

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG166 – Work Out Your Salvation

Thank you for joining me today on this podcast. I know that we are heading into a new spiritual year. As this podcast is being posted, we are just leaving the Feast of Tabernacles, which, of course, signals to us a new spiritual year. We should prepare our hearts to walk in the things that we believe are to come, and we should believe to create by our faith and determination the upcoming spiritual year we are moving into. So what is our attitude, and how will we live, as we begin to go into this time? One thing I want to do is I want to refuse to allow my past to frame my future.

I had an experience yesterday which was, for me, a real meeting with the Lord. It was born out of just almost an anger in my spirit that I am refusing to go forward from this time, from this day, and not have a different relationship with the Word of God. It is not going to be acceptable to me that the Word go unfulfilled, and that what it says not really frame my reality and frame my day, as well as my future. So that is my determination, and I want to have this podcast be sort of a pronouncement or a heralding of a drive that I am determined to walk in in these months to come, and in the rest of my life.

I do not want to have faith in my conditioning that is born out of my past. I think we get far too passive in the way that we allow ourselves to read certain Scriptures and sort of take them with a grain of salt, or feeling like, "Well, it's fine that we are not really having an explosive fulfillment of those Words in our lives." You know, these are the Word of God, and they are given to us in order to determine our relationship with Him and how we are walking with Him. For instance, there is a Scripture that says, "If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creature. Behold, old things have passed away, and new things have come." I just think we read that too passively, to make it like it is some type of an affirmation, or it is something that we just quote through our day, but there is not this demand in our being that says the old things have passed away. All of the old has passed away in the blood of Christ, through the cross of Christ. There is an elimination of all that was in our life before, and there is something new now that is being imparted to us.

I think it has to be a two-fold reaction. One is that the old must go. We cannot build on the old. We do not build our life of faith on our old life. We do not build on our unbelief in God, on our unbelief in Christ. We remove that. We literally have to bulldoze it off, and see as though the cross does that for us. It removes the old; completely, thoroughly gets rid of the old. So why then do I allow anything of the old to continue on in my mind, in my heart? I should be aggressively making sure that that Word is working in my life, and that the old things have passed away. Paul was very bold about saying that we do not know anyone any longer after the flesh; even though Christ came in the flesh, we do not know Him that way or relate to Him that way any longer. We relate to the new thing of His resurrection, and His life, and the fulfillment of what He did on the cross. So that means that we reach in to the new Christ that has come out of the grave, and out of the old life of the flesh, and into a new life of Spirit.

So we too, about ourselves, do we still know ourselves after the flesh? I think we do. I think we know ourselves and other people, and we allow that to go on, and we have our own excuses of why it can go on. And usually, those excuses are born out of our past history of either relating to ourself, or the world

around us, or the people around us. But whatever it is, what we have to see is we have developed a faith in the Word not working and manifesting in its complete power in our life; and I do not want that. That is unacceptable to me any longer in my life, that I have a faith in the Word not working. Whatever excuses I may use for that, I refuse to allow that any longer to exist within me.

You might look at it like “casting it out.” Christ cast out the demons. Well, I think some of these things of our old way of thinking and relating literally need to be cast out of us until they are gone, and we are relieved of them, and they are never to return again; because we need to be focused on the new. We are a new creation. “We are a new creature,” it says, and “we are to be born again” – I feel like there is yet much for us to obtain in that concept. So I want to read just a couple of Scriptures and emphasize this thinking to us.

In Philippians 2, starting at verses 5-11, Paul says,

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God.

We are in that category. Because of what He has done, God has highly exalted Him, due to His obedience and Him becoming our salvation, and Him following the Word of God to go to the cross. Then it says, “Every knee will bow.” I think our knee needs to bow. I think our mind needs to bow to Him. Our tongue needs to confess that He is the Lord, and that His Word is the sovereign truth in our lives.

Verses 12-13 go on to say, “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” Now, I am reading this because I feel like too often, we as Christian believers have this sense that, “Well, I believe in Christ. I have a salvation experience. I have voiced the sinner’s prayer. I have confessed Him as my Lord.” But that is not the complete picture. I do not think we can just say that is the end of what salvation is all about, any more than we can look at a newborn baby and say that baby has now attained all in human life that that baby is going to obtain, because he is born. Well, we may be born again in a salvation experience; but I yet think there is a born-again experience through the Spirit, that Christ talked about, in order to see the Kingdom. So, yes, we are born the same as a babe is born into life; we are just newly born into something of salvation.

That is why Paul is saying, “Look, work out your salvation now.” You were born into something that takes a lot of work on your part. It takes fear and trembling. It takes going after it. God is near those who tremble at His Word – I think there needs to be that trembling in our heart at the Word of God, that we must see it fulfilled, we must allow it to have the power in our lives to fulfill itself. It says, “God is at work in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” So if our salvation is a completed thing, if it is all done from the moment we confess Him as our Savior, then this Scripture does not apply; but Paul is saying it because there is something more. The very name of this podcast is *Growing in God*, because I believe there is yet much to be attained and worked out in our salvation experience, in our relationship

with God. I believe God is in us, working both to will and to work. He is working on your will. When it came down to Christ becoming our Savior, it was an act of will at that last moment in the Garden of Gethsemane that said, "Not My will, but Your will be done." And I want the determination in me, the drive in me, that says, "Your will be done." I am not going to excuse or come up with some reason why this won't work, or that won't work, of what Your Word said is to transpire in my life or in the world around me. I want to be as Christ was, "Not my will, but Your will be done." And that was done with an intensity. It says that He was sweating blood – talk about an intense emotion that was going on there! This was not some light thing. And I think that we need this same depth of emotion in our determination about our salvation, that we are to work out this salvation.

