

1. Our LifeLines verse for October 30 will be Titus 2:11.
2. LifeLines will meet through Monday, November 13!

LifeLines October 23, 2023

Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

Philippians 2:13

For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will & to work for His good pleasure.

WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

CONTEXT

Paul is addressing the Christian community in Philippi in the mid 50's to early 60's AD. He's educating these early Christians in something all of us need to know – That the power that lives in us & compels us comes from the Spirit of the living God in us! The Spirit places *in us* the desire to do God's will and then gives us exactly what we need to bring it to fruition. Paul is deeply fond of the church at Philippi & is encouraging them in their faithfulness to God & the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In reference to the popular verse which precedes our LifeLine's verse (ending in, "work out your own salvation with fear & trembling"), Paul assures the people that even the desire to & power to work out their own salvation is supplied by God. He has supplied everything we need, because *we cannot work out what has not already been worked in us!* God energizes & provides enablement. Paul wanted the believers to grasp hold of that fact. Let's be sure we grasp it, too! God gives us the desire to do what pleases Him!

DIFFERENT VERSIONS (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

AMP

For it is (not your strength, but it is) God who is effectively at work in you, both to will & to work (that is, strengthening, energizing, & creating in you the longing & the ability to fulfill your purpose) for His good pleasure.

CEB (Common English Bible)

God is the One who enables you both to want & to actually live out His good purposes.

CEV

God is working in you to make you willing & able to obey Him.

CJB (Complete Jewish Bible)

For God is the One working among you both the willing & the working for what pleases Him.

EASY (Easy English Bible)

It is God Himself who is working in you. Now you want to obey Him, & He makes you strong to do that. When you obey Him, that makes Him very happy.

ERV (Easy-to-Read Version)

Yes, it is God who is working in you. He helps you want to do what pleases Him, & He gives you the power to do it.

GNT

Because God is always at work in you to make you willing & able to obey His own purpose.

GW

It is God who produces in you the desires & actions that please Him.

MSG

That energy is God's energy, an energy deep within you, God Himself willing & working at what will give Him the most pleasure.

NIRV

God is working in you. He wants your plans & your acts to be in keeping with His good purpose.

NIV

For it is God who works in you to will & to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.

NCV

Because God is working in you to help you want to do & be able to do what pleases Him.

NLT

For God is working in you, giving you the desire & the power to do what pleases Him.

NLV

He is working in you. God is helping you obey Him. God is doing what He wants done in you.

TLB

For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey Him, & then helping you do what He wants.

SELAH

BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE

For it is God who is at work in you... God allows believers to be partners with Him, laboring with Him to fulfill His will. What a privilege!

enabling you... God provides the energy & desire we need to be His co-workers. He gives us confidence to do work He intends we do in the body of Christ & things that please Him. He enables us out of His extreme love for us because *He wants each of us to be like Jesus!* Of course, that enabling may require: chiseling, sanding, steel wool, polish & more! He wants to humble us to make us malleable, workable, usable in His kingdom work on earth.

both to will & to work for His good pleasure... When we submit to God's will, He works His ways into us, supernaturally, in order to make us effective in the work He has planned. Think of a time you were called upon to do something & couldn't imagine being able to accomplish what you were called or asked to do. Your ability came not from your personal determination, but from surrendering & allowing God to work through you. Can you share an example?

God's Spirit will carry out His plans through us & in us *or* in & through someone else.

SELAH

RELATED VERSES (Add other related verses as you think of them.)

1 Kings 8:57-58, The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our ancestors; may He not leave us or abandon us, but incline our hearts to Him, to walk in all His ways, & to keep His commandments, His statutes, & His ordinances, which He commanded our ancestors.

2 Chronicles 30:12, The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king & the officials commanded by the word of the Lord.

Psalm 27:4, One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, & to inquire in His temple.

Psalm 37:4-5, Take delight in the Lord & He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, & He will act.

Psalm 91:14 & 16, Those who love Me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know My name. With long life I will satisfy them, & show them My salvation.

