

12th Grade Devotional 2

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.

Paul was in prison at the time he was writing this letter to the church at Philippi. He was encouraged by their faith and the fact that God was continuing to work in their lives even in his absence. You have come to the point in your life where the full weight of your spiritual walk has come to rest squarely upon your shoulders. Just like the Philippians, it is up to you to "work out your own salvation". That means the buck stops with you.

Paul adds an even greater weight to that thought when he tells them to work out their salvation with "fear and trembling". He's not talking about running away in fright, he's talking about approaching your faith with great respect and reverence, being cautious and diligent. Fear is not always a bad thing. If you are walking through the desert where you know rattlesnakes are everywhere, your natural fear of not wanting to be bitten will make you more cautious as you go.

You'll be more prepared than if you aren't paying attention, carelessly stepping in obvious places that a snake might be lurking.

This time in your life can be exciting and scary all at the same time. Your eagerness to be independent is mixed with the fear of being on your own. How's that for a paradox?! In verse 13 Paul gives encouragement to the Philippians by writing, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." Paul sees that they are continuing to grow in faith even when he is not with them and their desire to do so is evidence that God is truly at work in their lives.

Take the time to pray and examine your spiritual walk up to this point. Have you been going through the motions because it's what others expected of you? Take ownership of your faith. What is your plan to continue your walk with the Lord after you leave home?

Parents:

Encourage your son or daughter as they take ownership of their walk with the Lord. Pray for them and let them know that you are there to help them during this time of change in their lives.