There is yet much land to be possessed in our salvation experience, and we should be working that out with Him. He is within us, working with us. But there has to be something in us, I think, that is of a greater sense of urgency, a greater sense of determination. When we read things in the Word of God, when we look at what the Scripture says is to happen for us, when we look at what is to be ours through faith in Christ, I think there is yet much that we have not laid hold of. And yes, in our minds, we have reasons for that. Many times, those reasons reach back into our history. You say, "Well, I have been a Christian for fifty years, and I have not seen it happen yet. So, it's fine not happening today." No, it is not fine. We have to see that the past is done away with, and that we press in to what we have in our future.

In Philippians the third chapter, there are some verses that I really want to read pertaining to all of this. I will start in verse 7. It says, "Whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ." I think there has to be that in us, too. As we start a new year following this tremendous Feast of Tabernacles, we have to say, "Whatever things were gain to me, those things I count as loss." Again, "the old things pass away, behold, new things have come"; and it has to be that way for us. We cannot walk on a basis of feeling like, "Oh, we already have it. Oh, we have already obtained it. Oh, we know what it is supposed to be like." No, the old things have passed away. We have no idea. He is a God that says, "I will do exceeding, abundantly above all you could ask or think." All we could ask or think – what is hindering us from "all we could ask or think"? Many times, it is what we have experienced through our past. Our past taints us in a way where we do not allow ourselves to think of even the possibilities of what God could do and be in our lives moving forward.

Verse 8 says, "More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ." Now we know Paul felt this way. The question is, can we? Can we really, in view of what lies ahead of us in our walk with God, can we count all things as loss in comparison to what awaits us today in our relationship with Him? Can we look at those things and say, "Whatever I have experienced, it is almost like rubbish in comparison. It is like false pearls in comparison to the real thing that God wants to bring to me today in a new day, on a new level of what He has for me today.

Verse 9 says, "[That I] may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith." There is still something that Paul was reaching for in a faith of putting on a righteousness, of putting on a salvation. That is where he is saying, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Be reaching, reaching, pushing, possessing what it is that God has for us through faith" – a righteousness we have yet to experience.

In verses 10-11, he says, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." He is reaching for something. And he goes on in verse 12 to say, "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on." We have to get the spirit that Paul had. This is working out your salvation with fear and trembling. Whatever we had of yesterday, whatever wonderful things we have attained to in God, we must say, "Not that I have already attained it. I have not yet attained to that which is available to me as a believer in God through the Word that He has spoken. He has provided all things pertaining to life and godliness, and I have yet to attain to those things." And therefore, "I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ."

I want every believer to feel this in their own heart. We are pressing on in order to lay hold of that for which also we were laid hold of by Christ. He laid hold of you. He brought you into that initial salvation experience for the purpose that He has for you. He laid hold of you with a reason, a purpose, a drive; and we should press likewise to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of us."

Verses 13-14, "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." There is yet a prize to be attained by us. We have not laid hold of it yet, and therefore, we must, as Paul, press on to lay hold of that goal. "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude." I love that wording: "as many as are perfect." We may have been perfect up to yesterday, but as of today, we must press on to something that is greater; a greater prize, a greater fulfillment, a greater revelation, a greater experience, a greater meeting with Him than we have ever known.

In the midst of all that Moses had, as he had stood in the Presence of God for forty days and nights, what does he do? He says, "I want to see You. I want to behold Your glory." Whatever it must have been like to have been dwelling in the Presence of God as he was, he was not satisfied, and he said, "Let me behold Your glory. I want to behold You." And I feel like, as we leave this time and this experience of Tabernacles, as we leave the past year, as we leave our past history in life in God, I am not saying it was bad. I am saying it was wonderful! But I also know that we must press on. I know we have not laid hold; like he said, "Not that I have already attained to it." We have not yet attained to the salvation experience and the fullness of it that is available in Christ, and that God has made available through the cross of Christ. We cannot allow what He suffered for to go unappropriated by us as believers. There is much more that can be received from His suffering, and we should press on to the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

I hope this stimulates your heart to reach in for something that we have not yet known, that we have not yet attained. He will do exceeding, abundantly above all we could ask or think. He says, "Behold, I will do a new thing. Do not be stuck in the past, where you cannot see it." He says, in those verses, "Will you be aware?" Will we be aware of the new thing that God has for us, that prize of the upward call in God through Christ? Or will we not be able to see it because we are so bound and conditioned and limited by the past that we have known? I do not care how great it was, I do not care how great of meetings with God we have had, they are yesterday; and our today and our tomorrow hold something yet greater than anything that we have known. We must lay hold of that for which God laid hold of us; and believe me, we have not achieved it yet. We have not attained it yet. And without this drive in our hearts and spirits, we will live a year of passivity and allow the opportunity of a window in heaven set

before us to pass by. Behold, He stands at the door and knocks. Will we open that door? Will we ourselves pass through the door of opportunity that we have in this moment and see a new history for ourselves and the body of Christ being created? Let's press on. Let's work out our salvation before God with fear and trembling, and with great faith – knowing that He who has promised is faithful, and it is right before us, and we can lay hold of it by faith. Bless this year, this life ahead of you. Let's walk in it with all of our hearts.

Amen.