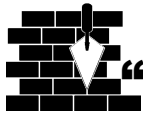


## AN ANCIENT-MODERN PROBLEM - “Even The Demons Believe...”

**“Building Blocks”**

1. **(Intro Scriptures)** The four “if’s” of Philippians 2:1 are all a Greek word that could be translated “*assuming the following to be true...*” In other words, Paul is assuming that the things he is talking about are in fact realities. He’s really *not* talking about them as possibilities. This makes his request in verse 2 very reasonable. This is an excellent illustration of the truth of this chapter of “To Love,” namely that genuine faith *always* expresses itself outwardly towards others.
2. **(Intro Scriptures)** The word translated “grasped” in Phil. 2:6 has the meaning of “*holding onto*” not “*reaching for.*” In other words, Jesus didn’t *cling to* his prerogatives as God. This verse is *not* teaching that He gave-up trying to *be* God. He already was! He simply “let go” of His right to act as God and submitted Himself to the Father.
3. **(Intro Scriptures)** An important key to understanding James’ statements about faith and works is his use of “you see...” His point is that true “saving” faith is rarely (never?) invisible; it always manifests itself in the life of the one professing it. This is an important idea in our day when many people feel content to say that “faith is a private matter.”
4. **(Intro Scriptures)** The Incarnation itself (i.e. God becoming a man) was the greatest humiliation Jesus faced. Much more-so than even the crucifixion. Think about it!
5. **(Q3)** This question is *vital* to the chapter; don’t hurry past it. The rest of this book (and the other two) is built upon seeing *both* of these as instantaneous and “finished” (i.e. certain). There are no “degrees” or “stages” of justification. It is a declaration about me made by God. It is *not* a process. That’s the whole point of Paul’s arguments in Rom. 8:1, 31, 33-34. Glorification, according to Paul is also “finished” (guaranteed to all who are justified; cf. Rom. 8:30) and instantaneous (1 Cor. 15:50-52).
6. **(Q4)** Gently correct anyone who talks about “being saved” when they are referring to their conversion (i.e. their justification). Ask them to start using the word “justified” if they are talking about the *beginning* of their Christian life. Your goal is to help them slowly begin to see “saved” applying equally to *all three* periods spoken of in this question.
7. **(Q5)** It is typical for Christians to think of being “saved” as limited to justification, and glorification a sort of “bonus” for having faith—a reward at the end. The “in between time” typically is *never* thought of in terms of salvation.
8. **(Q10)** The word “work” appears 3x in Phil. 2:12-13. But it is *not* the same word. In vs. 12 the Greek carries with it the idea of “producing” and has a history related to business. “Make salvation your business; let it produce...” But the word used 2x in vs. 13 focuses on the effort or power that is put forth either *by* someone or *for* someone. And, in both cases here it has the force of this being an on-going, continuous “working.”

The phrase, “*to will*” is a very strong word meaning “decisions that produce action.” The idea here is a progressive change in me that manifests itself in new behaviors stemming from new convictions.

**“Stumbling Stones”**

1. **(Overall)** Because of the influence of legalism in the Church, some will see this chapter through the lens of “works” or mere behavioral changes. If that idea comes up, gently inform them that

our sanctification is *not* primarily about “cleaning up our act.” And, that the next chapter will bring this all into focus. Then, move on.

2. **(Intro Scriptures)** It is important to understand that James’ readers were persecuted *Jewish* Christians who had been living as a people under the burden of the Law for centuries. The doctrine of justification by grace through faith seemed like a great excuse for tossing “works” (i.e. growth in godliness; sanctification) out the window. James writes to correct this. He says works have *everything* to do with our salvation. But, with our *sanctification*, not our justification. Be careful about when and how you say this, but in a very real sense, we are justified *by* faith and sanctified *through* works.



## “Going Deeper”

1. **(Q1a)** A quick “survey” of answers might be fruitful, to ensure that they’ve seen all that is their in justification. Have 2-3 share their answers. Look for:
  - I am righteous
  - I am redeemed
  - I am alive
  - I am forgiven
  - I am free from condemnation (I once wasn’t!)
  - I am justified freely by grace
  - I am at peace with God
2. **(Q6)** How many of your responses to this question had to do with:
  - getting rid of “bad” behaviors, or
  - doing more things related to church?
3. **(Q7)** Why does sanctification *have* to be a life-long process? (**Note:** Otherwise the inevitable conclusion is that I’ve “arrived” sometime prior to death!)
4. **(Q8-1 Cor 3)** What are the factors needed to build a building *other than materials*? (**Note:** time, and a very clear picture of what the building will look like when it’s finished.)  
Do you think God is concerned about completion or progress, in this “construction” metaphor?
5. **(Q8-1 Cor 9)** Does Paul see himself as a “runner” or as an “athlete”? What’s the difference? Does it matter?  
What are the qualities implied in Paul’s use of this “runner-race” metaphor? (**Note:** focus, discipline, self-control, perseverance, pain, endurance, a clear idea of the “course” [*“I don’t run aimlessly...”*]).
6. **(Q10c)** How is God’s “working in us” in our sanctification *different* from Him healing blindness or leprosy? (**Note:** Healing did not depend on the *will* of the one being healed. The transformation Paul is talking about here involves our wills. We have to cooperate with God and put forth effort, or it won’t happen, even though *God* is the one working.)
7. **(Q11)** It would probably be good to have 2-3 share what they have for this question.
8. **(Q15)** What affect would a clear understanding of the place of sanctification in the life of believers have on what we think and do in regard to “fellowship”?  
How could be implement some of these ideas (based on answers to the above question) into this Bible study?
9. **(Q15)** Which activities, relationships or personal goals in your life are moving you *forward* in your sanctification?  
Which ones are moving you *backwards*?  
How important is the sanctification of your closest friends to you?