**HOLY SAVIOUR, BITTERNE BIBLE STUDY – WEEK BEGINNING AUGUST 2nd**

**PHILIPPIANS 2.12-30 – WORKING IT OUT**

Paul had spoken of Christ’s example in 2.5-11 and continues with a ‘therefore’ to describe the sort of life-style to which that should lead. God has saved them and is at work in them but they need to work out what that means for them and work at it as they live and share the good news, like shining stars in a dark world. Paul’s personal words about Timothy and Epaphroditus give us examples of two people who were working out what it meant to live as Christians.***As usual you may find it helpful to jot down your thoughts about the questions in the spaces provided*** *–* ***and it would be really good to share them with others.*** *Phone, Skype, email some members of your homegroup or a friend and/or email me your thoughts (* brianparfitt@btinternet.com*).* ***Brian Parfitt***

What things have you had to really work at in order to succeed? What effort was required? How was it rewarded?

**READ Philippians 2.12-30.**

**A STAR (verses 12-18)**

What sort of effort is Paul calling for in verses 12 and 13? Why does each individual need to work out what Christian living and service means for them? What part in Christian living must we play and what part is played by God’s help and enabling?

What sort of difference in lifestyle does Paul long to see between Christians and those around them *(see verses 14-18)*? How can Christians ‘shine like stars’? How would seeing the Philippians live this sort of life encourage Paul as a Christian leader *(see verses 16-18)*?

***How can our way of life tie with our words to help us be ‘shining stars’ to the people around us?***

**A SON (verses 19-24)**

Paul writes about two people who are real ‘stars’ – Timothy and Epaphroditus. What sort of relationship does Paul have with Timothy? *(You might like to read how that relationship came about in Acts 16.1-3 and 2 Timothy 1.3-7.)* Why is he sending Timothy to Philippi?

What does Paul say about Timothy’s character and work? Why are people like him important in the church’s life?

***Are there fellow Christians with whom you have or have had the sort of relationship of encouragement in the faith and/or working together that Paul and Timothy had? How have such relationships been a source of encouragement? How can we build encouraging relationships amongst church members?***

**A SOLDIER (verses 25-30)**

How had Epaphroditus ‘worked out’ his discipleship as a real brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier? How had he reacted to hardships? How was Paul now showing his concern for Epaphroditus and the Christians in Philippi?

***‘Brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier’ speak of different sorts of relationships we can have with each other as church members. What qualities are needed for each of them? How are these things seen in the church’s life?***