**Growth Group Bible Study**

Shining Like Stars: Living with Joy in a Dark World - Series

*Shining Like Stars*

May 16, 2021

**Reading** Philippians 2:12-18

**Opening Questions**

1. When we work out physically, we see improvements in our health … we lose weight, we strengthen our heart and muscles, we develop physical endurance and generally feel better about ourselves. When it comes to our spiritual life, how do we “work out”?

2. What are the benefits of working out spiritually? Do you feel spiritually fit? Why or why not?

**Study**

1. vs12 - How is the obedience of the Philippians in Paul’s absence a greater testimony to the reality of Christ in them? How does our level of obedience to God and His word demonstrate our level of trust in Him?

2. What does it mean to “work out your salvation” in verse 12?

 a. Is salvation dependent upon your works? Why or why not? Ephesians 2:8-9

 b. Read James 2:14-22 – What is the proper view of grace and works? How are we saved? What are we saved for?

 c. Do our “works” save us or are they evidence of our faith?

3. Explain: Christians “work out” their salvation vs12 and Christ “works in” our salvation vs13.

4. Explain the difference between the idea of “work out your salvation” and “work for your salvation.”

 a. How does “your working” and “God’s working” relate?

 b. What would you say to a person who suggests that we are saved “by our good works”?

 c. What would you say to a person who suggests that we are saved by grace and therefore don’t need to change how we live (i.e., we can live any way we want regardless of God’s standard)?

5. Explain what Paul means when he says to work out your salvation with “fear and trembling.”

 a. Do Christians fear God today?

 b. How can we live our lives with a healthy respect for God? What can be done to produce genuine reverence for God in our lives?

6. When we choose to follow God and live out the mission of Christ in our world, who really provides the power that enables us to do that work?

7. There are two dangers related to this passage. The first is to try to act without God’s empowerment, and the second is to not act at all. Describe the drawbacks of each.

8. Challenge: What are you currently doing to “work out your salvation”? Describe a way that you will choose to act this week, knowing that God will empower you to accomplish that work.

9. What instructions did Paul give in relation to everyday Christian living? (2:14-16)

10. Why were the Philippians not shining “like lights” in their world? (2:14-16)

11. Paul told the believers in Philippi to shine as light in a crooked and depraved generation. How is our world now like the world the Philippian believers lived in?

12. How do we shine as lights in this world today? Since COVID, do you think that people are uneasy and scared about the world they are living in right now? Do you see an opportunity for the church to address some of those concerns? How can UBC be that “shining light”?

13. How does shining for Christ encourage others to be drawn to Him?

14. How did Paul view the faith of the Philippian believers? (2:17)