Not I But Christ Pt. 2

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Well, as John mentioned, we are here in our study of Philippians in verses 12 and 13.

! Verses, as we look around this theme of not I but Christ, we want to live with the recognition, as James 1 tells us, that every good and perfect gift comes from God.
Every good thing in our life is due to His grace and to His kindness. And even as we look at our salvation and our sanctification, we want to be quick to give all the glory and the praise to the Lord.
So let's look again here at verses 12 and 13. And we'll spend just a few minutes reviewing last week as we add to it verse 13 this week. A few words that we are making note of in this brief passage.
The first is the word obedience. We are to be an obedient people. And we looked last week that there are two elements to our obedience in this passage that we see.
[1:52] One is that our obedience is to be consistent. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, we want our obedience to the Lord and to His Word to be a consistent thing.

Not that we just part-time obey the Word. Not just when it is convenient to obey the Word, but that we would always be obeying the Word.
And the second word we looked at under obedience, not only consistent, but our obedience is to be genuine. Genuine. Genuine. That it's not just something we do when someone is watching us, but the recognition that the Lord always sees.
And we want our life to be lived as an act of worship before Him. We want to genuinely obey the Lord. And we saw that as it says, So now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence.
As Paul says, You were obedient to the Lord when I was there. When I was watching. When I was teaching. When I could see you. When I was around you physically. You were obedient.
[3:02] And now that I'm removed from you physically, how good and sweet it is to hear that they continue to obey the Lord consistently. Not only when He was there physically, but even now in His absence.

And this really is the heart of genuine obedience. That we would choose to do the right thing as unto the Lord, no matter who is watching.
And so, as a student, our behavior should not really be impacted by whether the teacher is watching us or not. We want to do the right thing. As a worker, our work ethic should not really be impacted by our supervisor present or not present.
Because ultimately, we are working as unto the Lord. And the things that we say, and the things that we do, the way that we conduct ourselves, should not be dependent upon somebody watching over us.
Because the Lord ultimately, who sees all things, living for His pleasure, and the sake of His name, should be sufficient for us, for us to live a holy life as unto the Lord.
[4:12] And so, we want to live with obedience that is consistent, and obedience that is genuine.
The second word we looked at last week was the word effort.

So now, not only as in my presence, but much more my absence, work out your own salvation. We noted that we're not working for our salvation.
We're working it out. We're taking what God has given to us and working it out. Applying it. Living it. Taking what has been implanted to us by the grace of God, through the Spirit of God, and living it out.
Working it out in all aspects of our life. We're not giving effort in order to gain salvation. That would be impossible.

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What we are doing, though, is taking what God has graciously gifted to us and granted to us, and then taking the reality that He has given us a new nature, a new will, the ability to be able to obey Him and to honor Him.
[5:25] Hebrews says, without faith, it's impossible to please God. So we're not trying to work for something. That would be impossible. But we are striving to give our best effort in obedience with all the Lord has entrusted to us.

We're not just sitting back and doing nothing. We're using our time wisely. We're using our spiritual gifts wisely. We understand salvation is of the Lord.
I can't save anybody. You can't save anybody. Only God can do that. But, we have been called by the Lord to pray for the lost.
And we ought to do that. And we've been called by the Lord to share the gospel with all that we can. And we ought to do that. We give our best effort not in order that we would gain salvation, but as a response to what He has graciously gifted to us.
Which brings us today to a third term to write down and that's the word humility. Humility. As we are obedient, as we give our best effort to honor the Lord, we do so with humility.
[6:45] We see this at the end of verse 12. Work out your own salvation. Notice how we do that. With fear and trembling. With fear and trembling.

In context here, to speak of working out our salvation with fear is speaking of the kind of reverential awe that we are to have before the Lord.
Now this is extremely important for us to grasp. This is telling us that our obedience, which is what He's just spoke of, their obedience, even if He's not watching, even if He's not there, their act of obedience is to be done with fear, with awe, with worship, with respect, with an awareness, an awaitiness that we are doing all things before the sight of God.
Our obedience, even with fear and trembling, is a recognition of the authority of God and of the supremacy of God in every part of our life.
We worship with fear and trembling. I think this certainly, when we speak of obedience, this is true in all parts of our life.
[8:13] It includes the most routine, mundane tasks of your life that you would do at your home or at school or that you would do in the office.

do all things as an act of worship unto the Lord. It certainly includes what we would do as a church when we gather together that our worship, while it is joyful and our worship, while it is to be celebrating the victory we have from Christ on the cross, what He's given to us through His resurrection, there is also a sense of fear and trembling that ought to be a part of our worship.
And our culture doesn't do very well with this. There's not much sense of fear and trembling that exists anymore.
We've got to remind ourselves that it's true, Christ is the friend that is closer than a brother. It's true that Christ in grace has called us His friends.
It's true that the Heavenly Father is our personal Father. That's all extremely important to realize.
And yet, and yet our God reigns and rules and is the King of kings and Lord of lords.
[9:35] There is to be a sense of joy in His presence. There is to be a sense of celebration in His presence. There is to be a sense of freedom in His presence.

