

Your Daily Workout

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 16 February 2020

Preacher: Pastor Bart Leger

- [0 : 0 0] How many of you have ever had a workout? Now, I don't necessarily mean going to the gym and pumping iron. I mean really doing something that gets your blood flowing and gets your muscles tired and you're really putting your energy into something.
- Now, why is that good for you? Why is it good to get our heart elevated for a period of time and to exercise and to work out?
- Well, what happens to those who literally do nothing? They sit around all the time, not even lifting a finger. Now, I'm not talking about those of you who for health reasons can't do workouts like that, but I'm talking about those who are able.
- So what happens if they don't work out, get out and walk and get out and move and do something? What happens? Well, you get all out of shape.
- Bad things start to happen to your body. And before you know it, you might be ill and your doctor might be telling you there are all kinds of things wrong with you.
- [1 : 1 6] Well, the same thing is true about the family of God. We need to be working out. As a matter of fact, in our text this morning that we're going to be in a couple of verses in the book of Philippians and chapter number 2, the apostle Paul says, you need a workout.
- You need to work out. Well, what does Paul mean by that? Well, don't rush it. We will get into it. And the same is true with the family of God.
- In the Christian life, we have problems. In our own lives, we have problems. In the family of God, in the body of Christ, in the church, we have problems.
- That's part of life. We can't escape it. We don't live in nirvana. We don't live in a place that is totally free of problems and all those issues.
- But if we don't work out, as Paul is going to tell us in a moment from these verses, the body is going to get sick.
- [2 : 2 5] The body of Christ is going to become ill. And so the apostle Paul is very serious about what he's talking about and what he's telling these believers.
- And that's why I believe the apostle Paul gets so serious about working out in the Christian life. Now, he's not referring to going to a gym and pumping iron, although that probably wouldn't be bad for most of us.
- He's talking about something else. Let's take a look at what the apostle Paul says this morning about this. Verse number 12 and verse 13 of Philippians chapter number 2, where he says in verse 12, Therefore, my beloved.
- That's interesting the way the apostle Paul opens up these two verses. Paul is saying, therefore. So he makes a little bit of a transition. And rather than appealing to his apostolic authority to tell them this, what he does is he says, look, my friends.
- Now, listen, beloved. Therefore, because of what we just finished saying about the attitude of Jesus Christ, having the submissive mind. Therefore, because of all of that, he says, therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence.

[3 : 53] And here you have it. He says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure.

Now, remember last week we talked about the mind of Christ and that referred to the attitude that Jesus had when he was in heaven in eternity past.

He was God. He was in the very image of God, the form of God, an outward representation of what was inwardly true about him.

He was God through and through. And he had all the power of God. And he says, I don't want I don't need to hold on to it. I don't need to keep it for the moment.

He says, I'm going to empty myself. And that was the great we call the kenosis passage, the emptying of Jesus Christ. He left all of his glory in heaven.

[4 : 57] He comes down and he becomes human flesh, takes upon himself the form. Same word that he used. He was in the form of God. He became not just like a man.

He became a man. He wasn't just like God. He was God. And he wasn't like a man. He became man. And that's the only way he could have died a sufficient death on the cross for us.

He became a human being, although he was. We don't understand how. Fully God and fully man. So his attitude was the glory that I've got.

You know, it'll be waiting for me when I get back. So I don't have to exercise all of this power and all of this glory. And I don't have to have people groveling at my feet and worshiping me all the time.

He said he came to earth to do what? To serve. To serve. Not to be served. Now, he expects that now. We are to be serving him.

[5 : 58] But we call that the submissive mind. And so Paul says, have the same attitude. It's not about you. But it's about you and you and you.

It's about others. That's what we, the conclusion we came to last week. The Christian life really is about others. About serving others. Putting others' interests ahead of our own.

To think of others and all that we do and all that we say. Now, Paul has some work in mind for these Philippian believers. They were to exhibit, or would they exhibit, this submissive mind while he was away from them?

