

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 1st May 2022 Hymns Psalm 116v1-8 tune 58, 307, 270 Read: Philippians 1:1-7 Text Philippians 1:6

Series: Philippians (16) Title: God's good work

The Apostle Paul having spoken of the Philippians fellowship in the gospel from the time of salvation, then continued that, ***Being confident of this very thing, that He (God) which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.***"

The word **confident** means ***to be settled, persuaded, absolutely certain***. Also the word **confident**, is in the **perfect tense meaning this confidence is on going**.

What was Paul confident about? What was ***this very thing*** that Paul writes concerning the saints at Philippi?

Paul had come to the settled persuasion and continually remained confident from the first day and until present, of the believers fellowship in the gospel.

Paul is confident in God and His good work which He has started in the lives of those He saved, and He will finish it.

God's work is a reflection of His own nature.

The character or nature of God's work is called a good work, because it is by God whose very nature or being is good.

For God to start a work and not finish would be to dishonour His own character.

Therefore, The Psalmist declares of God in **Psalm 119:68** "**Thou art good, and doest good...**"

God is eternally, infinitely, unchangeably and perfectly good.

In the beginning when God created this world, and all therein, **Gen 1:31** “*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good...*” *All that God created was good because goodness comes from God.*

God cannot create that which is against His own nature.

Upon the nature of God, Paul considers the salvation of the believers at Philippi, their fellowship in the gospel, and he describes it as a good work, God’s good work.

To bring sinners from darkness into light is good, to deliver sinners from the bondage of their natural corruption, and set them free and enable to please God, is good.

With the Lord’s help lets look at God’s good work, not only in the lives of believers at Philippians but every believer where God’s good work has been applied.

I FIRST THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE GOD’S GOOD WORK.

Paul said *Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you...*”

The word ***begun*** points ***to the commencement or start of something.***

In this case Paul is referring to the time when ungodly and unrighteousness heathen sinners at Philippi received salvation, spiritual life, or new life, or what is termed **regeneration** the work or operation of God, creating spiritual life in the sinners spiritually dead heart, and awaken them by the power of the Holy Spirit.

That’s why Paul says ***in you***. the beginning of a good and divine work in the soul.

The only other time this particular word **begun** is used in scripture is in **Galatians 3**. On that occasion, Paul is asking the believers in **Galatians 3:2** ***This only would I learn of you,***

Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Paul challenges them to think, why did you received the Holy Spirit, was it by your good works, as a reward of what you have done, or by hearing the word by faith trusting fully upon Christ for everything.

In other words, why call yourself a Christian was it by faith alone in Christ alone, or do you call yourself a Christian because you are religious, you follow religious principles.

And off course the answer is a sinner receives the Holy Spirit at the moment God begins His good work in the heart, when they are saved by faith alone in Christ alone.

Then Paul asks another question where our word **begun** is located, **Galatians 3:3** ***“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”***

when new life, begun, commenced, started it was in by and through the Holy Spirit at the command or authorisation of God.

He spoke with that voice that wakes the dead, He called by grace and the Holy Spirit applied the redeeming accomplishment of Christ to your heart.

Oh believer that thrills our hearts, because it teaches God’s good work is actual and eternal.

God in eternity past, before the world began, within the counsel of the Godhead, planned an everlasting covenant to redeem a people to Himself.

It was a deliberate, decisive and divine act on the behalf of God to redeem a people to Himself.

This word **begun** as only used in **Galatians 3:3 and Philipians 1:6** deals with work of God in saving His people.

It is a good work that He commanded and a good work that He commenced and a good work He will complete.

Let me ask has God begun His good work in you. Do you possess spiritual life, saving faith in Christ's person and work alone.

Those who can answer yes, we can sing of God's good work in Christ, It was for yes all for me alone, He died for me my Lord and king.

II SECOND, THE CONTINUATION OF GOD'S GOOD WORK.

Paul states that God who has begun this good work ***will perform it.***

The term means that the Lord ***will carry it onward toward completion He will continue His work. It is an on going work.***

(This is because the word **perform** is in the continuous tense, which means that this work is on-going)

The good work God has started in salvation He will bring it to full perfection when Christ returns.

Therefore, between salvation and glorification is sanctification. While the word **sanctified or sanctify** means **set apart for a holy purpose**, yet the teaching of sanctification is a progressive continual, life time work this side of eternity.

The work of sanctification is a good work, and God has not left His people alone. He teaches sinners, how to be saved and how to live for Him, for the just shall live by faith.

Upon earth the believer's position in Christ is **secured perfectly**, but as far as our daily practises on earth we will never be **sinlessly perfect**.