And there is to be a sense of fear and trembling in His presence. And I'm really not too afraid of emphasizing this part of it too much because if there is something in our culture that has just almost been entirely lost, it's the aspect of the fear of the Lord among His people.
We are to be obedient but we worship humbly. This isn't the fear of being doomed as believers, as those who have been set free from our sin.
Romans 8 says, we are now more than conquerors through Him who loved us. And so, this isn't the kind of fear of eternal torment. This is about a complete respect and humility before our God.
This is not a fear and trembling that drives us from God. This is a fear and trembling that drives us to God. If you are robbing a store late at night, and you turn around and you see that there are police officers who have been alerted to what you're doing and they are now on your heels pursuing you, that fear and trembling rushes into you and the presence of that police officer makes you want to flee away because of the fear of wrath and punishment and judgment that you rightly would deserve.

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[11:28] The presence of the authority in that sense causes you to try to run away. That's what thieves do. They run away. That's not the fear and trembling we're talking about here.

This is the fear and trembling of saying the nearness of God is my good. The presence of God is the greatest blessing in my life and yet He is so holy and so perfect and so pure as Isaiah said I am undone.
There is nothing in myself that is good and all of my praise and all of my worship goes to the Lord and it is the grace of God that causes us to respond in worship with fear and trembling not a fear to drive us away but the kind of fear and trembling that we run toward the Lord in worship and in praise.
Proverbs 1.7 says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's not it's not a coincidence that we live in a day where so many people are highly religious and yet live without much wisdom at all because in their lives and in our worship so many times in this culture there is no sense of fear or trembling but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
I see clips on a weekly basis of churches and worship services where there's not any consideration at all of the holiness of God of the greatness of God of the supremacy of God and you know that and can see that because all the things that are taking place are all appealing to the lowest most earthly parts of us.
[13:44] It's not to say that our worship should be boring. God forbid we would be bored or find dull the worship of the King of Kings. But in your congregational life and in your personal life and in your family life as we worship that is to be done with humility with fear and trembling.

Isaiah 66 verse 2 to this is the one to whom I will look he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.
This reminds us the Lord is near to His people. All of this is for our good but when we recognize who God is when we see His word and we understand His word is our authority it is our standard it is our hope it is our salvation it makes us humble and contrite in spirit and the result of that is we tremble at His word.
Our response of worship is to be done in humility. It's out of love it's out of reverence we tremble before the Lord not the trembling of someone who has been caught and is guilty to be judged the kind of trembling of someone who has been set free and rescued and loved and are aware that every good thing we have has come to us from the Lord.
This is the trembling that comes not out of anxiety this is the trembling that comes out of awe out of worship. And maybe just a quick word to those of us who teach the Bible to our pastors here to our Sunday school teachers here to those of you who teach in Awana to those of you who teach through small group Bible studies for any of us who handle the word.
[15:51] Remember what it was like the first time you taught in front of somebody? Those of you who have stood in front of a class to teach those of you who have stood in front of a congregation of any size to preach remember what it was like the first time you did that?

And you were preparing that week and you were shaking at the thought of what you were doing you were excited nervous prayerful desperate thrilled and I assure you trembling.
I remember it so well for me I remember those early days of preaching and I was so excited loved the study loved what I was getting to do but my leg sometimes could hardly get me up the stairs as I thought to myself this is a weighty task.
It doesn't matter if you're preaching in front of thousands it doesn't matter if you're teaching a class of dozens it doesn't matter if you are just opening the word and teaching it to your family around your living room there is a sense of joy and a sense of wonder and a sense of trembling that comes when we speak for the Lord my mind always goes back I've said this before mine always goes back every year I get a chance to go up with our children in Awana and do some Q&A with them and I'll never forget years ago one of the little kids in Awana said to me said pastor does it bother you to know that some people when you're preaching aren't listening does that bother you and the honest answer I gave was what bothers me far more what concerns me far more is that there are people who are listening and will believe what I say that's far more sobering to me because when you open a
Bible and you say this is what God has said you are taking on such a weighty task we dare not do that without fear and trembling you can't tremble and strut at the same time which is why it bothers me so much when I watch pastors in front of their congregations that are clearly so full of themselves and it just shows there's just no sense of trembling before the Lord that's true not just