That was the question. He said, you've always obeyed not only my presence, but also my absence. But I want you to continue to work this out.

Even though he wasn't there with them, he challenges them to work out. But what does he mean by that? Does it mean that we have to work for our salvation?

[7 : 02] Now, for those watching or listening to this message, the question is, do you really know what salvation is?

That word saved. That word saved. I know we throw that word around a lot. And for some, it might be a churchy term. And, you know, we throw it around not realizing that some people don't understand what that word means.

And they might call it Christianese. So, for a few moments, if you'll bear with me and allow me, I would like to go through a few portions of God's word to explain about our condition, apart from Jesus, apart from God, and what Jesus did for us.

Now, here we go in Romans 3, verse 23. The Bible's got some bad news for us. You know, the Bible is not all good news.

The bad news is, the Bible says, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The reality is, when you and I are born as a baby, we're not born into the family of God.

[8 : 17] Doesn't matter if your parents belong to the family of God. God has no grandchildren. So, we have to be born into the family as His children.

So, because Adam made that choice, we talked about it last week and the week before, he made the choice to disobey God. And from that point forward, we were born into sin.

Our parents didn't have to teach us how to rebel, how to disobey God. And so, we had to come to a point where we realized we had a problem. And the problem is, we're not good enough to get to heaven.

All have sinned. Every individual, apart from Jesus Christ, who lived on this earth, has sinned and will sin. And so, the problem is, we miss the mark.

There is a standard of perfection that is required in order to be with God for eternity in heaven. And the bad news is, nobody comes up to the mark.

[9 : 20] Well, you say, well, so what then? Well, we go on. The bad news gets worse. The wages of sin is what?

Death. Do you realize that Adam began to die the moment he disobeyed God? And God proclaimed upon mankind that death was going to be a part of man's condition.

And not only did he refer to physical death, but he referred to at that moment that Adam disobeyed God, took a bite of that fruit.

He was separated. He and Eve were totally and completely separated from God. That's why when God came back to say, Adam, where are you?

Where was Adam? Where was Eve? They were hiding. Why? Because they felt guilty and they felt ashamed because they were separated from him.

[10 : 22] And so we've all fall. The wages of sin is death because we all have missed the mark. When we go to Romans chapter 5 and verse number 8, and the problem is bad.

The problem got worse. We deserve death, eternal separation from God. But there's also good news. The Bible has good news for us.

And it's that God demonstrates his love toward us. That while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He died in your place. He took your sin upon him.

Him who knew no sin, the Bible said, became sin for us. Sin for you. And he took upon himself that penalty. And it's just like if you and I had murdered someone and we received the death penalty and somebody else were able to come along and said, judge, I'm willing to take that penalty for them so they could live.

And if that were legally possible, that person, that substitute, our substitute would come and they would put that person to death and the law could be satisfied and we could go scot-free.

[11 : 37] You say, well, that's not fair. Well, no, it's not, of course. Who said love is fair? God loved you and me so much that he sent his only begotten son, Jesus Christ, that he became a man.

He died on the cross in our place that we could be delivered from that penalty of sin. So God demonstrated his love. He didn't just talk about it. He didn't just say, oh, I love you.

I love you this much. And it's easy to say that. But he said, I love you this much that he allowed his son, Jesus Christ, Jesus allowed himself to be nailed to a cross and to die in our place, to be separated from that three hours, separated from God in total darkness.

Jesus Christ died for us.

But we go back to verse 23. So the wages of sin is death. That was a bad news. But what? What do we see next? But the what? But the gift. Well, wait a minute.

[12 : 45] I thought you said, Pastor, a little while ago that you had to. Paul said, you've got to work it out. Work out your salvation. We're going to get to that in a minute. But he says, the gift of God is eternal life in whom?

In Jesus Christ. Not in our works. Not in a religion. Not in a church. Not in a set of rules or regulations. But he said, in Jesus Christ.

