

1 It was nice to be for a little bit over  
2 at the graduation party for  
3 Noah and and celebrating with Libby and  
4 her family as well. And  
5 I have to tell you, I did have one  
6 stunning experience while I was there.  
7 Yvette Duenas. I  
8 didn't ask permission to do this, I'm  
9 just going to do it. But you know, I mean  
10 Yvette, she's sort of a shy,  
11 unassuming person, servant-hearted. I  
12 mean she she makes dinner for our junior  
13 highers every week, or did, we're done  
14 now with Kids Club for a while. But for  
15 our Kids Club XL kids, she came and made  
16 dinner every week. She doesn't even have  
17 a kid in the program. But just a servant  
18 heart, I've always kind of thought she  
19 was kind of a shy person. That was  
20 before yesterday,  
21 when I witnessed her  
22 at the ping-pong table.  
23 Oh ohh my gosh, all of that shy,  
24 unassuming, you know, servant-hearted  
25 Gone.  
26 Kill her. And she has  
27 skills. So just a word to the  
28 church family here. If you want somebody  
29 to help you with the project, call  
30 Yvette. If you want somebody to play ping  
31 pong with, do not call her.  
32 Because she will show you what for. Ohh  
33 That was a great experience.  
34 Well done. Samuel, I think she's  
35 playing against Samuel, sorry.  
36 We're continuing our study through the  
37 book of Philippians. We're in chapter two  
38 and we've made it to to verse 12.  
39 Hear the word of God.  
40 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always  
41 obeyed, so now, not only as in  
42 my presence, but much more in my absence,  
43 work out your own salvation with  
44 fear and trembling. For  
45 it is God who works in you, both to  
46 will and to work for his  
47 good pleasure. Do all things without  
48 grumbling or disputing, that you may be  
49 blameless and innocent, children of God  
50 without blemish in the midst of a crooked  
51 and twisted generation, among whom you  
52 shine as lights in the world, holding  
53 fast to the word of life,  
54 so that in the day of Christ, I may be  
55 proud that I did not run in vain or labor  
56 in vain, Even if I am to be poured  
57 out as a drink offering upon the  
58 sacrificial offering of your faith, I  
59 am glad and rejoice with you all.  
60 Likewise, you also should be glad and  
61 rejoice with me. Let's pray.  
62 Lord God, once again, we thank you for  
63 your word that instructs us,  
64 that that provides water  
65 in the desert for us of  
66 knowledge and truth. that shows  
67 us the way to go, the way to  
68 find peace,  
69 fulfillment, joy. Lord,

70 help us to  
71 receive deeply what you give  
72 to us today through your word, and I pray  
73 this in your name and for your sake.  
74 Amen. Everybody is here in  
75 this world, working out  
76 something. Maybe working out  
77 a sense of insecurity, like that guy in  
78 that shiny new car cutting you off on the  
79 freeway and then peeling off onto the  
80 Virginia Street exit. Working out  
81 maybe a self-centered worldview,  
82 that co-worker who claims credit for all  
83 your work. Maybe working out a  
84 basic disappointment with life, like  
85 that foul-mouthed middle-aged first  
86 baseman on the other softball team.  
87 Maybe working out deep-seated fears.  
88 Another teenager caught shoplifting as  
89 she was desperately trying to impress her  
90 fickle friends. Maybe working  
91 out a census duty. A  
92 young man earning yet another degree at  
93 yet another university.  
94 Perhaps working out the implications of a  
95 tragic childhood. That man  
96 downtown asking you for a dollar.  
97 Perhaps working out a basic  
98 optimism about human ability and  
99 achievement. Someone losing  
100 control of their drinking, trying to mask  
101 their disappointment, and then losing  
102 control of their car.  
103 Everybody is here working  
104 out something. What are you and  
105 I working out these days?  
106 Verse 12, Therefore, my beloved, As you  
107 have always obeyed, so now, not only as  
108 in my presence, but much more in my  
109 absence, work out your  
110 own salvation with  
111 fear and trembling.  
112 Paul the Apostle calls the Philippians  
113 and us to work out  
114 our salvation. With his  
115 therefore at the beginning here, Paul  
116 appeals to the example of Christ and  
117 refers back to the beginning of his  
118 heartfelt exhortations. 27,  
119 Only let your manner of life be worthy of  
120 the gospel of Christ. Look at how  
121 Jesus obeyed his heavenly Father.  
122 Obey like Jesus, follow  
123 him. How do we hear the  
124 command to work out our  
125 salvation?  
126 Paul is writing to the whole church in  
127 Philippi, and this corporate  
128 context of his command suggests  
129 that this salvation work is  
130 church work. It is something we do,  
131 essentially, together.  
132 People are not called to work alone, and  
133 do not do it best by trying to work out  
134 their salvation by themselves.  
135 When we gather for worship,  
136 We are doing salvation work.  
137 When we meet for Bible study in classes  
138 in small groups, we are working out our

