

Women's Bible Study

Philippians 1:6

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For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Praise God! What an encouraging statement.

- Does it feel impossible?

To me it does until I remember who it is that will be perfecting the work begun. How able is God to do this work? Paul seems very sure. He uses the word confident. This word means to be fully and firmly persuaded or convinced and is used many other times in the New Testament. Often it is translated persuaded, convinced, or believed. Let's look at a few of those uses.

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 11:13 (KJV)

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

2 Thessalonians 3:3-5

And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

In Philippians 1:6 Paul writes that he is confident because it is God who has begun the work. God does not start something and then change his mind. When he starts something, he intends to complete it. God is so powerful and wise. He can do what he wants. When he chose us to be his children, it was not an experiment. He did not say "Let's see how this goes and then we'll decide whether to keep her or not." He knows the end from the beginning so if He starts something He is sure to complete it. The Bible is very clear that once we are made his child by his grace through faith, there is no going back. It is a done deal.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

John 10:27-29

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Romans 3:28-30

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren: and who He predestined, these He also called; and who He called, these He also justified; and who He justified, these He also glorified.

Since it is God who began this work then we can be confident as well. But we need to examine ourselves to make sure we are in the faith and that God has saved us from the penalty of sin. How can we do this? How do we know for sure? Well, in what have we put our trust? Is it in our good works? How about the fact that we attend a Bible believing church? Is it because we get goose

bumps when we hear a wonderful Christian song? The only way we can know for sure is if we have put our trust in Christ and his work on the cross for us. Alone! That is it. There should be actions to go along with our faith, but it is not those actions that save us. Those actions are a result of the faith that God has given us. If the actions are missing, this is concerning. We won't be free of sin until we are freed from these bodies, but we should be moving forward toward Christlikeness.

2 Corinthians 13:5a

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!

The Bible says that God will perfect this good work. What does that mean? The word for perfect is *epiteleo*. This word means to fulfill completely, accomplish, do, finish-until the end!

The New Testament Commentary by Albert Barnes states: *“God abandons nothing that he undertakes. There are no unfinished worlds or systems; no half-made and forsaken works of his hands. There is no evidence in his works of creation of change of plan, or of having forsaken what he began from disgust, or disappointment, or want of power to complete them. Why should there be in the salvation of the soul?”*

There are two ways that God will perfect his good work. First, by keeping us from falling from grace and second, by our ultimate entire perfection.

This perfection will be celebrated on the Day of Christ Jesus. What is the “Day of Christ Jesus”? This is the day when Jesus will return for his church.

1 Corinthians 1:3

who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:10

when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day and to be marveled at among all who have believed-for our testimony to you was believed.

Another day talked about in the Bible is the “Day of the Lord” which relates to the day when God’s wrath is revealed, and judgment comes to the earth. This is described in detail in Revelation 6-19 but is talked about in many other places in the Bible.

2 Peter 3:10

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Isaiah 2:12

For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty and against everyone who is lifted up, that he may be abased.

Joel 2:1

Blow a trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, surely it is near

Joel 2:31

The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

The other day is the “Day of God” which is when God creates the new Heaven and Earth. This follows the judgment, but we are instructed to be looking for and hastening this day.

2 Peter 3:11-12

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat

Being perfected is an amazing promise to those who have had their sins forgiven and are now children of God. So how should this affect us? Well, we can live confidently knowing that everything that happens to us God will use to bring us to

this point of perfection. If we truly believe that God is all powerful and knows everything like we say we do then circumstances should not cause us to have such bad moments, days, weeks, months, etc.

When “bad things” happen to us we need to trust that this God who loves us so much is planning on using those events to perfect us for the day when he is triumphantly crowned as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

- Do we trust Him this way?

We are the proof of his victory. The Bible says that we were dead in trespasses and sins, yet he brought us to life spiritually. How dead is dead? Dead means dead.

Ephesians 2:1

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

Ephesians 2:5-6

even when we were dead in our transgressions, (he) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Jesus is the champion!! He is the one who overcame death and the grave. He rose from the dead himself and he has brought dead people back to life spiritually. We will also live eternally in perfect bodies eventually. I can't wait! Can you?

We also should be doing our part in this perfecting of ourselves. We sometimes sabotage ourselves. We go way too long without our spiritual food. We don't read our Bible, we don't spend time in prayer, we easily decide to not go to church or other events in which we will have fellowship and teaching. When we do this, we are cutting ourselves off from our spiritual sustenance. The Bible tells us that it is imperative that we abide in Christ.

John 15:1-2

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:3-4

You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- What are some ways we sabotage ourselves and how can we avoid doing that?

Philippians 1:6 should cause us great joy! The victory is God's! He has already won. We cannot allow ourselves to become distracted by our flesh. It is true that it won't go away until after this life. This is a lifetime war within us, but we cannot let this fight sway us to the right or the left. We need to be single-minded in our pursuit of abiding in Christ. Many days will not be easy. Jesus never said it would be easy. We can spend a lot of time thinking about and worrying about the cares of this world.

Romans 7:18

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Romans 7:24b-25a

Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Philippians 2:13-15

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.

Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I **press on** in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I **press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Luke 9:23

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"

Ladies, this life is too short to be living in a distracted manner. We have a calling. We are children of the King of the Universe! Let us put aside the things that keep us from daily striving for that goal.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Philippians 1:6 says "will perfect" the good work which he has begun. That means it is not done yet. This is a lifetime process. It is so important that we are patient during this process. We must be patient when God is specifically working in us. Sometimes the work can be painful. We also must be patient when God is working in other people. Sometimes we are even the means that he is using to perfect other people. That can be difficult.

Colossians 1:10-11

So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience joyously

- Are we rejoicing in the work God is doing?
- Are we grumbling about our circumstances?
- Are we participating in the work God is doing or fighting every step of the way?

Let us fight the tendency to become discouraged when God is working in our lives to mold us into the image of his Son. Let us rejoice in the knowledge that we are children of the King, and our Father loves us so much that he does not leave us in the state that he finds us in. Children of the king are different than children of the world. The world's citizens are slaves to sin and selfishness. We are different. Can you imagine if children in our public schools were taught "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven". People would think that teachers had lost their minds. "Poor in spirit" is not a quality children of the world are taught. The meaning of poor in spirit is to be humble and completely dependent on God. No, children today are not taught to depend on God. They are taught to look out for themselves first. How happy are we that we are children of the kingdom of God and headed for eternity in Heaven and that at the Day of Christ we will be perfected and no longer fighting the battle with sin. We are blessed indeed!!