That's where real life is. Jesus said, I am the way. I am the truth. And I am the life. In Jesus is life.

So the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Now, how do we get that? How do we receive that gift?

Just like for your birthday or Christmas or some other time. Someone goes out and they spend money. Or they take their time and they make something with their own hands.

[13 : 49] And it's for you. It's a gift that's for you. It even has your name on it. And they say, here's your gift.

Now, then you have a choice, don't you? You could say, well, you know what? I don't want it. And I'm sure there are broken relationships where there is someone who would say, no, I don't want a gift from you.

But in order for us to receive the gift, in order for us to have the gift, we have to accept it. We have to realize, you bought the gift. You made it.

You paid for it. You're giving it to me. But in order for it to belong to me, I have to accept it as my own. And that's the way God treats eternal life.

He says, Jesus paid for it on the cross. It's free to you. You don't have to pay me back. You don't even have to be good enough for it because you can't be. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[14 : 52] So that free gift is available if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus. That Jesus is Lord.

And believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. If we believe that Jesus is God, and if we believe that he died on the cross in our place, and he died in your place, and you say, God, I believe it, and I'm trusting in it, then what is the promise from the Bible?

You will be saved.

In the name of the Lord. There we have that promise again. Shall be saved. Shall be delivered from their sin. Now, what are the results of becoming a part of the family of God?

And I love this verse. Romans chapter 5, verse number 1. Therefore, having been justified by faith. We're not justified by what we do. We're not made right with God by going to church or getting baptized or praying a prayer.

[16 : 27] Therefore, having been made right with God. That's what that word justified means. Having been made right with God by faith. By our faith. By faith. Without works.

We have peace with God. How many of you today long for peace? Long to have peace in your life. Long to have peace with God.

Wondering, where do I stand with God? What's going to happen if I die? Where will I go? Well, the one way for you to know and to have peace with God, to be at peace with God, is to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and accept that free gift of everlasting life.

We have peace with God. And then chapter 8. It gets better and better. I mean, these verses get better and better and better. Verse number 1 of Romans chapter 8. There is therefore, when?

Now. If you've trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior. If right now you trust Jesus as your Savior. If you're watching this or if you're listening to this sometime online.

[17 : 41] Therefore, if you trust Jesus as your Savior. Here's the great, awesome promise of God. There is therefore now no condemnation.

God will not condemn you. No condemnation to those who are where? We say that word again. In Christ Jesus. Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

We follow God. We follow Jesus. So if we have trusted Jesus as our Savior. We have peace with God. We have our sins forgiven.

And we don't have to worry about condemnation. And Paul goes on in Romans chapter 8, verses 38 and 39.

Wonder. And we wonder. Sometimes you might be wondering. Well, what happens if I just kind of give up? If I stop living the Christian life? What happens if I sin?

[18 : 37] If I sin just so bad? If I just mess up so bad? What's going to happen? Paul said, for I am persuaded. Strong words. Paul said, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come.

I think Paul was on a roll when he wrote this. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us, separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So what's Paul saying? I don't care who you are. I don't care how big you are. Satan. Or anybody else. You can't separate me from God.

Once we come to know Jesus as our Savior. There is no separating us. There is no salvation divorce. It's not in the Bible. Now there are some who might think we can lose our salvation, but Paul says, no, I'm persuaded.

Nothing can take it away. Nothing can separate us. And there's also in the Gospel of John talks about no one can pluck us out of the Father's hand. So nothing.

[19 : 47] Nothing. My friend, the gift of salvation is available for you to receive right now. Will you humble yourself before God and receive life in Jesus Christ simply by trusting Jesus as your Savior?

If so, there's a really simple prayer that you can pray. It's not a prayer that saves. But it's simply acknowledging before Him and declaring to God that you're relying on Jesus Christ for your salvation.

The words themselves won't save. Only faith in Jesus Christ can provide salvation. But it goes something like this. And if that's where you are today, wherever you are, and if you mean it in your heart and you want to receive that free gift of life from Jesus, then say this to Him and mean it in your heart.

