God, and then third, the perspiration. There you have it, the perspiration of sanctification. You thought I couldn't do it. I just slam-dunked it, okay? The perspiration. Work out your salvation. It could not be any more clear, black print on white paper. There's no other spin to put on this ball, there's no other angle to hold your Bible to try to get it to read some other way. We are commanded to work out our salvation.

You need to know that this is an imperative verb, meaning it is a command, and this word "work out" means to work thoroughly at something, and to take pains in working at it. Listen, there is no easy path to maturity. There is no easy way to grow in the grace and knowledge of God. Let go and let God is found nowhere in the Bible. We must work out our salvation, it means to expend energy and to exert our effort to get off the couch, to get onto our knees, to get before an open Bible, and as we live our Christian lives, to resist temptation, to fight the good fight, to buffet our body, to discipline ourselves for godliness. Listen, the Christian life is a call to action, it is a call to work, it is a call to put our shoulder to the plow and to press on in the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. It is not a call just to sit back. It is to press on.

And when he says "work out your salvation," we said God has already worked it in in regeneration, we work it out in sanctification. God has already put it in us, we now work it out. And the word salvation here is really synonymous with sanctification. The Bible speaks of salvation in three ways, past, present, future. Justification, sanctification, glorification. The reference here is to sanctification and it is a call to perspiration. In fact, one of the verbs that is used in the New Testament that exhorts us as believers is a Greek word, agonizomai, to agonize, to expend blood, sweat, toil and tears in pushing against the resistance of this evil world system, and fighting our way through the kingdom of darkness as we live in this world, and guarding our hearts. All of this is a part of "work out your salvation."

Then finally, fourth, the prompting, the prompting of sanctification. What is to be the motive? What is to be the force that is pushing us to work out our salvation? And he says "with fear and trembling." Those are strong words. Certainly it includes reverential awe for God, no doubt, and it does not mean dread of God. But what is communicated here to us is that we must take God very seriously in our Christian lives and in our spiritual lives to the point that there is not just simply fear but fear to the point of trembling. You can read it for yourself right there in your own Bible and this is recorded in the book that is known for its joy. The book of Philippians is the letter of joy but the joy that we have in the Lord grows out of the soil of fear and trembling. It is the idea that we are so blood earnest in our Christian life that there is nothing casual here, nothing kicked back, nothing, just laid back, but it is a call to take the pursuit of holiness very seriously.

Let me ask you this morning: is there fear and trembling in your heart regarding your working out your salvation? Does this sound strange to you to read this in your Bible? This should truly grip our hearts and this does not discount the peace of God that surpasses all comprehension. This does not discount, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice." It's not either/or, it's both/and. But if we have a Christian life that only seeks joy and happiness and there's no room for fear and trembling, there's going to be very little spiritual growth. God will just be an addendum to your life, an add-on for you to use for your own purposes. How this should grip our hearts, "God, I want to work out my sanctification as You have worked it into my life."

Now I did not mean to take that long for the review but it was a blessing to my heart at least to go back through that. Now second, not only our work in sanctification, now second, God's work in sanctification. That is verse 13 and Paul now proceeds to God's work as we work out our salvation. Now I have five subheadings that I want to set before you and you know my practice, I am so committed to the word of God that I just want to move phrase by phrase, at times word by word through a sentence even in the order in which it is written, and so I want to take us now through verse 13 and I want to give you five subheadings that I think will serve as lenses to help you see what is in verse 13. It will follow the adverb type of outline: who, what, when, where, why and how.

First of all, the who. Notice how verse 13 begins, "for it is God." That is the who. That is the one who is working in our lives, it is God. And when he says God here, the reference is to God the Father. As you look at Philippians 2, it becomes very clear the distinction between God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are God but the word God here refers to God the Father, not God the Son. That distinction began in verse 6, "who, [Christ] existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped," then in verse 9, "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him." God is God the Father. Him is God the Son. Then in verse 11, "that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." You see?

God is God the Father and what I want us to understand is God the Father is the primary worker in your sanctification. He will use the agency of God the Holy Spirit and he will use the instrumentality of the word of God, but God the Father has not walked off the project. It was God the Father who sent the Son and sent the Holy Spirit to bring about our salvation and once we entered into the kingdom of heaven, God the Father has not dusted his hands and left it to be worked out by the other two members of the Godhead. God the Father will now complete what he began. In fact, that's what he says in Philippians 1:6, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." That "He" is not Christ Jesus. There's a distinction in Philippians 1:6 between Christ Jesus and He, the He refers to God the Father who was mentioned earlier in verse 3.

