



**Reaching,
Restoring,
Raising Up**

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L.I.F.E. Group Questions—(Phil 2:12-13)

Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

1. Each person share about the times since they became a Christian that they have grown the most—and why you think you grew so much.
2. Of the 4 things that were listed—the Word, the Spirit, circumstances, and people—which have you most often turned to for help, and which the least?
3. What it would take to allow the Word and the Spirit to be true resources from God for your life?
4. What type of circumstances or situations normally sidetrack you (maybe positive or negative)? What steps could you take to deal with them differently this week?
5. Generally speaking, do you normally connect with others in the process of trying to “work out your salvation”? Specifically how can you change this?
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

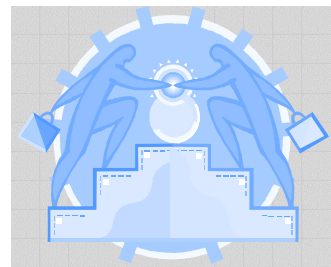
**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find
Yours Below and Join Us!**

Adult Bible Fellowships

Locations, Times, Descriptions

9:00

10:45



ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS
- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -

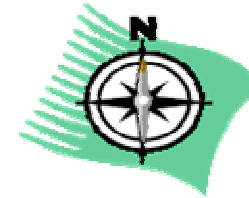
Rm104	30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104	Open—Hixson-Sturgill-Bower
Rm 112	Small Group Leaders Training	Rm 112	Women—Byrum
Rm 201	30s-40s—Sims-Fendley	Rm 201	20s—Jones-Norwood
Rm 202	Master Your Money (April 18)—Lux	Rm 202	30s—Miller-Tripp
Rm 203	Young Singles—Franklin	Rm 203	Singles—Bentzel
Rm 204	Making Peace with Your Past	Rm 204	Blessings in Disguise
Rm 205	40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 205	30s—Heritier-Sharp
Rm 206		Rm 206	Engaged/Newly Married
Rm 207	40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 207	20s—Alexy
Rm 208	Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 208	Open—Regis-Hubbard-Anderson- Robertson
		Gym-3rd fl	College Ayres-Getchell-Hopkins

March 28, 2004

Enjoy the Rest of Your Life

Discover principles for happy living from the book of Philippians

Celebration Fellowship



Volume 2, Issue 34
March 28, 2004

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Betting the Farm

A preview of Philippians 2:14-30

You know you have a gambling problem when you routinely “bet the farm”, or everything you have, to win the hand. It’s a problem because, unless you are holding a handful of aces, there’s no sure thing in poker. But “betting the farm” is smart if you do have a sure thing — then you come away as the big winner. The Christian life is like that, as Philippians 2:14-30 illustrates. This also provides another clue for having joy: we have to “risk” all we have and are to fully experience the life God has for us. There are 3 men in this week’s study who

provide examples of those who “bet the farm” to experience the fullness of Christ’s life. The 1st is Paul. Paul was willing to just be a “drink offering”, poured out over the Philippians’ service to God. This willingness to be just the “icing on the cake” in the Philippians’ worship of God shows the sacrificial nature of Paul, and the fullness of his commitment to Christ. This dedication is also seen in Timothy, who gladly left his family to travel with Paul, to just be his “gopher”, helping him with whatever he needed. Then there was Epaphroditus,



**The secret of happiness
is found in Christ!**

who “risked his very life” to serve both Paul and his home church at Philippi. Because each of these men were willing to give it all up for Christ, they experienced the best that Christ had to offer. If we are to have joy then we must do the same.

A Good Workout

Body builders tell us that a good workout involves more than just hitting the weights—it takes rest, good nutrition, the right program and the right mindset. However, if we have all these things but fail to actually work out, we will never have a well-conditioned body. The same is true for the Christian life. While God provides all the resources we need to actually live out the Christian life, we must respond to Him by actually doing it. In fact, in Philippians 2:12-13 this is the basic instruction we have from God: “work out your salvation”. Most of us view salvation as an event that occurred in our past, but this command strongly implies that it is an ongoing process. Salvation does begin at a point in time—when we repent of our sin and place our faith in Christ, we are “born again”, and become a brand new creation (2 Cor 5:17). But, this is only the beginning, because during the rest of our lives this “new life in

Christ” is working its way through every part of our being. For this to happen best there are some things we have to realize. First, this salvation is worked out in the context of the love of God. It is because we are “dearly loved” by God that we are able to “work out our salvation”. This enables us to view God as helping us to achieve something that He wants for us as much as (and maybe more than) we want it for ourselves. We work at this salvation with the assurance of God’s love, rather than to earn His love—it is all done in a secure relationship. We must also remember, that in this process of working out our salvation, Christ has done so much already to help us accomplish His best for our lives. “So then” of v12 looks back to His example of humble, voluntary sacrifice for our sakes; this should motivate us to want to fulfill His purposes in our lives. He had no “personal gain” to be realized from

(Phil 2:12-13)

His sacrifice (although God later exalted Him), but He did it for us. Amazingly, when we fulfill His salvation in our lives, we do realize personal gain from it—although that’s not the reason we serve Him. We serve Him because of what He’s done for us. We also should not serve Him because someone else is “looking over our shoulder”. Paul alludes to this when he says “just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only”. A sign of maturity in any sphere of life is when we accept personal responsibility for our actions. Often Christians fall into the trap of “acting” good when other Christians are around (like at church functions), but when they’re out in the world they forget who they are. But Paul had observed these Philippians and knew that they obeyed Christ even when he wasn’t around. This meant they understood that it was their personal