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for men in this work that's true for every one of us who are handling the word now here's the thing about it you really can't let yourself off the hook because you're not a pastor or because you're not a Sunday school teacher because every single one of us whether we are teaching a class or teaching our children or encouraging our spouse or sharing with our friends what we've learned all of us ought to in some way be a part of passing down and passing on the word of
[19:28] God we dare not do that without a sense of fear and trembling joy yes freedom absolutely celebration of what Christ has done for sure but with fear and trembling because sometimes you're doing that family devotion it's we talked about this the parenting conference all weekend in different ways it can be frustrating sometimes you're trying to teach your kids and you feel like they're not listening that's true but I'll tell you what else ought to cause you to tremble is that you are teaching your kids and there are things they will listen to and they will believe and they will remember and what they believe about God they learned from you with fear and trembling we work out our salvation there's a fourth word I want you to write down it's the word promise we are obedient we give our effort before the

Lord we do so with humility but here's the promise in verse 13 for it is God who works in you this is kind of the paradox of the Christian life that we are to work out our salvation we're to obey and apply it and yet it is God who works in us I think the best and simplest way to understand this is that we are to work out what God has worked in us we have here a promise and a statement of power to fulfill that promise it is God who works in you in the New Testament Jesus says to the man who was paralyzed rise take up your mat and walk now what does the man do he gets up he obeys and he walks he gives his honest effort but could he do that apart from the power of
Christ no chance he was Christ working in him and yet when Christ told him to rise and walk he did not stay lying down he was obedient Lazarus in the tomb a dead man he cannot rise himself he cannot walk himself because physically he's dead and the Lord Jesus says Lazarus come forth he can't do that without the power of Christ working in him and yet at that command what did Lazarus do he came forth he didn't stay in the tomb this is the Christian life we are to obey we are to give our effort we are to worship humbly And yet we do so under the confines of the promise that it is God who works in you the word work here it's where we get our
English word for energy or to energize you can look at it this way it is God who gives you the spiritual energy to obey him God works in us individually and calls us to obey him collectively and so in verse 12 where you see the language for you you have always obeyed work out your own salvation it's in the singular in verse 13 it is God who works in you it's in the plural I don't think that's real complicated to understand that God is working in you individually and as a church he's working in us he's working collectively in us and that your obedience to his command absolutely influences all of us
God is working in you individual for the good and the benefit of you as a church God is working in you as the teacher for the benefit of you the class God is working in you the church member for the good and the blessing and the strengthening of you the congregation there is inextricably linked here this connection between your life as an individual Christian and the influence it plays on our life as a church family if you individually don't obey the Lord our church will not be an obedient people if you individually honor the Lord and worship the
[24:48] Lord we as a church family will be greatly strengthened by it so many times people think to themselves they want to be a part of a friendly church but they themselves aren't friendly they want to be a part of a praying church but they themselves aren't prayerful they want to be a part of an evangelistic church but they themselves don't share the gospel the only way for our church collectively to be anything is that we individually would be doing what the Lord called us to do if you want to be a part of a church that is spiritually strong you've got to see to it that asks for you and your house you're following the Lord and then you join your life and join your family with all these other people imperfect though we are who are laboring by God's grace to do what he's called us to do so if we've got 1200 and none of us are reading the

Bible and none of us are honoring the Lord and none of us are seeking to do what he's called us to do and then we gather in this place for worship throughout the day and we say I really hope our worship is pleasing to God it won't be so many times who we are collectively is just the combination of who we are individually before the Lord our obedience and disobedience influences and impacts all of us around us but it starts with us individually but never cut off from us corporately so we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you he's working in you as

