

PHILIPPIANS, RIGHTLY DIVIDED, VERSE-BY-VERSE
SESSION 8 | PHILLIPPIANS 2:9-14

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11 | THE MIND OF CHRIST

Verses 5-8 – see session 7

VERSE 9 – BLUE

Because of Jesus' obedience unto death while under the **likeness of men**, God **highly exalted him**. This, no doubt, could be applied to every aspect of the Lord's ministry today, but is likely a specific reference to the ascension and "session" of Christ the Lord (see Acts 2:33). He has also been given a **name which is above every name**. Paul elaborates on this in Ephesians 1:21.

VERSE 10 – BLUE

Christ has been exalted so that **every knee should bow** at His name, **Jesus**. This *bowing of the knee* is a figure of speech, often displayed literally but the literal being secondary to the spiritual. The verse does not say that **every knee does bow**, but that every knee **should bow**.

The phrase **of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth** moves this reverence beyond people to all of creation. All things **were created by him, and for him** (Col. 1:16) but today **the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain** (Rom. 8:22) and **continue as they were from the beginning of the creation** (2 Pet. 3:4). In fact, God **hast put all things in subjection under his feet...he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him** (Heb. 2:8).

Note the insertion of the word **things**, required by linguistics. Most modern translations have narrowed this, incorrectly I believe, to *people*. For example, the NKJV uses "of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth." The Greek uses the neuter, and the masculine would be expected if the author intended *people* rather than *all of creation*.

VERSE 11 – BLUE

The phrase **every tongue** seems to move more specifically to living beings, that they should all **confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**. This does not imply salvation, but rather the acceptance of reality (see Rom. 14:9).

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-18 | EXPECTED BEHAVIOR

VERSE 12 – BLUE

Paul continues, having begun in verse 1, speaking generally to all Pauline followers, and not so specifically to the Philippians that we would not use *blue letters*. This verse (and entire section) is written to those who are **not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence**.

The instruction is to **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**.

A note on the Greek κατεργάζομαι [katergazomai], translated **work out**. This particular word does not have an *active tense* but is always found in the *middle or passive*. Such verbs are called *deponent* and are almost always translated in the active tense. They are *assumed active*. The verb itself is made of two parts, *kata*, the prefix which intensifies to the fullest degree possible, and *ergon*, “to work.”

The saved believer is saved *without works* and is **complete in Christ** (Col. 1:10) as **the gift of God** (Eph. 2:8). Nonetheless, each believer should then take the grace-gift and *use it to its fullest extent*.

VERSE 13 – BLUE

Because God **worketh in you** the believer is to cooperate and **work out** his or her **own salvation** (v. 12). This puts it, therefore, in the “you can lead a horse to water...” category.

In this age of the “silence” of God we must not forget that God **worketh in you** (present, active, participle). In fact, the way in which God’s **good pleasure** is carried out in our world is not God’s miraculous and supernatural intervention into the affairs of mankind or the physics of creation, but rather by using the *work force* of the Body of Christ. We, therefore, should cooperate with this work of God **with fear and trembling** (v 12).

VERSE 14 – BLUE

The thoughts of this verse continue into verse 15, and arguably are the continuance of verses 12-13. Because God **worketh in you** then we should **do all things without murmurings and disputings**.

A *murmuring* is an under-the-breath complaint. While such complaints are not plainly spoken, they are almost always plainly known.

The **disputings** are more verbal, coming from διαλογισμός [dialogismos], literally (by etymology) to *thoroughly talk about it*.

Together, **without murmurings and disputings** means “don’t mumble about it and don’t over-talk it, just do it.”