

Working out Our Salvation in a Perverse Nation

Phil. 2:12-16

Introduction:

- A. It is easy to excuse and/or blame our shortcomings on our surroundings.
 - 1. How can Christians be expected to live faithful and godly lives in this city, state or nation?
 - 2. How can Christian parents be expected to raise faithful children in this nation?
 - 3. How else can it be done? There is nowhere else to do it!
- B. Philippians (and others) had to work out their salvation in “midst of a crooked and perverse nation.”
 - 1. Were their surroundings more or less conducive than ours?
 - 2. Let us look at the conditions then and now along with the solution then and now.

Discussion:

- I. Their “Perverse Nation.”
 - A. The religious surroundings in a typical Mediterranean city.
 - 1. Jewish synagogue or other place of prayer.
 - a. Long rich and prestigious tradition.
 - b. Strong central government in Jerusalem.
 - c. Exciting program of persecution – violence in name of religion.
 - 2. Pagan temples and shrines.
 - a. Could worship the “god of your choice” (Athens, Acts 17).
 - b. People could satisfy every lust of the flesh in the name of religion.
 - B. The moral surroundings of a typical Mediterranean city (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11).
 - C. The immorality in political leadership.
 - 1. The Caesars.
 - 2. The Herods.
- II. Our “Perverse Nation.”
 - A. The religious surroundings of a typical American city.
 - 1. A church or synagogue to suit every fancy.
 - a. With a doctrine that takes the effort out of religion.
 - b. With a program that “meets the needs” of the fleshly side of man.
 - c. With activities that make church fun!
 - 2. A variety of “exciting” churches.
 - a. Charismatic.
 - b. Fastest growing – doing whatever it takes.
 - c. Come as you are, do as you please churches.
 - B. The moral surroundings of a typical American town.
 - C. The immorality in political leadership.
- III. Working out Our Salvation
 - A. By being consistent and persistent in obedience (v. 12).
 - 1. Includes our worship and service to God.
 - 2. Includes properly training children (Eph. 6:4; cf. 2 Tim. 3:15)
 - B. By being serious about religion (“fear and trembling”).
 - C. By letting God work in us to do His pleasure (v. 13).
 - D. By acceptance rather than “murmurings and questionings” (v. 14 ASV).
 - 1. Whatever the duty.
 - 2. Whatever the circumstances.

Conclusion:

- A. It could be done then and it can be done now – but it took effort (work) and so it is now.
- B. We cannot let “perverse nation” be our scape goat.