

## 5 – Back from the Future

Now that we have an idea of the New Heaven and the New Earth – a redeemed world and universe that will never end – we should come back to our current reality.

With so much to look forward to, how do we keep this life’s purpose in plain sight?

We have a purpose to live - which is our act of **WORSHIP**.

### **Romans 12:1**

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your [present] bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”<sup>i</sup>*

We are to please God with a life of **HOLINESS**.

### **1 Peter 1:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> *Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. <sup>14</sup> As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. <sup>15</sup> But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; <sup>16</sup> for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*

<sup>17</sup> *Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.*

This passage calls all people of faith to live a life of holiness. In a literal sense, holy living means -

- Christians are to live a life that is set apart from the crazy darkness of our culture today.
- Holiness is a life of discipline, focus, and attention to matters of God’s way of living.
- We are transformed by Christ Jesus to give glory to God *now!*

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## We live in the here and now as God’s CHILDREN.

### Philippians 2:12-18

*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, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*

*<sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> 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 <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.*

Let’s sort this passage out.

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## Obey the Lord’s CALLING on your life.

*“...**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, <sup>13</sup> for it is **God who works in you** to will and to act in order to **fulfill his good purpose.**” (2:12-13)*

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## SHINE like stars in the sky

*“Do everything without grumbling or arguing,<sup>15</sup> 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<sup>16</sup> 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.” (2:14-16)*

Remember you are God’s children “*in a warped and crooked generation*”.

This is what we have to work with.

But focus on the fact that you are “Children of God”!

## Don’t grumble or argue amongst YOURSELVES.

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The Holy Spirit communicates through the Apostle Paul in **Romans 12:9-13** the details of this truth:

*“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.<sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.<sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.<sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.<sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”*

## Don’t let go of the WORD OF LIFE.

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*“...you will shine among them like stars in the sky<sup>16</sup> as you hold firmly to the word of life. (2:15-16)*

## Be thankful for the effort that causes SUFFERING for Christ.

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*“<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.”*

Suffering for Christ is something we all will share because of our common faith.

By using the term "drink offering," Paul explains that he was presently in a dangerous situation that could lead to a martyr's death.

He considered this moment of suffering the climax of his ministry and a cause for rejoicing.

Jewish religious practice included the use of wine poured out ceremonially in connection with certain sacrifices.

Paul regarded his own life as a sacrifice ceremonially poured out for the spiritual advancement of those whom he had led to Christ.

"The sacrifice and service" relates to the various Christian ministries that the Philippians performed as a spiritual sacrifice to God springing from their faith.

Therefore, we should rejoice together considering the ministry of sacrificial services in our work for the Lord.

*For it is God who is working in us for His glory today, that others may share in the glory of the New Heaven and the New Earth that is to come!*

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<sup>i</sup> All scripture references will be taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise indicated.