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individual he's working in us as a congregation and just as a tie in back to our parenting conference from this weekend this is to me one of the great promises and comforts for parents and for children Paul has just mentioned in verse 12 that even when he's not physically present that the church is being obedient verse 13 here's why it is God who works in you when Paul is physically away from them the Lord is still with them and just to by way of application for those of us who spent this weekend at the parenting conference be encouraged by this one of the hard things about your kids getting older as they start to spend more time away from you than with you but be encouraged when you're not physically with them the Lord is still there when you drop your kid off to college and you leave if they're a believer the Holy Spirit resides within them God's presence is everywhere on that campus and though you may not be there he is!
them when your son or daughter gets married and moves out of state and you think to yourself I'm not going to be able to see them as much and encourage them face to face and see how they're doing eye to eye rest assured that wherever they go though you're absent the Lord is with them when you are at a new elementary school and you're in the third grade and you don't know anybody the Lord's presence is there though you may be somewhere your mom and dad cannot be you'll never be anywhere the Lord is not already there though I am absent he says our God is at work this is the promise for us it is God who works in you he is always working in his people and then fifthly write down the word submission we're obedient we give our best effort by his spirit we worship humbly!
We live according to his promise and then fifthly we live in submission it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure what are we to submit to his will and his work we submit to the will of God and we submit our lives to do the work he has called us to do God's grace it does change our actions but here's the way God's grace changes our actions by changing your will this is the marvelous part about about our salvation that we are a new creation in Christ that he has given us a new heart a new will new desires one of the great evidences that you truly are in the Lord that you truly have been saved is that you now will to do what before you did not will to do why is that because he has given you a new will new loves new passions your will is changed and because your will is changed your actions are changed things that you love to do today are things that you used to not enjoy and things that today break your heart or things you used to delight in [31:03] God is at work in us to will and to work he's willing in us to give us a new will that we would obey and respond with worship to him God moves our will in these two ways one he moves us to a discontentment with our sin and two he moves us to desire holiness one of the things you ought to take comfort in is when you feel convicted over your sin not not convicted that you got caught and got a punishment everybody would be bothered by that convicted that knowing only God was watching and if only God knows that your heart is broken over your sin he changes our will by giving us conviction through the spirit and not only that but the other side of that same coin is we now desire personal holiness we now desire to do what is right not because it has to be rewarded in an earthly sense but because the pleasure of

God is enough for us it's enough for us if somebody were to say to you did you have to come to church this morning to make it to heaven did you have to be here today if you would not have come today would that have cut you out of heaven and you say no and they say to you well why in the world did you go then if you could have got by with sleeping in why didn't you and the answer I hope is because you have a new will a new desire you want to be here should you be here yes are we called to be here yes is an act of obedience to be here yes but it when I was younger I didn't want to go or before I was converted I only went because my wife made me go or my husband dragged me there or whatever it may be but now by
God's grace you've been converted you've been made spiritually alive and you now love to do what before you couldn't stand to do and today your heart breaks over things that you used to laugh about that's the evidence of God at work it is God who works in you to will and to work to will and to work make note of 1 Corinthians 5 10 I'm sorry 1 Corinthians 15 10 but by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace toward me was not 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 Paul says
I was working as hard as I possibly could I was laboring I was working I was pressing on I was doing the very best that I could and yet he says he understands that it wasn't himself who was doing the work it was the grace of God at work in him it's been said that God shapes our hearts and empowers our hands and then we go work and we serve the responsibility is ours to be obedient

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the power for spiritual growth and fruit is God's we rest in his work it's a bit of a interesting life isn't it you're teaching Sunday school you study you read you pray you consult resources that are helpful maybe listen to other godly teachers teaching the passage you're going to teach that
Sunday you take your notes and you work them and you edit them and you labor over them and you strive to say how can I present this in a clear way in a compelling way in a way that people will understand and you work and you pray and you labor and you edit and you work and you pray and then you go to teach your class or to preach your sermon and you give everything you've got and just empty the tank for your children for your teenagers for the adults for the congregation you give everything you've got and then you walk off from the pulpit or you walk out of the classroom and if someone were to ask you do you think you accomplished the task your best and right answer would be it's all up to God to which somebody says then why did you study and why did you pray and why did you stay up late to work on this if it's all up to God why don't you just get up there and wing it and the answer is because
[36:57] God gave me a will and a desire to do his work for his glory in a way that honors him and I cannot fully explain or articulate how all those things work together here's what I do know there is nothing good ever happening from my teaching ministry apart from the Holy Spirit doing the work and yet every week as best I can imperfect though it may be I'm going to labor and give you every ounce of life and energy I've got if the Lord gives me breath because there's nothing else I'd rather do to serve you in that way and the power does not rest in me or come from me it's all his and yet he has given me a desire to do his will and his work in a way that honors him and that's the power belongs to the Lord and yet your heart longs to do what he's called you to do