So what is important for us is to have the right understanding of how our sanctification is being worked out. God is the primary worker. God is the author of our sanctification. God is the source. God is the supplier of our sanctification and what an encouragement this must have been to the Philippians to hear that they were not on their own in the

Christian life; that they weren't given simply a list of imperative commands and moral law and God saying, "Get after it and do it in your own strength." How this must have encouraged them to know that everything that God has called them to do and holds them responsible to do, God will enable them to bring it to pass. And so here we see the who, it is God the Father.

Now second, I want you to see the what. We would ask what is God doing? It continues to read, "for it is God who is at work." That's the what. That's what God is doing, God is at work. Now this verb for work, it's really a participle, is in the present tense. That's important and what it means is God is working every moment of every day in your Christian life. God never takes a day off. There's no sabbatical for God in your Christian life. God is constantly, ever and always at work in your Christian life and many times it will not feel like God is at work in my life, and it may even feel like the Psalm that I read earlier, "God, where are You? God, You have rejected us. God, You seem a long way away." Nevertheless, God is always on duty, God is always at work, he is constantly relentlessly at work in our lives to bring about our spiritual maturity. In fact, it's even an active voice meaning God is not passive in this.

God is dynamically at work and this word for "work" is used twice in this verse. The first here is God's work in us, the second is the work that he produces. "Work" was also used in verse 12 in an intensified form but it's all the same root word. Everything about verses 12 and 13 is about work. There's no sitting. There's no spectating. There's no passivity in verses 12 and 13. Everything is about God's work and our work together in the Christian life.

This word for "work," I told you last time, is a Greek word. I'm gonna pronounce it because you can hear the English word in it, *energeo*, energy. God is energetic. God is full of energy. God is always energetically working in our Christian lives. He is never inactive. He is always active. He is always involved. He is always engaged. And we hear that in John 15:1, Jesus said, "I am the true vine and My Father is the vinedresser," and we are to abide in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the vine, but by this metaphor God the Father is our vinedresser who is continually lifting us up to greater exposure to the sun, who is continually pruning us and removing those things from our lives that are pulling us away from spiritual growth and maturity. God is ever and always at work in our Christian lives. He began it when he called us into the kingdom, when he regenerated us, but that wasn't the end, that was really just the beginning.

Now you and I need to be mindful that God the Father right now presently in your spiritual life is energetically actively working. None of us are islands unto ourselves, separated from God. God is intimately acquainted with everything that is going on in our lives from the inside out. He is like the potter who is shaping us and molding us into the image of Christ. He is like the farmer who is cultivating the soil of our heart so that the word of God will spring forth and grow more fervently. God is upholding us, and he is sustaining us, and he is encouraging us, and he is convicting us, and he is challenging us, and he is comforting us. God is doing all of these things in our spiritual lives. He is

illuminating our understanding. He is granting repentance. He is enlarging our faith. He is removing what is ungodly and he is fostering that which is Christ-like.

God has to be doing this or we would never grow one iota in our spiritual lives. I mean, we would all be just like a computer but that it's not plugged into the source of power. We would just be like a glove but there's no hand in the glove to operate and to move the glove. God has to be at work in our lives. In John 15:5 Jesus said, "apart from Me you can do nothing." You can do nothing. God has to be at work in our spiritual lives if we are to grow and advance. Say, do you realize if you're a believer this morning God is at work in your life? And he is in your life for good? And he is in your life to bring about a desired result?

We've seen the who, we've seen the what, I want you to see the where. Note the next two words as we just work our way through this text, "for it is God who is at work," note the next two words, "in you." Where is God at work? In you.

Let's start with the word "you." Who is the "you"? The "you" is the beloved in verse 12 and we can trace the "you" all the way back to chapter 1, verse 1, "all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi," and that extends to every church, into every continent, in every generation, every true believer. Everyone who is truly a saint, God is at work in you. God is not at work in only a few believers. God is not at work only in those who reach a certain level of spiritual development. God is at work in every true Christian.

So he is at work in you, now note the word "in." This could not be any more personal. The idea is that God is at work inside of you. This is not something superficial that just lays on the external perimeter of our lives. God is at work in us in the very depths of our soul. God could not be anymore on the inside of our lives than where he presently has set up shop to work. He is at work in our minds. He is at work in our hearts. He is at work in our desires. He is at work in our affections. He is at work in our wills. That is a comprehensive scope of the working of God inside of us. There's no closet. There's no back room that is off-limits to God working inside of us. There's no hidden compartment in our life that is off-limits for God to work. God is at work from the front door to the back door, from the main floor, to the top floor, to the basement. God is at work from the roof all the way down to the foundation. God is at work in every single milli-inch in our lives.

