

## Philippians 2:12

*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*

Some people have a hard time with not being able to do anything to earn their salvation. I mean we have all been there, where we do something wrong, so we try to pay for it (sometimes literally) with money by tithing a little extra, or doing more, or praying more, or reading more of the bible. Those who are unsaved, think they can do it by doing good things for others and by giving to charity.

For those who do want to try to earn their salvation, they like today's verse, because they read: *work out your own salvation* because they are full of *fear and trembling*, maybe because of what they have done, so they try to pay off God with works or money. Or for those who think they can earn their way to heaven and bypass Jesus, they to have *fear and trembling*, because they think they haven't done enough to make it to heaven.

But this verse is not talking about earning your salvation or working to be saved. People tend to forget that salvation is a "gift" and you can never earn a gift, because a "true" gift is something that is given from the heart, not earned.

† **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT2)** *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.* (underlined for emphasis)

So when I read today's verse, I thought of two words that help explain it, and those two words are "**word out**" Now I don't know about you, but when I hear work out (or workout) I think of going to a gym, and the purpose of going to a gym is to get in shape.

There's a friend of mine, who when I first new him years ago, he was a normal looking guy. But over the years, we have both moved to different states and see each other only on social media. Well over the last few years, he has gotten into bodybuilding and he looks buffed and cut. He was even in a competition one time. But he got that way by "working out".

Now when you think of that, remember we are all born human, either a man or woman, yet still human, and what you do with yourself over the years will determine what you do and become in life, as well as how your body looks. I have never been to a gym, but my friend has, and he is cut, and I am not, and he got that way by working out. Now we are both human and both men, and working out, or not working out, does not change that fact. He is just stronger and looks better physically than me.

So this verse is not talking about being saved or staying saved, but rather what you do after you are saved. We know that we grow as a Christian, but the more you work out spiritually, the stronger you are as a Christian.

Haven't you heard the expression "He is such a strong Christian?" What's cool is when someone says it about you. But the truth is, what we consider a strong Christian, is actually a normal Christian in the bible. It is one who is in the word everyday, as well as in prayer everyday, and is part of a ministry. Just like those who work out, they eat right and are at the gym. But so many Christian are not in the word and they dine on junk food all the time (TV, internet, the type of music they listen too, etc...) so they are fat, flabby, tired and really don't do anything other than go to church once a week, or some, once a month.

So, as people make New Years resolutions to work out and get more fit the beginning of the year. Why wait? Why not make a resolution now to start a daily work out in the word everyday, praying more and getting involved in the church. Once you do you will start becoming a buffed, cut Christian. How cool would it be to hear people say about you, "Wow, they are such a strong Christian" Then you can tell them that you are a normal Christian, you just work out spiritually everyday, and you know they will ask you how. That will be your opportunity to share with them your daily spiritual *work out* routine so they can be a buffed Christian too.

† **1 Timothy 4:8** *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.*

† **Hebrews 10:25 (NLT2)** *And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*