



SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”

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Scripture: Philippians 2:12-13

NC0159

TITLE: Flip the Switch

“I just don’t get it. I’m saved. I love God. But I still am struggling with sin. I have the Spirit in me, but I feel like I’m just not changing. What good is the Spirit?” This is what I asked my pastor a number of years ago. What’s interesting is, I think most Christians struggle with this. I’ve received messages from some of you, because you’re struggling with sin, and you don’t want to. So what good is this Salvation, if life is still such a sin struggle?

Well, Paul provides us an answer as we continue our study of Philippians. Here’s what he says in Chapter 2:

“Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. ¹³ For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” (Phil. 2:12-13, NLT).

Paul is hitting the obedience mantra hard here in verses 12 and 13. He says, “Show the results, obey God, do what pleases him.” It’s important to stop here for a second. Because Christianity isn’t about the do’s and the don’ts. It really isn’t. Yes, there is a right way to live. The Bible provides the recipe. But if you think Christianity is just another performance trip, you’ve been misled. And as James said, “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:17, 20, 26). Paul said in Ephesians 2 that we were saved for good works (Eph. 2:8-10). So our obedience to God isn’t just out of fear.

Now, if you were paying attention, Paul did say, “Obey God with deep reverence and fear”. Why does Paul say that? Because He is God. God is loving and merciful, and patient. He is also just. He is God, and He takes sin seriously. So we are reverent of who God is. But I think that the fuller motivation for our obedience is out of love and gratitude for His mercy and grace, just like my kids. I don’t want a hug from them when it’s forced. I want a hug that is motivated by their love.

And this obedience and life change are powered by God through the Spirit. According to Paul, God gives the desire and the power. The question is, will we use that power?

We recently wanted to do some 4-wheeling. But I couldn’t get the 4-wheeler started. After a couple of hours messing around, I simply flipped a switch, and it fired right up. We have the switch. The question is, will we flip it?

So here's my challenge for you today: flip the switch. God offers you the desire and the power to obey. He gives you the switches. The question is, are you going to flip them? Maybe your desire switch is off, and you don't want to turn it on. Admit it. And then pray for strength to switch it. Maybe you desire it, but you're not asking for God's help. And you're trying to do it on your own. Flip the switch.

God wants you to succeed in following Him. That's why He gives you both the desire and power. I pray you flip the switch.