139 salvation. When they join the  
140 team week after week, year after year,  
141 for Kids Club and VBS, bringing  
142 God's love to his little ones, we are  
143 working out our salvation.  
144 When we send and support missionaries  
145 near and far, we are sharing in  
146 our salvation work.  
147 And importantly, this is not work  
148 as a prerequisite to salvation.  
149 The Philippian salvation and ours  
150 is already present as Paul's  
151 instructions are heard and followed.  
152 Their salvation work and ours is what I  
153 would call reality-based,  
154 rather than promise-based.  
155 It is like the kid who has been named the  
156 starting quarterback of his  
157 school's football team. He  
158 works hard because he is  
159 the quarterback. He wants to live up  
160 to the privilege he has been given. It  
161 is different for the employee whose  
162 boss says that if they do  
163 well, show initiative, work overtime,  
164 there will likely be a promotion and a  
165 raise in the future. This person  
166 works hard for what has been  
167 promised, but what is not yet theirs.  
168 How many times have people worked so  
169 hard, starting a new job, a new  
170 business, hoping to achieve promised  
171 rewards that never  
172 come? People in sports  
173 and business like to say, Hope  
174 is not a strategy. Have you ever heard  
175 that? Perhaps not. But  
176 hope is, I think, a  
177 vital part of hard work.  
178 There must be something we're hoping for.  
179 Maybe rewards, maybe just avoidance of  
180 suffering, something that motivates our  
181 efforts. In the case of our  
182 salvation work, we have real hope,  
183 and it has been guaranteed to us already  
184 through the already completed work of  
185 Jesus Christ our Lord.  
186 That's the gospel.  
187 So, we work not to earn our  
188 salvation, but to live up to  
189 the significance and security God  
190 has given us. We have been  
191 named his starting  
192 quarterback of his life in  
193 us. We also mustn't hear  
194 this command as God distancing himself  
195 from us, as though he were saying,  
196 Work out your own salvation. I don't  
197 know if God ever actually talks like  
198 that, you know, with that little raspy  
199 thing. For we are  
200 told, on the other side of the mysterious  
201 salvation work equation, that  
202 it is God who works in you,  
203 both to will and to work for his good  
204 pleasure. We work  
205 in response to God's work.  
206 We work in cooperation with  
207 our God. We work to show our

