

MESSAGE NOTES

Shine Like Stars

Philippians 2:12–18 (NIV)

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Work Out Your Salvation

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—**continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.**”
— Philippians 2:12 (NIV)

“For this is what the high and exalted One says—
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:
'I live in a high and holy place,
but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly
and to revive the heart of the contrite.'”
— Isaiah 57:15 (NIV)

“Humility is the only soil in which virtue takes root; a lack of humility is the explanation of every defect and failure. Humility is not so much a virtue along with the others, but is the root of all.”
— Andrew Murray

Shine Like Stars

“Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.”
— Philippians 2:15 (NIV)

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”
— Daniel 12:3 (NIV)

Poured Out

“But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.”
— Philippians 2:17 (NIV)

“I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint.”
— Psalms 22:14 (NIV)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”
— Matthew 26:28 (NIV)

“And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.”
— Joel 2:28 (NIV)

“‘In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.’”
— Acts 2:17 (NIV)

NOTES:

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

May 10, 2026

Shine Like Stars

Philippians 2:12-18

As needed, refer to the Order of Worship and Resources at solanabeach.church for sermon video, message notes, resources and small group questions print version.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Enter into your small group time with an ice breaker question: Can you share a time this week where something (an interaction, a moment, a thing) sparked joy within you?

CONNECT WITH GOD

- **Prayer with Complaints and Blessings** (adapted from James Finley)
On a piece of paper write two columns: one of complaints and one of blessings. Work through your list prayerfully in this manner:
 - Put your finger on a complaint and offer it to God with honesty and a listening heart.
 - Then move your finger to a blessing, asking God's light to shine in you with this blessing.
 - With your finger still on the blessing, ask God's light to shine through you to the world because of this blessing.
 - Move through your list alternating between complaints and blessings.

After praying through your list, close by thanking God for being present in it all, for hope in difficult times, and the gift of being able to participate in bringing the light of Christ to the world.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

- Begin with **prayer** before reading the passage this week.
- **Together:** Read Philippians 2:12-18 a couple of times. Hint: It may be a good idea to return to Philippians 2:1-11, because the passages may best be understood when held together.
- **Alone:** Reflect/Journal on one of the prompts below:
 - What speaks to you most personally in this passage? Why?
 - How do you understand verses 12-13? Are there areas in your life where you feel like you are "working out" your faith?
- **All together** or in **smaller pairs:** Share with one another.

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE

If needed, read the passage again. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group.

- Review the sermon notes.
- What words, images, or ideas have you continued to reflect on since the message?
- How does the structure in Philippians 2:1-18 as a whole contribute to Paul's ending argument and exhortation in verses 16-18?
- How does Paul's language reflect Old Testament imagery?
- Are there any Old Testament stories that come to mind as you read this passage?
- What do you think Paul means by "continue to work out your salvation" in verse 12?
- How might verses 12-13 be misunderstood or misused?
- If Paul is addressing the community, not individuals, how does that change your understanding of the passage?
- What are some subtle ways grumbling/arguing creeps into your life?
- How does 'sacrificial living' take shape in our life together, communally?
- How do we 'work out' our 'salvation in community'?
- What gives Paul cause to celebrate in verses 17-18? Where does his joy come from?

ENGAGE AND EXPLORE

Together: explore the quote below, in connection with Paul's call to "shine like stars," which is a likely reference to Daniel 12:3.

*"In a sense, then, what Paul is saying is not just that the Philippians are to be a sign of light and beauty in a world of darkness and ugliness. They are to be a sign of God's new **life** in a world that only knows the way to death."
–N.T. Wright*

PRAYER

How will your group pray for one another as you seek to live out this passage in your lives?