

Evidences of real and false religion (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] The Lord's help, we will speak from the Epistle to the Philippians, and the first chapter, verse 6. Old Epistle to the Philippians, the first chapter, verse 6.
- Be confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
- My own people will not be surprised at me reading this text.
- You'll be speaking from it for the last three services. The Lord's help will venture with us again. The blessedness of it, which will touch a cord in the heart of those who are very concerned as to whether they stand right before God in the matter of their religion.
- And it is a very pointed text, a very necessary text, as well as a very suitable text.
- [1 : 30] Upon this one great point, being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on or perform it.
- Until the day of Jesus Christ, when it will be put to the acid test and proved to be one of two things.
- A good work or a bad work. True religion or a false religion. It cannot prove to be a false religion because it is God's work.
- He that hath begun. And what God begins must end well. As the old saying is, that which begins right ends right.
- So that it becomes a question which the Church of Philippi were no doubt glad to have an answer to, hearing the Apostle speak so confidently, reassuringly, being confident of this very thing, this one unique outstanding point, that he that hath begun a good work will carry it on.
- [3 : 11] And this is where the point of examination comes in, that God works in the heart.
- Because it is quite scriptural, fully biblical, to point to those who've often asked this question.
- The Psalms breathe with the desire of the psalmist. So do the other gracious characters whose prayers and words we have show forth that they were not buoyed up with a false confidence.
- They did not pass by on the other side and say, come not nearer to me, I am holier than thou.
- They were poor, unworthy, needy, guilty sinners. And their great concern was, am I his or am I not?
- [4 : 24] It is laughed at by a false religion. Scott. Not so with those who come within the compass of this great question.
- And as I've already said, the time lapse between the writing of this epistle back to them at Philippi was some ten years.

and the apostle had gone through much in that time and was coming to the end of the journey. He was in Rome's prison for the first time and about to be released.

But he remembered these people as he tells us in the previous words, their fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

and this is something which Zion knows a good deal about. The remembrance of gospel fellowship from the day that it began.

[5 : 38] And you know, and there's no need for me to repeat what I've already said, Lydia and the Philippian jader were two of the characters whom he met.

And the Macedonian call came forth, come over and help them. So that we may truly say that the memory of past days blessed because the memory of the just is blessed.

On these anniversary occasions we cannot help looking back. Not many of us left now in the original church here of the early days.

We cannot help looking back over the precious memory of those who are now safely gathered waiting the day of Christ as the text speaks of.

On the other hand this is no place to rest and stand still and take things easy. We have to as the third chapter enjoins us press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

[7 : 25] But taking an overall view of this verse how glorious it is and none can contradict it with regard to the final salvation of the believer God begins it and God finishes it.

That is absolutely free from any human hands as regards the reality of its world. Not human means to begin it.

Oh no. Oh no. God uses what means he chooses but those means are only means and channels.

He that hath begun is God. Of his own will begat us by the word of truth says James the president of the first church of Jerusalem.

And this is where the Lord's people look to the great question who began how came you in this way?

[8 : 41] Did you like ignorance climb over the wall in Bunyan's Pilgrim disdaining the narrow and straight gate ignorance had many arguments as to the validity of his entry and he doubted not but what at the day of judgment the great judge would let him go by as many others who climbed over the walls as wise old Bunyan but the beginning is vital it is called a good thing good work the next verse explains it ye are all partakers of my grace or as the margin says ye are all partakers with me of grace this is the beginning grace so that the beginning is carried on by divine grace this mysterious mighty overshadowing of the

Lord in the life of every one of his people we read young Timothy what Paul said to him that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the holy ghost which dwelleth in us that good thing it is a good thing and who esteems it to be a good thing well the possessor of it of course they regard it as being vital all no adjective can fully describe it it has a goodly reference over Lee in verse 10 that she may approve things that are excellent that she may be sincere and without offense to the day of