208 love to God, the God  
209 who has first loved us.  
210 It is significant that Paul begins this  
211 series of exhortations to the Philippian  
212 church by calling them his  
213 beloved. He establishes the  
214 reality of their love-based relationship  
215 before he starts suggesting and  
216 commanding healthy changes in their  
217 behavior. In this,  
218 he models God's ways with us.  
219 Obey or don't. God's  
220 love is with you. And  
221 that is a powerful motivator  
222 toward obedience. Then also,  
223 we want to resist the natural temptation  
224 to hear this work out your salvation  
225 as an oppressive command. There  
226 is nothing better for us to be  
227 working out. And remember,  
228 everybody is here working out something.  
229 It is a peculiar sickness in our overly  
230 materialistic culture that we think the  
231 only thing we ever have that is worth  
232 spending is money.  
233 Wrong. We have time, we have  
234 energy, we have talents,  
235 but a spending money analogy may help  
236 us at this point. We who are  
237 saved are called to be  
238 outrageous spenders.  
239 God has given us the gift of working out  
240 the realities and implications of our  
241 eternal salvation in Jesus Christ in our  
242 own unique and creative ways. We have a  
243 limitless supply, then, of hope and  
244 strength and forgiveness and grace and  
245 goodness to share. And God calls  
246 us to get out there and spend it.  
247 Working out our salvation,  
248 obeying God, means,  
249 first, participating in a  
250 life-spanning, spine-tingling  
251 spending spree.  
252 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always  
253 obeyed, so now, not only in my presence,  
254 but much more in my absence, work out  
255 your own salvation with fear and  
256 trembling. The media  
257 trucks are gathering outside your  
258 house. And here comes a police car to  
259 help control the crowds. You've just  
260 won the biggest lottery ever. And  
261 people are finding out about you.  
262 Now it's time to get out there and work  
263 out your newfound incredible wealth with  
264 fear and trembling. And fear and  
265 trembling doesn't mean you're afraid.  
266 Just that you've got to approach things  
267 with real seriousness and maybe some  
268 healthy gratitude shown in your sense of  
269 awe at how well things have gone for  
270 you. We've got God's eternal,  
271 abundant, life-giving grace.  
272 Let's get out there and share it. Let's  
273 spend it. Spend, spend,  
274 spend. And look,  
275 God's bank of grace is as full  
276 as when we started. It never runs out.

277 We're working out our salvation.  
278 Working out our salvation means  
279 planning and producing purposeful  
280 projects with Almighty God.  
281 For it is God who works in you, both to  
282 will and to work for his good pleasure.  
283 Our salvation work is vertically  
284 rather than horizontally oriented.  
285 What Paul is calling the Philippians to  
286 do is going to be done not essentially in  
287 Paul's presence, but before the  
288 eyes of God. When Paul is not there  
289 with them, God still is.  
290 Their working out of their salvation is  
291 not to please Paul, or to appear as  
292 faithful to Him, they are to  
293 be faithful to God.  
294 Much more in my absence, Paul says.  
295 Here's the bad news for us humans. We  
296 have a chance to fool other  
297 humans, to put on a good face and  
298 appear to be good and obedient. We  
299 have no chance to fool God.  
300 Amen?The good news, though,  
301 is better, much better.  
302 God himself not only sees every  
303 aspect of our work, he  
304 involves himself in it with us.  
305 Probably be good to just say a quick word  
306 about human free will versus God's  
307 sovereignty at this point. Something that  
308 this verse about working out  
309 our salvation for is God that's at work  
310 in us points to. Helps us to  
311 understand it's a mystery with  
312 boundaries. We don't  
313 earnSalvation. We  
314 work out the gift. It is  
315 God's work from start to finish,  
316 including, as it turns out, our  
317 actions. God was all around them and  
318 even in them, including even our  
319 own will. We make our  
320 choices in the sovereign presence and  
321 power of God. This is wonderfully  
322 good news for people like us, who are  
323 always finding ourselves being  
324 controllednaturally or  
325 supernaturally, by external  
326 forces. And at the same time,  
327 God's word tells us we are free to work,  
328 too. And our work counts.  
329 God's world is no purely deterministic  
330 or fatalistic realm. The  
331 reality of this deep mystery is that what  
332 we call human free will moves in  
333 partnership with the living and sovereign  
334 God. God is not distancing  
335 himself from us in this command, but  
336 coming alongside of us. Our  
337 proper response then is not laziness or  
338 fatalistic resignation, but  
339 joy and confidence  
340 and wise obedience. And  
341 our resources forOur work is simply  
342 everything we need to do  
343 everything we need to do.  
344 We've got the limitless redemptive power  
345 of God. Let's share it. Let's

346 spend it. Spend, spend, spend.  
347 And look, our bank of divine power  
348 for good is as full as when  
349 we started. It never runs out.  
350 We're working out our salvation,  
351 working out our salvation, means  
352 prohibiting improper personal performance  
353 patterns. Apparently it doesn't  
354 mean prohibiting use of  
355 alliteration.  
356 Prohibiting improper personal performance  
357 patterns. Paul says, Do all things  
358 without grumbling or disputing.  
359 Grumbling, the word here, Gogizmos, it's  
360 a great Greek word, don't you think?  
361 Gogizmos. We don't want any of that  
362 Gogizmos. It has to do  
363 with complaining, displeasure expressed  
364 in secret talk. Nobody would ever really  
365 do that, would they?  
366 Murmuring, whispering. Disputing,  
367 diogizmos, another good Greek  
368 word, means arguing, engaging in futile  
369 speculations that lead to arguments.  
370 Don't do those, Paul says. You don't need  
371 to do those. When you do those, you're  
372 you're losing sight of the of the big  
373 perspective. You're going to heaven. I  
374 always like to use this analogy. My  
375 brother, I had a brother and sister, I  
376 was the oldest, so of course I you know  
377 knew everything, they didn't know  
378 anything. And they just  
379 were you know naggy all the time. But we  
380 we used to have fights all the time, we  
381 didn't get along all the time perfectly  
382 well. You know But I do  
383 remember when my folks  
384 Stuck us in the car, which is where we  
385 used to fight all the time in the back  
386 seat. Who has to sit in the middle? Oh,  
387 man. Usually it was me, because Mom would  
388 say, Jay, you're the oldest.  
389 We'd fight about everything. You know,  
390 keep on your side, nudging each other.  
391 But when my parents put us in the car  
392 and told us we were on our way to  
393 Disneyland, it was different.  
394 No, by all means, I'll sit in the  
395 middle so that you two can enjoy the  
396 windows. Oh, you want to lean on me?  
397 No problem, you can just lay in my  
398 lap if you want. I mean, it was a  
399 whole different world, at least for a  
400 little while. When we were going to  
401 Disneyland. Listen, friends,  
402 where we're going, way  
403 better. Way  
404 better. We don't need to go gizmos and  
405 deal-o gizmos. It's silly when we  
406 consider where we're heading. We've  
407 got wisdom and self-discipline. Let's  
408 share them. Let's spend them. Spend,  
409 spend, spend. And look, our bank of  
410 wisdom and self-discipline is fuller than  
411 when we started. It never runs out.  
412 We're working out our salvation.  
413 Then working out our salvation means  
414 promoting peerless purity. Do

415 all things without grumbling or  
416 disputing, that you may be blameless and  
417 innocent, children of God, without  
418 blemish, in the midst of a crooked and  
419 twisted generation, among whom you shine  
420 as lights in the world. Any of you,  
421 besides me, subject to that age-old  
422 malady of thinking that your times are  
423 the worst ever?I mean, people have never  
424 been as bad as they are now, right?I  
425 think I think oftentimes in church we we  
426 like to say stuff like that, you've heard  
427 me say things like that, hopefully not  
428 that we're worse. We're kind of the same.  
429 It was like that 2,000 years ago. The  
430 world that Paul and the fledgling  
431 churches like Philippi were starting  
432 up in was a world where people did bad  
433 things. People turned away from God.  
434 People were quite inhuman to one another,  
435 et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Key  
436 words in this section here  
437 are all words in Greek. You stick an a  
438 in front of a word in Greek, and that  
439 makes it not. AhYou know,  
440 like an you know  
441 agnostic, an atheist  
442 is a non-theist. Ah, theos  
443 means God, ah, non, non, you get the  
444 idea. And there's a whole lot of words  
445 that we use that are like that. You put  
446 an A in front of it, it means not. And  
447 so, blameless, a memptos,  
448 not to blame above accusation.  
449 Innocent, a keraios,  
450 not to mix. It has to do with  
451 being pure, unmixed, like undiluted wine  
452 or an unalloyed metal. External  
453 appearance corresponds to inner reality.  
454 Without blemish, ah moment,  
455 not blemished. It's an adjective that was  
456 used in the Old Testament Greek  
457 translations to describe the spotless,  
458 perfect, faultless animals to be used for  
459 sacrifices. Without blemish.  
460 The church now has the privilege of  
461 taking the place of blemished Israelas  
462 God's children made spotless, not  
463 by their own work, but by the once and  
464 for all sacrifice of Jesus, the true lamb  
465 of God. The church now has the high  
466 calling to live into that reality,  
467 gracefully given to us, working  
468 out our salvation, and we  
469 are the real stars in the world  
470 today. We've got love and goodness,  
471 let's share them, let's spend them,  
472 spend, spend, spend. And look,  
473 our bank of love and goodness is fuller  
474 than when we started. It never runs out.  
475 We're working out our salvation.  
476 Working out our salvation means affirming  
477 and embracing the importance of the  
478 gospel and the word of Jesus.  
479 Holding fast to the word of life, Paul  
480 says, so that in the day of Christ, I may  
481 be proud that I did not run in vain or  
482 labor in thee. The word of life is the  
483 gospel. The good news of Jesus, which the

484 Philippians have heard and believed, and  
485 so by which they have come to life  
486 eternal in him. It is the  
487 word of God. This good news is what  
488 we have to offer the people around us.  
489 Working out our salvation can mean lots  
490 of things, but never something other than  
491 or less than offering the good news of  
492 salvation in Jesus Christ for others to  
493 hear and respond to. We  
494 keep holding fast to God's truth  
495 for us, so we can then hold it  
496 out for others, like a cup of  
497 cold water to people who are dying of  
498 thirst. We do so no matter how  
499 others may respond. Swapping it  
500 away, ignoring it, asking  
501 questions, accepting it by faith. We've  
502 got good news. We've got God's  
503 revelation of his love. Let's share it.  
504 Let's spend it. Spend, spend, spend.  
505 And look, our bank of good news is as  
506 full now as when we first started.  
507 It never runs out. We're  
508 working out our salvation.  
509 Working out our salvation means  
510 proceeding past the perplexities  
511 of this particular place.  
512 Even if I'm to be poured out  
513 as a drink offering upon the sacrificial  
514 offering of your faith, which is a fancy  
515 way for him to say, Even if I die. I am  
516 glad and rejoice with you all, Paul says.  
517 Paul's present circumstances, suffering,  
518 imminent death possibly, are likened to  
519 the pagan and Jewish practice of  
520 pouring out a libation of wine,  
521 blood of the grape, on a sacrifice or  
522 at the foot of an altar to honor a  
523 deity. Paul saw the bigger picture of the  
524 good news of Jesus changing people's  
525 lives, and changing the world, and of  
526 his own life as a part of that amazing  
527 work of God. He encouraged the  
528 Philippians to see themselves in  
529 relationship to him, and in the same  
530 way. They are to share life as  
531 sacrificial libations,  
532 poured out upon one another's acts of  
533 faithful service to God. One act of  
534 sacrificial service deserves another.  
535 Working out your salvation means having a  
536 transcendent perspective on life's  
537 circumstances. We are  
538 never trapped. We can  
539 always have a measure of peace,  
540 because God is always present, always in  
541 control, and always at work for  
542 his ultimate good. Paul says, Hey,  
543 maybe I'm gonna die. Maybe the result of  
544 my imprisonment here is going to go  
545 really bad. And that's  
546 okay, because the greater work  
547 continues through me and through  
548 you. We've got a transcendent view of  
549 things. We've got the perspective of  
550 peace. Let's share it.  
551 Let's spend it. Spend, spend,  
552 spend. And look, our