Isaiah 43:6b-7, Bring My sons from far away & My daughters from the ends of the earth - everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed & made.

Jeremiah 29:11, For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare & not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Ezekiel 36:26-27a, A new heart I will give you, & a new spirit I will put within you; & I will remove from your body the heart of stone & give you a heart of flesh. I will put My spirit within you...

Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, & on earth peace among those he favors."

John 14:17, "This is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him or knows Him. You know Him, because He abides with you, & He will be in you."

Romans 8:28, We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose.

1 Corinthians 3:13, The work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, & the fire will test what sort of work each has done.

(For a fuller understanding, read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, related to the kinds of works true believers do in the power of God, *to His glory* rather than *for their own gain* & *to their own glory*.)

1 Corinthians 12:6-7, And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 15:10, But by the grace of God I am what I am, & His grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them – though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

Galatians 2:20, And it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me & gave Himself for me.

Galatians 5:25, If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Ephesians 1:5, He destined us for adoption as His children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will

Ephesians 2:10, For we are what He has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Philippians 1:6, I am confident of this, that the One who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:5, Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 13:20-21, Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do His will, working among us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever & ever. Amen.

SUMMARY

Who we think we are isn't who or what God thinks we are! We may be gifted in many areas, but those will only be *our* gifts until we lay them down to God in humble thanksgiving & acknowledge them as *His* gifts & abilities in us. There comes a time when we must orient our lives around our Creator, His Son & His Spirit. They have been, are & will always be our Source. The confidence we need to do His will comes from His Spirit in us. It isn't something we can manufacture on our own.

Knowing this, let us be wary of running ahead of God to do even *good* works in our own strength. Doing so is akin to works of the flesh. There are plenty of good things God has in mind for us to do, & each is for our good & according to *His* will & good pleasure *as opposed to* our own will & pleasure or self-seeking. God is the "will," the instigator behind all our works which please Him.

God's power & love & compassion never run out. He works in us continually. He works intimately in every believer because of His great love for us. As soon as we surrender to Him, His Holy Spirit in us goes to work, molding, forming us to be more like Him. Knowledge of His divine work in us steers our minds to reflect on & desire to have His perfecting work happen in us. He gives us the desire & power to please Him. Once His work in us begins, He continues to revitalize us & implants in us the desire to continue doing what pleases Him. He has a plan, & He supplies the willingness, desire, power & even the pleasure we need to do His work. *We can't work out what has not been worked into us!* And He's taken care of it all!

CONCLUSION

God isn't finished with us yet! The Creator in Him continues molding us, chiseling, cutting, shaping & sanctifying us until His work is complete & He's pleased with the final product. We don't have to pretend or feel like we have it all together. Our goal is to seek the One who is working in us & transforming us into His image. It's a process full of grace, mercy, love & patience. Let us meet daily with our Potter & willingly allow Him to shape & mold us. Let us trust Him to use our colorful nature, flaws & even failures for His glory!

J. Ligon Duncan, renowned theologian & author, said Philippians 2:13 is "one of the most important passages in all of the Bible about how we grow in grace, how we become more like Jesus Christ."

Let us grow in our commitment to live for God, not for ourselves. Let us place our faith in God & in what He wants to do in/with our lives. Let us align our desires with His. He wants our lives to be filled with growth, excitement, and fulfillment. All this happens when we realize *He's working in us*. Once He's prepared our hearts, we are His. Our "out-working" is the result of God's "in-working" in us. His Spirit continues to work in us, transforming us, causing us to grow & making pleasing Him our greatest desire.

Let us never doubt our ability to live for the Lord. His Spirit in us has already given us both the desire & strength to live for Him. With our cooperation, He will shape our soul – our mind, will, emotions & desires to be aligned with all that delights Him! Amen.

Let Philippians 2:13 be a *LifeLine* for you!

SCRIPTURE IS OUR –

LifeLine!

Take a minute or two & write something you want to remember about this LifeLine:
