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Safe Harbor Baptist Church

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## *“He’s still working on me”*

Philippians 1:1-11

### **Introduction:**

As we read the opening verses of Philippians 1 I am reminded of a song that is usually equated to children. But in reality when we examine the words this is not a Children’s song, but this is a Christians song.

There really ought to be a sign upon my heart  
Don't judge me yet, there's an unfinished part  
But I'll be perfect just according to His plan  
Fashioned by the Master's loving hands

He's still working on me  
To make me what I need to be  
It took him just a week to make the moon and stars  
The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars  
How loving and patient He must be  
'Cause He's still workin' on me

In the mirror of His word  
Reflections that I see  
Makes me wonder why He never gave up on me  
But He loves me as I am and helps me when I pray  
Remember He's the potter, I'm the clay.

**Philippians 2:8-10** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

*10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

- We are his **Possession**. – “For we are his”
- We are his **Project**.- “workmanship”

- He is the **Pattern**. – “*created in Christ Jesus*”
- He has a **Plan**. – “*unto good works,*”
- He has a **Path**. – “*which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*”

I am far from what I should be but I am grateful for the fact that he’s still working on me!

Jeremiah 18:4 *And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.*

- The Vessel was in the Potters **House**.
- The Vessel was in the Potters **Hand**. “*was marred in the hand of the potter:*”
- The Vessel was in the Potters **Heart**. “*so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.*”

**End of Introduction:**

## **I. The Common Greeting. Vs 1-2**

*Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*

*2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **1. The Author. Vs 1a**

“Paul”

As Paul’s custom was, he opens up the Epistle by identifying himself.

Paul had a great hand and influence in the start and the forming of the church at Philippi.

Acts 16 gives us the account of how this church began.

- A.** There was a **Burden**.- Paul had a burden that consumed him to preach the Gospel and reach sinners.
- B.** There was a **Battle**.- Paul and Silas in Acts 16 was attacked, lied upon and cast into prison because of the message they preached.
- C.** There were **Believers**.- People got saved as a result of the gospel that was declared!

## **2. The *Assistant. Vs 1b***

**“and Timotheus”**

Timothy was saved through the ministry of the Apostle Paul in Acts 16.

Acts 16:1-3 *Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*

*2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

*3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*

Paul would later send Timothy back to the Church at Philippi to assist them and help them.

## **3. The *Assignment. Vs 1c***

**“the servants of Jesus Christ”**

Paul and Timothy were both servants of the LORD Jesus Christ.

The word “Servants” here means one who gives himself up to another's will.

In other words, these men had laid aside their own wills and desires and committed themselves to fulfilling the will of God for their lives on a daily basis.

Thus, they were known as the Servants of the LORD!

What better title could be given?

## **4. The *Audience. Vs 1d***

*“to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:”*

God had done a mighty work in this city!

- Lydia the seller of purple.

Acts 16:13-15

- The Demon possessed woman who got saved.

Acts 16:16-19

- The Philippian Jailor.

Acts 16:25-33

All these came from different backgrounds and various situations. But now in Christ Jesus they are Saints.

Saints- Holy, Set apart.

### **5. The *Admonishment. Vs 2***

*“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Grace and Peace certainly derive from God and from Jesus Christ!

## **II. The *Christians Gratitude. Vs 3-5***

**3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,**

**4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,**

**5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;**

When Paul writes this letter to the Church at Philippi he is sitting in a Roman prison, chained to 2 men, chained to a wall.

The conditions are horrible. There is no light. There is no cot. There are no facilities, but yet Paul is thankful!!!!!!

### **1. The *Spoken Remembrance. Vs 3***

**“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,”**

Paul states that every time he thought about the Church there at Philippi that is caused him to rejoice and thank God for those precious people that God had brought into his life!

No doubt he remembers the day when Lydia believed on the LORD Jesus Christ.

He remembered watching the woman who was possessed with the devil and how God made the change in her life!

He remembered the night there in the jail when the jailor almost took his life only for the power of the Gospel to invade his life and changed not only his life but also the life of his family!

## **2. The *Supplicating Request. Vs 4***

**“Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,”**

According to this verse every time that Paul bowed his head to pray he had a prayer specially for the church at Philippi.

No doubt he had a long prayer list, and prayer needs. But Philippi was a top priority when he prayed.

Application: We must be reminded of the fact that we are commanded to pray for one another!

## **3. The *Special Relationship. Vs 5***

**“For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;”**

Adrian Rogers said:

What does Winnie the Pooh and John the Baptist have in common? They have the same middle name!