(Continued on page 2)

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- Worship—You were planned for God’s pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God’s family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

Philippians 2:12-13 (continued from pg 1)

responsibility to obey, no matter who was looking. This is the correct approach to obedience. However, Paul goes on to say that we should do this “with fear and trembling” for it is God who is at work in us. We must remember that God is doing a serious thing in our lives. We are not on our own, but He is truly present in us to help us carry out His will. This is why we serve Him with “fear and trembling”. This idea is a balance between realizing that we serve a God who has ultimate power, so therefore able to do whatever He wants with His creation, and yet knowing that He is a God who loves His children very much, so we need not be afraid of Him. It is wise to fear God, but not healthy to serve Him out of fear. We must know that God will never do anything to His children that is not loving, not in their best interest. But, like any good parent, He will do what is necessary to facilitate their best, even if it is immediately painful. The Bible calls this “chastisement” or, literally, “child-training”. While we may be “afraid” of God’s chastisement, ultimately we know that He carries this out because He loves us, not to cause us unnecessary suffering. So, we must have a healthy reverence, or respect, for God and serve Him seriously, knowing that it

is for our best. In the context of His love, motivated by what Christ did for us, and with the mindset of reverence for Him, we must take personal responsibility for “working out” our salvation. The basis for this is that God is at work in us—we are not on our own, but we are partners with Him. This gives us hope when things aren’t going well because we know that God is still working in spite of how it may feel. In fact, since the basic sphere of God’s activity is “in us”, often the difficulties that we encounter give us the opportunity to grow internally. This, in turn, enables us to “work our salvation” outwardly. The first thing that God does in us is give us “the will” to do what He wants us to do. This means that His Spirit con-



“God is at work in us—we are not on our own, but we are partners with Him.”

tinuously gives us impulses to follow God. These impulses are at war with our original nature, but when we choose to follow these divine impulses, we find that we become more and more like Christ. Verse 13 tells us, though, that when we actually do the things that God wants us to do that He gets the credit for this as well. He is the One who is at work in us, not only “to will”, but also “to do”. This is what Galatians 5:22-23 calls the “fruit of the Spirit”. These are the activities that the Spirit works through our lives, even though we must cooperate with God for these things to transpire. As we do both of these things—willing, and doing, we must realize that God is leading us to do both for one purpose—for His good pleasure. This is an exciting idea, that when we live a life in accordance with God’s will, it brings Him pleasure. This is the foremost purpose of our lives, and when we worship God with our whole life, then He invites us to enter into the very joy that He experiences when we serve Him. To sum it up, if we want to experience joy in this life, we must take seriously God’s voice in our life, listening to it, and following it moment-by-moment. When we partner with God in this way He works His joyful purpose out in our lives.

Study Questions for Philippians 2:14-30

This passage illustrates that great sacrifice for Christ leads to true fulfillment in life.

1. Read Philippians 2:14-16. What does Paul tell the Philippians not to do (v14), and how would you define these 2 things. What do you think causes us to engage in these activities?
2. According to Phil 2:15-16 what is the motive for avoiding the activities of Phil 2:14? Why is it important to keep our tongue under control for 1) our relationship with God (v15), and 2) our witness for Christ (v15-16)?
3. In what kind of a world of a world are we to “appear as lights” (v15)? What examples of this do you see around you, and in your everyday life?

“It is wise to fear God, but not healthy to serve Him out of fear.”

4. According to v16, to what are we bearing witness, and to what does this refer? How important was it to Paul that these Philippians did this (v16), and how would you apply this to us today?

5. Read Phil 2:17-18. Since a “drink offering” was poured over a regular animal offering, what does this say that Paul was willing to do for the Philippians’ service to God? How could we do this?

6. What was the result of Paul’s willingness to sacrifice everything so that the Philippians’ service to Christ would be acceptable to Him (v17)? What did he urge them to do in return (v18)?

7. From Phil 2:19-24 who did Paul hope to send to the Philippians (v19), and why (19)? How did he qualify his wish (v19), and how can we apply this to our prayers?

8. Describe Timothy from these verses: 20, 21, 22. Why is it important that we have each of these characteristics in serving the Lord?

9. What did Paul hope to do (v24), and when (v24)? Again, how did he qualify this hope (v24)?

10. From 2:25-30 who else had gone to the Philippians (v25)? His name means “favored by Aphrodite”, and was used as people threw dice in gambling. What “gamble” had he taken (v30), and why (v30)?

11. How does Paul describe Epaphroditus (v25), and how had he demonstrated his closeness to his church at Philippi (v26)? How had God taken care of Paul in this (v27), and how did Paul pass this blessing on (v28-29)?

12. From Philippians 2:14-30, what are some sacrifices that we are called to make for the cause of Christ (v14, 17, 20-22, 26-27, 28, 30), and what will these sacrifices result in (v17-18, 28-29)?

Memory Verse

“Do all things without grumbling and disputing.”
Philippians 2:14