1 Corinthians 6:19, "your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you." Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you." The reference here is to God the Father and in a very real sense the entire Trinity is at work in us, but I do not want us to neglect the present activity and energetic work in sanctification that God the Father is having inside of us. It's the fullness of the Godhead: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Listen, all three were involved in our conversion, were they not? That's why when we baptize people we baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit because it is the Father who chose his elect, designed the plan of salvation, sent the Son, and sent the Spirit. It is the Son who came into this world, born of a virgin, to keep the law of God perfectly, go to a cross, die for the sins of everyone who will believe upon him, propitiate

the righteous anger of God, reconcile sinful man to a holy God. And it is God the Spirit who now comes and convicts and calls and regenerates. Now that's why we are not one of these churches that baptizes just in the name of Jesus. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, all are involved in our salvation and so it is in our sanctification as well.

The profundity of this is inscrutable, how actively the entire Godhead is at work inside of us, and it really ought to be a cause of concern for each one of us here today to walk in a very circumspect manner knowing that God is so involved. He's a part of every conversation. He's a part of everything we watch. He's a part of everything that we read. He is a part of every thought, every fantasy, every dream, every ambition, every act, every deed no matter who is around looking, not looking. God is actively a participant in every part of our lives.

Now, number 4, the how. As we continue to work our way through verse 13, "for it is God who is at work in you," and we would ask the question, "So how is God at work in us?" Note he goes on to say, "both to will and to work." To will and to work, and the idea here is God's will is moving our will and God's working in us is moving us to work. God is the cause, we are the effect, and it is God who is working upon our wills. Listen, our wills are so weak. We are such weak-willed people. People want to talk about free will? That's a death sentence. You think far more highly of yourself than you ought to think.

We need God to be at work to will and influence our will if we are to pursue what is right, and when he says "will" here it takes in the desires, the affections, the ambitions that we would have. Martyn Lloyd-Jones who speaks and writes so precisely regarding the Christian life in his sermon on Philippians 2:13 writes this and it really bears my reading this, "Every good desire, every Christian thought, every Christian aspiration which I have is something that has been produced in me by God. God controls my willing. It is God who energizes my desires and my hopes and my aspirations and my thoughts. God stimulates it all." He goes on to say, "These desires for a fuller and better and more perfect Christian life are not self-generated. They are not self-produced. When you have a desire to do something good or a desire to pray, it is God who is energizing it in your will. God is bringing his great purpose to pass in our Christian life and by controlling our will, our desires, our thoughts and our aspirations, God persuades our will and gives us holy desires." Legalism says, "It's all me." Keswick view of sanctification is, "It's all me." The Bible view is, "It originates in God."

Now he goes on to say, "and to work." Not only is God's will influencing my will, but God's work is influencing my work. He says, "to will and to work," and here's the third time this word "work" is found. The second time in this verse, third time in these two verses, and I've already said everything about these two verses is all about work. There's nothing passive here. If we are to grow as a Christian, there must be hard work that is going on.

Now this work is God causing us to work. It refers to our work in sanctification. John Murray, a great theologian of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, writes this, "Because God works, we work."



All working out of salvation on our part is the effect of God working in us." In other words, God's work is the cause, our work is the effect. God's work is the root, our work is the fruit. God is a working God and we're a piece of work, and we are the arena of his work. We are the construction site of his work, and God every day is at work bringing us along in holiness.

John MacArthur makes a great distinction here, both a negative and a positive. As God is working, he is giving us a holy discontent of those things that we need to let go, those things that are holding us back, those things that are polluting our spiritual lives. God is giving us a holy discontent and at the same time he is also giving us holy aspirations for that which we must have to grow. He is increasing our aspirations, our holy aspirations for the word of God, for prayer, for Christian fellowship, for meditation on the word of God, for corporate worship, for private worship, for fellowship with other believers and to carry out ministry. That is God at work in our soul, increasing our holy aspirations while at the same time giving us holy dissatisfaction with those things that are off-limits or hold us back from our spiritual lives. That is God at work.

As I prepared for this message, I poured through numerous commentaries and numerous theologians to really dig and to get to the bottom of this and I want to read just a couple of these. You'll recognize most of these names. This is almost just a momentary parenthesis just for you to stop taking notes and to listen to these other towering, gifted giants that God has given to the church to instruct the church over the centuries.

Matthew Henry. Everyone ought to have access to Matthew Henry. Matthew Henry writes at this point, "God gives the whole ability. It is the grace of God which inclines the will to that which is good and then enables us to perform it. To will and to work." And by the way, it's always in that order. First the will, then the work. First he gives us the desire, then he gives us the dynamic.