But God, I know that I've sinned against you and I am deserving of punishment. But Jesus Christ took that punishment that I deserve so that through faith I could be forgiven.

And with your help, I place my trust in you for salvation. Thank you for your grace and your forgiveness. Thank you for the gift of eternal life.

[21 : 09] If you've prayed that prayer, and if you're trusting Jesus Christ this morning or whenever you're listening to this for the first time, please let us know. You can let us know by texting the word LIFE, L-I-F-E, to 337-474-3758.

Text the word LIFE, and we will make sure and we connect with you and help you to grow in your newfound faith, in your new Christian life.

And welcome to the family of God. Now, let's get back to our text this morning and unpack this potentially confusing part of Scripture.

Because I've heard some people look at verses 12 and 13, particularly verse 12, and go, What does that mean? Do I have to work for my salvation?

Let's take a look. Verse 12, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, not only when Paul was there in Philippi, but he says, But now much more in my absence.

[22 : 23] It's even more important, while I'm not there with you, that you do this thing. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Now, what's Paul asking them to do?

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. So what is Paul not telling them to do? Okay, I'll tell you right out of the gate. Okay, Paul is not telling them they have to work for their salvation.

Because remember the verses we just read? It's by faith. It's by grace, through faith. It's not of ourselves. It's the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

We didn't read that. But the Bible says it. So it's by grace, through faith, not of works. Because if we could be good enough, we could boast about it and say, Oh, look how good I am. I'm better than you.

I made it. You didn't. But he says it doesn't work that way. It's by grace, through faith. So to get a little bit better understanding, who's Paul writing to? He's writing to Christians.

[23 : 22] Because if you look at verse number one, to all the saints in Jesus Christ who are in Philippi. Now, he's not talking about people who had miracles attested to them and they became canonized by the church.

That's not who he's talking about. When the Bible talks about saints, the Bible talks about people who are justified by faith, made right with God through their faith in Jesus Christ. So guess what?

If you trusted Jesus Christ, you're here this morning, you're watching this, you're a saint. Some of you may have never ever heard that before, right? Boy, he's a saint.

She's a saint. They might have had other words for you. But if you trust Jesus as your Savior, God considers you a saint, a part of his family.

So Paul's writing to believers. He's writing to Christians. So now we must come back to work out your own salvation. Well, if he's writing to people who were already Christians, he's obviously not telling them to work for their salvation.

[24 : 24] We've got to take that verb here in verse number 12. He says, to work out, work out, and then your own salvation.

That verb there means to work to full completion. To work to full completion. Those of you who I know math may have been your favorite subject in school, right?

Some of you chuckle. When you had a problem that had multiple components to the problem, like three or four, and you wrote an answer, quite often your teacher would tell you, I want you to show me your what?

Show me your work. Show me your work. I want you to do what to the problem? Now we're going to use Paul's words here. Work it out. There you go.

That's the word. That's the verb that Paul used. So you've got a math problem. You want to get an answer? You've got to work it out. You've got a math problem. You want to get to the end? You've got to work it out. It was also a word that was used in Paul's day of working a mine.

[25 : 35] So let's say you buy a mine. You buy property. You stake a claim. It's yours. You don't have to continue paying for it.

It's yours. You bought it. So what do you have to do to get what you want? You've got to work it. You've got to work it out. And so the word, the verb was they go in, they dig into the mine, they work out the mine so they can get that precious ore, and so they can, whether it's silver or gold or whatever it is, work it out.

It's also the same word that would be used for you farmers. You have a field. It's your field. Or you leased it or whatever.

You've paid for it. But in order for you to get a full crop, what do you have to do? You've got to work it out. You've got to get in there, and you've got to work it.

You've got to work it out. You've got to water it. Well, first of all, you've got to plant it. You have to water it. You have to take care of it. You have to do all that's necessary for you to get a harvest.