Oswald Sanders in the book spiritual leadership says spiritual ends are achieved by spiritual men who use spiritual methods the power to heal is God's but when your child is sick you pray with all your might the power to convert your spouse is God's but when someone you love is not a believer you pray with all your might it's your instinctive response how to get there because the Holy Spirit resides within you we expect and hope and trust and labor to make sure that our Sunday school teachers are working hard and well prepared and study well and are found faithful it's not an easy thing to be a good
Sunday school teacher we expect them to study hard and to teach! well but the power is God's not theirs! Tuesdays ladies night of theology I assure you I won't stand up there and wing it for two hours it takes weeks for me to get ready for that and when I walk out Tuesday night if any good comes from that it's because the Lord did something not me how's that work well we are to work out God has put in we work out verse 12 but verse 13 it is God who works in we work out he works in he works in we work out and all I can tell you is if you're not a true believer and you're just trying to do religious things all of that process is exhausting if you know the
Lord it is the greatest desire of your life and in closing all of this everything we've talked about these last two weeks is done according to verse 13 for his good pleasure pleasure for his good pleasure this is a great test for us because the truth is in verse 12 it says you ought to obey and you ought to obey even if nobody else is watching and you ought to work out apply your salvation and you ought to worship the Lord with fear and with trembling these are things you're really doing and at the end of it you say okay I've done this I obeyed I was faithful even if nobody else was watching I did the right thing I worship my heart was right my motive was right my actions were right my head was right my hands were right
I did everything I could who's going to get the glory for that and the! answer is God and the you're telling me I'm going to work as hard as I can be as faithful as I can as diligent as I can and somebody else gets the glory the unconverted person says I want no part of that here's a good test for your soul and your salvation if you're as faithful as you can be as obedient as you can be!
[41:56] and you come to the end of your life and the only thing people say about you is that you served a great and awesome God you good with that?

If they don't praise you if they don't make much of you if they look at your life and your work and your ministry and your service and your sacrifice and the only conclusion they come to is this person served a great God are you good with that?
All God's people to that would say may it be but those who are unconverted! just playing the role of a pretend Christian they want no part of that don't you know how hard I worked don't you know how much sacrifice I gave don't you know how many late nights I put into this you're telling me that God gets all the glory and I don't get some of the glory that should tell your heart something too only a

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true believer would fight with every ounce of energy they have to serve and obey only at the end to see that all the glory goes to
God if that's you you ought to be encouraged that's God working in you to will and to work for his good pleasure it works both ways here his will and his work is for his good pleasure and he gives you a will that longs to work for his good pleasure which tells us that when your heart's desires are aligned with what God loves that's the result of the work of the Holy Spirit with grace in your life and when you understand the amazing grace of God you will with fear and trembling say all the glory goes to him we're not that far away from school being out in a month we're going to be on the other side of spring break and you're going to take a deep breath and it's going to be summer and when summer hits here comes
VBS and for our youth here comes church camp and then here comes kids camp and then here comes middle school falls creek and then here comes high school falls creek and here come mission trips and trust me when I tell you none of those things are happening without all kinds of work so much preparation if you think VBS happens because someone wrote a bed and said let's do VBS this week come join the team you'll see how much work it takes far more than I know they don't let me be a part of that camps retreats mission trips the amount of work it takes to organize and get transportation and get beds and get sponsors and do background checks and prepare lessons it takes so much work really working at it truly working this is real effort it's not fake effort it's not pretend effort it's real effort and not one hour of our work would accomplish anything if not for the grace of God and at the end of that camp in the end of that
[46:51] VBS in the end of that mission trip when people are saved and lives are changed and faith is deepened nobody will look around and say look what we've done no one our only response will be how great is our God and the fact that you love to labor and to work and to prepare and to study and to pray knowing that it's God who's doing the actual energizing and work and it's God alone in the end who's going to be glorified for this the fact that that resonates with you and you say that's all I want to do with my life is evidence that his spirit has worked in you and given you a will to go work out what he has placed in you this is why your attempt at salvation by works is so futile you can't do it you must be born again you must be brought from death to life but when that happens his will becomes your will his work becomes your work and his glory your greatest delight if that's you be encouraged that only

God could do that in your soul and if that's not you even this day call upon the name of the Lord who in grace still saves sinners not because of what they've done but because of what Christ has done Lord we thank you today for your word and pray that it would resonate in our hearts we pray that it would give us a renewed passion and desire to walk and to live in obedience to your will and to your work in Christ's name Amen Amen

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