Thus, what does a philosopher have in common with a traveling saleslady, and former fortune teller and a jailer?

They were all members of the church of Philippi.

**Fellowship-** To hold something in common.

What did all these people have in common? They were all changed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **III. The *Confident Guarantee. Vs 6-8***

***6 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:***

***7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.***

***8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.***

## **1. The *Almighty's Creation. Vs 6a***

*“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you”*

Notice the work that had begun in them was started by the LORD Jesus Christ!

Work- any product whatever, anything accomplished by hand.

As we emphasized in the introduction, we are his project, he is working in us, so that he might work on us, so that he might work through us!!

## **2. The *Assured Completion Vs 6b***

*“will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:”*

Notice the confidence that Paul expresses *“will perform it”*

There is no doubt in Paul’s voice, he is confident that what the LORD has started he will complete!

Romans 8:29-30 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

*30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

One day the job will be complete, the task will be accomplished, I shall be like him!

I John 3:1-3 *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

*2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

*3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

I Corinthians 15:51-55 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

*52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

*53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

*54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*

*55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

I am looking forward to getting rid of me!

### **3. The *Apostles Confession. Vs 7-8***

*7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*

*8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*

**A. His *Assumption.*** Vs 7a *“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all,”*

Notice in Vs 7 he states that it was meet (right) for him to think this (that God is working in their lives) of them all!

In other words, Paul is stating that he assumes that if they are saved, then God is working in their lives on a personal level.

Application: What is God currently working on in your life?

The work of God in our lives is a continual task.

**B. His *Affection.*** Vs 7b-8 *“because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*

*8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.”*

They were in the heart of the Apostle Paul. They were in this thing together!

Paul had a longing and desire in his heart to meet with the Church of Philippi again and worship God with them!

I love the people of God!!

#### **IV. The Continual Growth. Vs 9-11**

*9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

*10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.*

*11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*

God is going to complete his work. He will accomplish his task of sanctification in our lives when we receive our glorified bodies in the image of Jesus Christ.

BUT UNTIL THEN there are some expectations of growth. Thus there are some things that I am to do until that day.

##### **1. The Abounding. Vs 9**

*“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;”*

Paul’s prayer and desire was that the love of God would abound more in the church!

Romans 5:5 *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

John 13:34-35 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

I John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

*8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

*In the context of “knowledge and all judgement” consider this quote:*

*“Love is not to be mistaken for lust, nor does love operate without law. Love knows its limits, knows where to draw the line. While we can love all men, we do not love what all they do”- John Phillips- Exploring Philipians pg. 40*



## 2. The *Approval. Vs 10a*

*“That ye may approve things that are excellent;”*

Approve- to test, examine, prove, to recognise as genuine after examination.

This gives idea of considering things with a spiritual mind and a scriptural perspective.

Test it by the word of God!

## 3. The *Authenticity. Vs 10b*

*“that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.”*

Sincere- pure, sincere, unsullied

Offence- having nothing to strike against, not causing to stumble of a smooth road. of not leading others to sin by one's mode of life.

Paul is stating the importance of being real and having a real testimony of Christianity before others so that your life does not cause others to sin.

Warren Wiersbe said: *“There are two good tests for us to follow as we exercise spiritual discernment: 1) Will it make others stumble? 2) Will I be ashamed if Jesus should return at that moment?”*

- **The danger of being wrong but sincere-** Some say “Well it does not matter if it’s right or not as long as the individual is sincere” It does not matter how sincere a person is; if it is not based upon truth than they are wrong.
- **The danger of being right but insincere** -There is also a danger is being right but being sincere, and not having that true desire to please God with our lives.

## 4. The *Accomplishment. Vs 11*

*“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”*

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

*23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

*Colossians 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

*Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

We are often guilty of trying to produce results, instead of abiding in Christ and allowing him to produce fruit out of our lives.

*John 15:4-5 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

*5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

*Vs 8- Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

This fruit is not souls, but rather it is spirituality!

Conclusion:

Bro. Eddie Davis's apple tree.

At one point it had many, many apples on it, but they were so small that they would never ripen to be able to eat.

So he pruned the tree, and cut it back.

The next year he had less apples, but more fruit!

Many times God will prune and cut somethings out of our lives, but its for the purpose that we might bring forth more fruit!

There really ought to be a sign upon my heart  
Don't judge me yet, there's an unfinished part  
But I'll be perfect just according to His plan  
Fashioned by the Master's loving hands

He's still working on me  
To make me what I need to be  
It took him just a week to make the moon and stars  
The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars  
How loving and patient He must be  
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