[26 : 47] What if you said, yeah, I planted the seed, and that's good. It will not reap itself. It will not put itself in the barn. It will not bring itself to be sold.

So we have to work it out. That's the word that Paul used. You've got to work it out. The question is, what does God want to work out in us? What does God want to work out in you?

It's Christ-likeness. Be like Jesus. Be like Christ. Paul just finished saying, have the attitude of Christ. Have the mind of Christ and serve others.

Have the submissive mind. Now, we will all have problems in life. The Philippians were obviously having problems as well. Remember Euodia and Syntyche?

We're going to get to them at the end. But he says they're having some problems in our lives. Your life has tremendous potential.

[27 : 46] God has a plan for your life. Your life has a lot of potential. And like a mine or like a field, he wants us to fulfill that potential.

He wants us to work out in our lives to mine out, to be able to reap all that potential that God has placed within us.

Excuse me. So when we work out our salvation, we're simply working out what God has started in us.

So I believe we have the work out part down. Paul didn't say work for your salvation. He said work it out to completion. Continue serving Jesus.

Continue doing what's right until he comes back for us. Now, that brings us to the next phrase, your own salvation. He says work out your own salvation.

[28 : 51] The middle voice in the Greek, reflexive, meaning it's something we do and we do it for ourselves. Nobody can do it for us. Your parents can't live out your Christian life for you. Your children can't live out your Christian life for you.

You've got to do it. You've got to make your daily decisions. You've got to get up in the morning and say, I'm going to read God's word. I'm going to pray. I'm going to serve others.

So it's something that we do. We work out our own salvation. We can't do it for someone else. I know a lot of parents wish they could do it for their children, but they can't. We have to do it for ourselves.

We take... And here's the thing. God has a plan for everyone's life, but he doesn't have the same plan for everyone's life. Aside from the big plan, the big picture, Christ-likeness.

But aside from that, God's plan for your life is not the same as your life. Let's take Paul, for example. God's plan for Paul's life was Paul was to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

[29 : 59] Now, Paul was a Jew. But God said, Paul, my plan for you is I want you to go and be an apostle to the Gentiles. You're going to get beaten. You're going to get imprisoned. You're going to get accused of all sorts of things.

And you're going to have a lot of problems in your life. That was God's plan for Paul. And Paul had to work it out. If Paul never left home, he wouldn't have gotten put in jail.

But that was part of God's plan for Paul to work out in his life, Peter's life. God told Peter, you're going to be the apostle to the Jews. And so God had a plan for Peter to work out in his life.

The same thing is true for us. In order to work out our salvation to completion, just like Paul, we have to do what God has planned for us.

So the phrase, work out your own salvation, probably had reference to the particular problems that the Philippian believers had in Philippi at this time.

[31 : 00] He says, I need you to work these things out. I need you to work these problems out among yourselves. I need you to work out this submissive mind when it comes to, well, I don't agree with you and I don't like what you did and you didn't treat me right.

Paul says, work it out with a submissive mind. Work it out with the single mind. And be Christ-like. And when Jesus Christ comes back, we'll be a body that is working together like it ought to be.

And the thing is, we're not to be cheap imitations of somebody else. We're not to take someone's life and just pattern ourself after their life.

Because everyone has feet of clay. Everyone will let us down at one time or another. When Paul says, imitate me as I imitate Christ, he was simply saying, I want you to take from my life when I'm following Jesus, when I'm doing it right.

He says, go ahead and imitate that. But don't be Paul. Only Paul is Paul. Don't be me. There's only one me. I can't be you. There's only one you. So work out what God has worked in to you.

[32 : 15] Now, that's when we come to verse number 13. He says, for it is God who works where? He says he works in us, both to will and to do for what?

For his good pleasure. You see, God says, work it out. But we can only work out what God has what? Come on.

Worked in. We can only work out what God has worked in. Someone can say, well, you know what? I want to live the Christian life. But you're not part of the family of God.

