

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

The truth that God has revealed here is something every child of God needs to understand! If you are a truly born again today it is because God began and is continuing a mighty work in your life! Furthermore, that work is absolutely guaranteed to turn out successfully, because it is God's work not man's.

If you have been born again by the Spirit of God, then you don't need to be afraid that you will ever be lost again! God, Who called you, will be faithful to complete the work He began in you!

In this verse Paul tells us four things about the work that God has begun in the life of a Christian:

I. IT IS GOD'S WORK!

The "He" of this verse is referring to God Himself!

Paul does not refer to the good work that **HE** had done in Philippi! Now Paul was a missionary who was sent by God to preach the Gospel in Philippi. And Paul did do a great work there. God used Him to start a Church there and to help build it up. But when he writes this letter he does not refer at all to the work **HE** had done. Listen, it was **GOD'S WORK** through Paul that accomplished so much!

In Acts 14:27 when Paul and Barnabas returned from their first missionary journey they gathered the Church together in Antioch, not to give an account of what **THEY** had done, but what **GOD** had done on their missionary journey!

*Acts 14:27—"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, **they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.**"*

It wasn't Paul, it was God Who began that good work in them! Salvation is a work of God!

It is not surprising that Paul should emphasize that salvation is all of God and not of man. Paul never forgot what he had been before God reached down and saved him. Look at **1 Timothy 1:12-14:**

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

He says, ***I was a blasphemer!***

He was a blasphemer because he adamantly spoke against Jesus and denied he was the Messiah.

He says, ***I was a persecutor!***

He was a persecutor because he arrested and imprisoned men and women and tried to make them renounce their faith and had many of them put to death!

He says, ***I was injurious!***

He was a violent man. The word Paul uses here means "*a man of insolent and brutal violence.*" He delighted in inflicting pain on other people.

But then as he was on his way to Damascus to persecute more Christians, the Lord suddenly appeared to him.

Acts 9:3-5—"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

It wasn't Paul's plan to become a Christian. It was God who initiated the work in him. Look at what He says in **1 Timothy 1:15-16!**

Not only did God initiate the work in Paul. Paul remembered how God also initiated the work in the Christians at Philippi. In *Acts 16:6-7*, we are told that Paul did not intend to go to Philippi.

He wanted to go somewhere else. He wanted to preach somewhere in Asia. That seemed to him the right thing to do. But it says "*the Spirit suffered them not.*" Then Paul had a vision during the night. God gave him this vision. A man of Macedonia appeared to him and said, "*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*"

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

Luke records in *Acts 16:10* – “*And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.*”

When Paul arrived at Philippi, the capital of Macedonia, he spoke to some women gathered by the side of the river for prayer. As Paul preached, it says the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to respond to Paul’s message.

It doesn’t say Lydia was impressed with Christianity and decided to try it. No, **the Lord** who brought Paul to preach **opened her heart and the hearts of her whole family** and they all became believers!

Then a demon possessed girl was delivered by the power of God! Her life was transformed! This made some people so angry that Paul and Silas got beaten and thrown into prison!

Paul and Silas were unfazed and *Acts 16:25* records that “*...at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*”

Suddenly there was an earthquake that shook the very foundations of the prison and all the doors were opened and all their bands were loosed! And the jailer who was ready to commit suicide because he thought all the prisoners escaped wound up getting saved along with his whole family!

Paul didn’t produce any of this. It was a work of God in Philippi. As Paul says in *Ephesians 2:10*, “*For we are His (God’s) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...*”

IT IS GOD’S WORK!

II. IT IS A GOOD WORK!

What Paul is talking about here is what the Bible elsewhere calls being born again or being born from above.

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

A Christian is not someone who has simply changed his ways and decided to reform his life and be a little bit better and more religious.

A Christian is someone in whom God has done a work that is so radical it can only be described as being born again. Sometimes the Bible refers to this change as being raised from the dead, or being made into a new creature or new creation!

Ephesians 2:4-5– “*But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

2 Corinthians 5:17– “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*”

Becoming a Christian is the deepest and most wonderful change that a person can ever know.

It is not a superficial and temporary change!

It is a powerful work of God in the very center of our being!

John Wesley called it, “*the life of God in the soul of man.*”

The Prophet Ezekiel describes it beautifully in **Ezekiel 36:25-27**.

God performs a spiritual heart transplant. He removes our hard old heart and gives us a new heart—a heart that loves Him and wants to follow His ways and obey His commandments!

What God begins, He continues in us. “*He who began a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ.*”

IT IS GOD’S WORK....IT IS A GOOD WORK....

III. IT IS A GOAL-ORIENTED WORK!

“*Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*”

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

We are being prepared for the Day of Jesus Christ. What is the Day of Jesus Christ?

It is the great day when the Son of God will return to this earth in power and glory. This is the day of God's final triumph over evil. And when Christ comes we will share in His glory!

Look at how Paul describes this coming glory in **Romans 8:18-19**.

The picture Paul draws in Romans 8:18-19 is of the whole creation waiting with eager expectation for that glorious day when Christ returns and the sons of God are revealed.

At a wedding, when the bride comes down the aisle in all her radiant beauty, everyone is eager to get a look at her! We who are saved are the Bride of Christ! We are being prepared now for the Day of Jesus Christ, when He comes as the Bridegroom to claim his chosen bride!

On that day all the universe will stand in awe of what the grace of God has done in the lives of each and every child of God! In Ephesians 5:26-27, Paul says that the very purpose of why Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it was, *"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*

Jesus speaks of that future glory in *Matthew 13:41-43*—*"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."*

Nothing God permits in our lives is accidental or without design.

**GOD AT WORK
PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

He is shaping us and preparing us for the glorious future he has in mind for us when the whole universe will stand in awe at the workmanship of God. By the grace of God we are destined to shine like the sun in glory in the Day of Christ Jesus.

IV. IT IS A GUARANTEED WORK!

There is no doubt about it, Paul says: *"I am CONFIDENT of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you WILL PERFORM IT until the day of Jesus Christ "*

His confidence is based on the character of God himself. God never starts a work and leaves it unfinished! That would be a contradiction of his character!

God is not like man. We start things but we do not finish them. Thank God that my hope in Christ does not rest upon MY will power! It rests upon the fact that God would never have started the work in me if he had not decided to finish it.

Paul says the same thing in *Romans 5:10*—*"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."*

What Paul means is: if Christ died for you when you were an enemy and a rebel and hated Him; how much more, then, will God keep and sustain you and finish the work He began. The character of God guarantees the completion of the work!

IT IS GOD'S WORK, IT IS A GOOD WORK, IT IS A GOAL-ORIENTED WORK, IT IS A GUARANTEED WORK!

Conclusion

The question is, has God begun this good work in you?