



The Epistle of Joy

“Working Out Your Salvation” # 3

Philippians 2:12-13

In Philippians 2:13, the Apostle Paul wrote: **“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”**

- Over the last few years, the concept of the equality among all of the gods has resurfaced.
- Obviously, if the God of the Bible, whom we say we worship, is the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God of the universe, then any other being, regardless of his characteristics, would be less than divine.
- The Bible asserts that there is only one God. This concept, known as monotheism, is central to the biblical worldview.
- Deuteronomy 6:4 declares, ***“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!”***

- Isaiah 45:18 says, ***"I am the Lord, and there is no other."***

In recent days, we have also seen other views arise to diminish our concept of God. We have seen the rise of what is called:

- **Omnism** – the philosophy that recognizes the validity and value of various religious traditions rather than claiming one is the sole true path to God or divine truth.
- **Pantheism** – the universe is God, and when we worship creation, we are worshipping the Creator God.
- **Henotheism** – the worship of a single god while acknowledging the existence of other, equally powerful gods, which often leads to:
- **Polytheism** – accepts the existence of many gods but views them as just different aspects of the same God.
- **Monotheism** – the worship of one supreme God who alone is worthy of our total devotion, but not all monotheistic religions worship the same god.
- **Syncretism** – the blending of all of the man-made religions, i.e., all gods are the same, for all religions lead to a different understanding of the same God.

However, all gods are not equal, and they all do not lead to the same understanding of the future.

- **Islam** – the monotheistic religion of the Muslims, which is based upon the truth as revealed through Muhammad as the Prophet of Allah.
- **Hinduism** – many gods and goddesses.
- **Buddhism** – no “supreme creator” – our thoughts make the world.
- **Judaism** – one God, Yahweh.
- **Neopaganism or the New Age religion** – everything is considered to be divine; even humans are gods.
- **Biblical Christianity** – the worship of the one and Supreme Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
- The fastest-growing religion in the world is Islam, followed by the Baha, Sikhism, Jainism, Hinduism, and Christianity.
- The worship of multiple false gods is growing fast than the worship of the one true God.

1. The God of the Bible is a Living Person –

- The God of the Bible is not an image of some weird being shaped by the hands of man from wood, stone, or metal.
- The God of the Bible seeks that personal relationship with mankind, and He finds deep satisfaction and joy in assisting those who believe in Him to discover His perfect will.
- Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, the God of the Bible equips and empowers us to do that which He created us to do for His glory.
- The Old Testament writers used human terms to describe what they saw or experienced as the humanity of God.
- When Paul told the Philippians that God was at work in them, both to will and to do His good pleasure, he was not talking about some inanimate, impersonal, lifeless statue, but rather a holy God, who is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present, and yet who desires an intimate relationship with those He created.

2. The God of the Bible is All-Powerful –

- When Paul said God is at work in us, the Greek word for “work” is *“energe,”* from which we get our word “energy.”
- God gives us the desire to be sanctified and then the energy to be sanctified in such a way that it brings Him glory.
- In Ephesians 3:20, the Apostle Paul wrote, ***“Now unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”***
- The God of the Bible can accomplish within us the unimaginable, the unthinkable – things beyond our ability to comprehend, if we would surrender our lives unto Him.
- In 2 Corinthians 12:9-11, Paul said God told him, ***“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”***

3. The God of the Bible is Ever Present –

- Paul told the Philippians, ***“God is at work in you,”*** not on you; His presence is within you.
- Acts 1:8 – Jesus told the Apostles, ***“You shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon you.”***
- 2 Corinthians 6:16 – ***“For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, I will dwell in them and walk among them and I will be their God.”*** God said He would never leave us nor forsake us.
- Romans 11:33 – ***“O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His judgments, and how unfathomable are His ways, for who has known the mind of the Lord or who became His counselor?”***

4. The God of the Bible is a God of Purpose –

- God is trying to produce something very special in us so that He can do His work through us.
- God is at work in us; giving us the desire to do His will, and that’s the most important thing we need to understand.
- All behavior rises out of our will, i.e., our wants, those things we desire to fulfill the emptiness of our lives.
- In the flesh, that desire is out of our emotions, our passions, or our lust.
- God wants to produce within us the proper emotions, the proper passions, and the proper desire for what is right.
- Psalm 37:4 – ***“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”***

5. The God of the Bible is a God of Pleasure –

- Our God is a God of love, a God of compassion, a God of grace and a God of mercy, and we are very dear to Him.
- When we do His good will, He abides with us still; He is pleased, He is honored, and He is glorified.
- It is amazing to think that we can do something to bring joy and satisfaction to the heart of God. But wait!! We can’t do that in the flesh: it is God who works in us both to will and to do, for His good pleasure.