We are surrounded by the presence and pollution of sin, we fail, we sin against the Lord daily and grieve Him by a thousand falls,

but we can know on earth instead of sinless perfection what is termed **progressive sanctification**, day by day striving to love Christ more.

What is sanctification, the **SC Q 35** **Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.**

God's good work in salvation, is not the end, rather it is only the beginning. He has given us by the death of Christ, the Holy Spirit to continually minister to our lives to make us more like Christ, to renew us after the image of Him who created us.

Despite our failures and faults, God still works within us, He will perform His good work within us by the help of the Spirit as **Romans 8:29** states "**For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinated to be conformed to the image of His dear son.**

The word **conformed** means **to be shaped, moulded**, therefore our lives are to be shaped and moulded to the **image or likeness** of Christ.

To help us and promote holiness, the Holy Spirit continually ministers to us, supplies and guides to Christ likeness. Paul exhorted believers in **Galatians 5:25** "**If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

Believer, here is good news, God has not finished with you yet, He has not given up on you.

The good work of God within us, is the work of grace rooted in the Supreme goodness of the Father.

It is planted by the sacrificial goodness of the Son, and it is daily watered by the Sprinkling goodness of the Holy Spirit, all to follow and assist until Christ returns.

III THIRD, THE COMFORT OF GOD'S GOOD WORK

These also focus on the great truth of divine preservation of the spiritual life that the Lord creates in the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is where we learn of the term and comforting truth **the perseverance of the saints**.

The sinner who is saved by God's grace through Christ's atoning blood, by the power of the Spirit, will never be lost or fall from grace.

To fall from grace is to fall from Christ and that can never be, no man shall pluck us out of His hand.

In other words, the good work God commences in salvation He will not forsake, abandon, abort, desert or leave anything incomplete.

This removes all fear that you as a believer could fall away or lose salvation.

But we doubt God's work because we view God as we view ourselves, He is infinite yet we view Him as if He is limited. Because we fail Him, we conclude He will fail us.

We doubt God what He started, we think God is unable to finish, because we do the same.

Remember the Lord Jesus in speaking about discipleship, following Him said in **Luke 14:28** ***For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*** you consider every detail.

The lesson is, before you build, you plan, prepare and consider the cost, otherwise you will start and will have to stop, the work will be unfinished.

Jesus counted the cost to fulfil God's good work from His first coming to His second coming.

Christ gave His own life to honour God and make full satisfaction for all the sins of His people.

There is no failure in the sacrificial work of Christ. His is a finished work, a perfect work, a work that us accepted by God, and because Christ stood before God to be condemned for His people, none can condemn them. The work started in them will be completed.

Believer there are many reasons for being assured and confident that God's good work will continue in you until the end.

Scripture is saturated through and through with this truth. He had promised never to change or altar His everlasting covenant to save His people,

(Romans 11:29 the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The gifts or blessings that God gives He never reverses, or retracts. When He forgives sin, He does not change His mind.

The point is, there is absolutely no possibility of the Lord failing to pursue the good work that He commences in the soul by Christ death.)

In fact the word Paul uses for **confident** which means **persuaded** is used in **2 Timothy 1:12**, when Paul said, "**for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded (confident) that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.**

But this also assures the unsaved in coming to Christ by faith for forgiveness. Come to Him and rest assured that He will not fail to maintain His good work in your soul and thus He will not fail to keep you.

IV FOURTH, THE COMPLETION OF GOD'S GOOD WORK.

Having considered the phrase, **will perform it will carry it onward toward completion**, the word **perform** itself means **complete, accomplish, perfect, to reach the destined goal. To Claim the prize.**

Here is the believer's GLORIFICATION.

(The same word perform is translated in [Heb 9:6](#) as **accomplishing**. "[The priests went into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God.](#)")

Paul teaches since Salvation is God's work, it is His work from start to finish.

God keeps His people that He gave to Christ, because there is a day of completion or perfection when Christ will return in power and great glory from heaven with a shout, and trumpet sound, to gather all His people and as **Jude** says **to present you faultless before the throne with exceeding great joy,**

as [1 John 3:2](#) confirms "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.."

Paul looked forward to the day of Christ, as he wrote in **[Philippians 1:10 & 2:16](#)**. The day of Christ is a term that includes the second coming of Christ, a day of glorification, a day of public vindication, the judgment seat for believers where rewards or crowns are given for service, where believers will rule and reign with Christ, and then to enter into the New Jerusalem,

We look forward to a day when we will be finally free from the presence of sin, perfectly conformed to Christ's image, when God's good work in us be will completed.

Until then, He's still working on me.