Albert Barnes, great commentator from the 19<sup>th</sup> century writes, "God works in their hearts that which is agreeable to Him or leads them to will and to do that which is in accordance with His own will." Now what is important about that piece of the puzzle is it would be easy for someone to hear me preach this sermon and come to a fatalistic view, "Well, God's just at work in my life and God is doing it, therefore there is no reason for me to be energetic in my Christian life." Wrong. God is not working the sin in your life. God is not the author of iniquity in your life. That's at your feet. That's at my feet. God is only working that which is in accordance to his will, bringing about the desired result that God desires to see in our spiritual lives.

James Montgomery Boice writes, "The same God who is in us to will also works through that will to do according to His good pleasure."

And William Hendriksen, the great commentator writes, "God causes them to work out their salvation yet without destroying their responsibility or self-activity."

So we see that God is at work in you both to will and to work. It's an inside job.

Finally, I want you to see the why. Note the last four words of verse 13. Here is why God is at work. Here is why God is working so that we will work out our salvation. Note, "for His good pleasure." God does this because God wants to do this. God does this because God loves holiness and because God hates sin. God does this because God loves conformity to his Son Jesus Christ, and God hates the spirit of this world. God does this work in us in sanctification for his good pleasure. It brings great pleasure to God to see us grow like flowers that are rooted and grounded in his grace. It brings great pleasure to God to see the image, his image restored in us. It brings great pleasure to God to see the image of his Son brought to bear in our lives. It brings great pleasure to God. Do you know what? It should bring great pleasure to us as well.

All that God does he does for his own pleasure and so God is at work in us not begrudgingly, but with greatest pleasure to bring about the desired result, and from this we can safely infer that God works to effect our obedience because obedience pleases God, therefore disobedience displeases God. Likewise, God works in us so that we will be working out our salvation because it pleases God, and our negligence to work out our salvation and sanctification displeases God. Moreover, our fear and trembling pleases God, and our lukewarm approach to Christian living displeases God. Thus the extent to which God is working in us is restricted to that which brings him good pleasure. All sin displeases him. All holiness brings him great pleasure.

This is God's work in sanctification and it is never independent of our work in sanctification, and because God is working, therefore we work in sanctification. And wherever you see someone who is not working in their sanctification, you can be assured of one of two things. 1. Either they are not a believer and do not have God in their lives because if God is in their lives, God 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, will be working to bring about the desired result of growth in godliness. That's option #1. The other option is God is in their life and God is working mightily in their life but there is a serious flaw in their spiritual life; there is a serious disconnect, the short wiring of the wires, and somehow, somehow what God is doing in that person's life is not converting into them working out their sanctification. And that should be cause for serious self-examination and a cause for serious inward inspection to see God, "Why am I not growing as I ought to be growing in my spiritual life? If You are working, why am I not working? God, if You are so incessantly energetic, why have I slowed down? Why have I become passive? Why have I become less than what You desire me to be to work out my sanctification through obedience in fear and trembling?"

As I conclude this message, a word to those of us who are believers first. What a glorious thing it is to live the Christian life. God could have just saved us and given us a shove in the right direction and left us on our own. "Hang in there until the end. I'll come get you at the end." And we could've been just flying solo in the Christian life. But how good and how gracious of God to actually come live inside of us, and not only to live inside of us as a mere spectator or observer or occasional incliner of us in the right direction, but that God is incessantly working energetically to bring about our sanctification. Let us be reminded not only is there the transcendence of God, that God is high and lifted up, he is

exalted above the heavens as we just sang, but God is also imminent. There is the imminence of God, that he is close and he is near, he is inside of his beloved, and he is helping us work out from the depths of our being that which he has worked into us.

So if you're a believer here today and I would assume that most of us are, be encouraged. You're not on your own. God is with you. Better than that, God is in you to bring this about. If you're an unbeliever here today and you've never been converted, I cannot think of anything more dreadful or boring than to try to live the Christian life without God in me. It really will become a performance treadmill and what's so frustrating is you'll never be good enough. You can never achieve or attain. You're like a man in quicksand, the more you exert energy, the faster you are sinking and you can't reverse the cycle. Nothing more frustrating than the one who tries to live the Christian life without God in their lives. If you have never believed upon Jesus Christ, I have no idea what's going on in your mind and in your heart right now. I don't know if you've been with us for 10 years or for 10 minutes, but if you're at that point where you know you cannot continue to go on like this, that you cannot continue to try to live a way to impress other people and you have no reality in your own heart and soul, you're just empty on the inside, you're bankrupt, why continue to live in denial of this? Why continue to just put off like you would put off going to a doctor to be made well? Why not come to the Great Physician today? Why not say to him, "Lord, save me. I'm a sinner. I'm a great sinner. You are a great Savior. I call upon You this very moment, come into my life, cleanse me, wash me, begin the process now of sanctifying me and making me what You desire me to be on the inside." You need God in your life to do this. May God give you faith to call upon his name even today.