553 bank of peace is fuller now than when we  
554 started. It never runs out.  
555 We're working out our salvation.  
556 Finally, working out our salvation,  
557 obeying God, means  
558 possessing joy.  
559 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink  
560 offering upon the sacrificial offering of  
561 your faith, I am glad and rejoice  
562 with you all. Likewise, you  
563 also should be glad and rejoice with  
564 me. Despite whatever  
565 troubles threaten, And Paul  
566 knows he is a man in trouble,  
567 writing to a church being torn apart, to  
568 some extent, by selfish factions  
569 and me-first attitudes.  
570 Paul is going to rejoice with his friends  
571 who have already obeyed God and  
572 faithfully received his gospel. He  
573 tells the Philippians to do the same,  
574 despite circumstances, whatever they may  
575 be, rejoice. And don't let  
576 life's circumstances take away your joy  
577 in me and your joy in Christ.  
578 For there is one circumstance that  
579 will not change, cannot change,  
580 and that is, Jesus died  
581 for you, taking upon himself the  
582 just penalty for your sins. Everything  
583 that would clog the way between you and  
584 the living God in which we find life  
585 and health, and wholeness, and  
586 glory, and joy.  
587 Everything that would get in the way has  
588 been removed by the completed work of  
589 Jesus. And he rose  
590 from the dead, and so will we.  
591 That circumstance will never  
592 change. Working out our salvation means  
593 continually growing in our ability to  
594 hear and respond to the command to  
595 rejoice. to let our inner  
596 security because of Jesus Christ, our  
597 inner sense of self-worth because of  
598 Jesus Christ, our inner surety  
599 of eternal wholeness with our heavenly  
600 Father because of Jesus Christ,  
601 show in our expressions of  
602 deep joy. We've got  
603 joy. And our joy buried and raised with  
604 our Lord and housed in his church is  
605 resilient, even indestructible.  
606 Let's share it. Let's spend it.  
607 Spend, spend, spend.  
608 And look, our bank of joy  
609 is fuller now than  
610 when we started. It never  
611 runs out. Let's pray.  
612 Heavenly Father, we thank you for this  
613 day that you have given to us. We thank  
614 you for your word that blesses us,  
615 that instructs us, that helps us  
616 to know where we are, where we're going.  
617 what we're doing and why.  
618 Lord, I pray that you would help each of  
619 us to understand that we're always  
620 working something out and to  
621 affirm with your help that there's

622 nothing better for us to be working out  
623 in this life than our salvation  
624 in you. We pray in your name and  
625 for your sake. Amen. It's  
626 time for us to pray for one another. I  
627 encourage you to continue this throughout  
628 the week. making use of your  
629 prayer and praises page.  
630 If you have any prayers that you would  
631 like to share and would like others to be  
632 praying with you about, we encourage you  
633 to use the tear-off sheet. You can just  
634 tear that off and put it in the box in  
635 the back of the sanctuary there on the  
636 table or on the desk in the office, and  
637 then we'll make sure to include your  
638 prayer requests with other prayers of the  
639 church. Let's pray.  
640 Lord God, we thank you for the partnership  
641 that you call us into with you that  
642 expresses itself in so many ways as we  
643 work out our salvation with you and for  
644 you, as you have worked out our salvation  
645 for us already in Jesus.  
646 Lord God, we are grateful for the  
647 opportunity to pray for one another, so  
648 we do pray as folks have asked  
649 us to, pray for our youth  
650 programs, for a  
651 youth leader, for  
652 our youth ministries here. Lord, we've  
653 been looking for a while. We just pray  
654 that you'd bring the right person to us,  
655 and give us wisdom to see  
656 that connection, that you'd make that  
657 connection happen. Lord, we pray  
658 for Sue, and for Gary, for  
659 Shirley, for the Lowe's, for Barbara,  
660 asking for healing and encouragement for  
661 them. We pray for families of  
662 George and Brett, of at their  
663 time of loss of loved ones, Lord, that  
664 you would comfort them. Pray for our  
665 neighbors next door, continuing to ask  
666 you to bless them. Help us to  
667 be good neighbors for those that have  
668 suddenly moved in next to us. Pray for  
669 those serving in the military, grateful  
670 for their service, asking that you would  
671 watch over them. Noah, Taryn,  
672 Cody, Matthew, Weston, Chase,  
673 Levi, Gary, Molly, Brian,  
674 Hannah, Margaret, Benjamin,  
675 Chandler. Lord, we pray for Kristen  
676 and her family, mission family serving  
677 on the other side of the world, Lord, at  
678 this time of loss for them. Hear us now,  
679 Lord, as we share together in the special  
680 prayer that you taught us, saying, our  
681 Father, who art in heaven,  
682 hallowed be thy name, thy  
683 kingdom come, thy will be  
684 done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
685 Give us this day our daily bread  
686 and forgive us our sins as we  
687 forgive those who sin against us. And  
688 lead us not into temptation, but deliver  
689 us from evil. For thine is the  
690 kingdom and the power and the

691 glory forever. Amen.  
692 Our closing hymn is number 122,  
693 God, all nature,