You haven't trusted Christ yet. Guess what? You can't live the Christian life. Because you don't have the power. You don't have the life in you. You might say, well, you know what?

I want to work out of this bowl a nice, fluffy birthday cake. Well, guess what? If you don't have the ingredients in the bowl, you can't work the cake out of the bowl.

[33 : 20] Does that make sense? And so Paul says, work out your salvation. But you're only doing what God already gave you. He gave you salvation.

He gave you the Holy Spirit. Now he says, I want you to work it out among yourselves. Work out your own salvation. And he says, with fear and trembling, with that awe and that reverential fear, knowing that God is in control.

So God must work in us before he can work through us. A preacher one day was reading this verse, verse number 13. And a little girl sitting out there looked at her mom.

And she says, mother, you can't work out salvation unless it's first been worked in. Can you? Wow. How true. We can't work out our salvation until he works it in.

Too many Christians obey God only because of pressure from without. Thing is, we need to be serving him because of what's internal.

[34 : 24] Because we desire to do. Paul warned the Philippians that not his presence with them, but their desire to obey God or please him. He said, it'll please me if you do this in my absence.

Work out your own salvation. So God works out what he has already worked in. If God has saved you, he saved you by faith plus nothing. God's not accepting any kind of good works for our salvation because we know salvation is a gift.

We receive it because of his grace and through faith. But after we're saved, God is talking to us about our works. This salvation that he worked in is a salvation that he will work out also.

John Calvin said it this way, faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone. Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves, it's not alone.

James says it this way, even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. Yes, a man may say you have faith and I have works.

[35 : 34] Show me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my works. The reality is only God can see the heart. He knows our true condition.

He knows if we have saving faith, but your neighbor can't see it. What can your neighbor see? The submissive mind, I care about you, I love you, and I'll serve you.

I will cut your grass if you're laid up and you can't do it. If something is wrong, I will. And that's the way a follower of Christ is.

We work out what God has already worked in to us. It's true faith that works itself out so that the people around us can see that we're different, can see that we are God's children.

We don't need to wear a placard. You know, we don't need to wear a bumper sticker. You know, some people have bumper stickers on their vehicles and aren't living like a Christian.

[36 : 38] It doesn't matter what you say on the outside, it's what we do that truly matters. We don't need a symbol to identify us as a Christian.

You know, we don't have to walk around with a cross, although there's nothing wrong with that. But we don't need the symbol to prove that we're a Christian because people will look at you, they'll listen to you, they'll hear you, and they'll see the way you respond to certain things.

They'll go, that person's different. And we'll have an opportunity to share the gospel. So, while we must not believe in salvation by works, we must certainly believe in a salvation that works, that lives out the Christian life, that serves, that loves, that gives, that provides mercy, or shows mercy and grace to others.

Now, what does all of this mean? Number one, make sure that you're trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. That's where it begins. Just as we read in the book of Romans, that's where it all starts.

Make sure today, right now, that you're trusting Jesus alone for your salvation. And then secondly, don't be copying anyone else because of external pressure. Be working out God's will in your own life.

[37 : 58] Study. Read. Read the Bible. Pray. God, please show me what you want me to do for you. Please show me your will for my life. And work it out until he takes you home.

And then thirdly, rely on God's Holy Spirit to accomplish his will in you for his good pleasure. Let's pray.

Father, this morning, we've looked at a potentially difficult paragraph about working out our salvation.

But it helps when we understand that if we already have something and we're working it out to completion, working it out to get everything possible out of it that we can, that it does make sense, that you want us to work out what you've already worked into us.

So we thank you, Father. We pray that if there's any others, any who trusted Jesus as their Savior today, that you would give us the opportunity to connect with them and to help them and to put into their hands the tools whereby they can grow and learn about this decision that they've made and that we can partner with them to help them become disciples of yours, to be learners.

[39 : 19] And, Lord, help us to work out the salvation you've provided us each and every day by living out that submissive mind, the mind of Christ. We thank you.

We praise you for it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.