Christ grace is excellent grace is approved but what is this strange mighty work that God performs without let or hindrance without offer or suggestion that you should take up grace as a career a religious career far from it it is said as it was early back in the days of Noah that Noah found grace that's where grace begins you have he quickened so that in this there is an excellency in the beginning of it you see the children running about in health and strength quite unaware of the excellency of their little bodies how fearfully and wonderfully made they are we all the ones envy them don't we their activity their agility their clear little minds wonder working powers of nature how quickly they learn and pick up quite unaware of the masterpiece of construction that their bodies are but their mother can remember the time when they were quicker and she first knew of that life you had the quicker who were dead in trespasses and sins wherein ye walked in time past according to the prince of the power of the air and so on but not now it is therefore the outcome of life the growth of life and then the children begin to choose between good and bad and which do they make their first choice the good or the bad well what was your first choice answer the question in your own conscience was it good so with

Paul the writer we ask him the question what would he say that he was born in sin so that there comes a time of choice and so in grace that he may approve things that are excellent grace grace gives a new life brings with it a new life all things pass away and that means what it says they're not put in a cupboard hoping to bring them out when you get a little older they're not just put on one side the time being reluctantly oh no if they are you may be sure you picked up your religion in the wrong way you're hoping that you won't always have to sacrifice always have to read your bible attend the sanctuary and such that grace is a complete change it brings with it this choice this approval you can see it in the night of the scripture characters and those outside of course and in your own you now as a hymn writer says chosen of

God ere time began I choose thee in return this is choice blessed choice sanctified scriptural choice that is the approving of that which is excellent good the margin says here the trying of it trying of things that differ it doesn't take a great deal of thought to see the original meaning therefore of this text that she may try things that differ or approve things that are excellent so that as the child in youth is faced with the left hand or the right good or bad and they waver between the two which way shall

[16 : 42] I go what shall I do oh when it comes to this remarkable work of God there is a differentiation who maketh thee to differ differ from what you see unless you can mark a difference in your life what good ground have you for hope when you come to the day of Christ none not according to the word of God none whatever unless you have been made to differ and differ from an ungodly world and differ from the evil man of your own heart this is what God accomplishes and if we ask how does he accomplish it and by what means we're not at any loss of an answer the word abounds with it we're only speaking of it on the

Sabbath weren't we if we look into the second chapter the precept of the word of God how that differs from the old law that binding law Moses do and live why if you turn back to the second of Romans you will see Paul there speaking to the Jews and challenging them upon the matter of this same thing this excellence that they were so strong in that they thought themselves to be the real children of God but he says very solemnly to them that behold thou art called a Jew and rest us in the law and makest thy boast in

God and knowest his will and approvest the things that are more excellent here the very words being instructed out of the law and are confident that they are a guide of the blind a light of them that are in darkness and so on he challenges them upon this point that he is not a Jew which is one outwardly neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh but he is a Jew which is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter this is his difference this is where the great difference lies between the old law of

Moses and the law of the gospel of liberty of which he says in this chapter to the Ephesians that the Philipians that I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment he that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on he will enlarge love he will enlarge judgment he will enlarge knowledge in the holiness of the law of liberty fulfilled by Christ believed in by the redeemed the redeemed this is where they grow in grace and this is where they stand in preparation for the great day of

Christ all other ground is sinking sand whatever name it may be called by but they do approve this wonderful work of the righteousness of Christ don't they don't you poor thing who feel helpless and empty cannot do one thing right God would you do not approve with all your heart the excellency of the righteousness of Christ has not your very soul laid down on it and have found it as Isaiah says a bed that you can stretch yourself on the glorious excellency of the perfect law of liberty do you not approve it do you not grow in the knowledge of it is it not something that you love why is

[22 : 08] God performing carrying on not leaving you to the dry husks and the cold and clammy part of fleshly religion your knowledge is enlarged in the precious work of Christ why Paul always prayed for these people he wrote to on these lines you read the first of Ephesians as I have often said you wouldn't think they needed much more praying for until you come to the latter part of the first chapter then you can see that Paul sees many things that they need prayer for so it is with us all we all need to be prayed for oh yeah this is the beauty of a pastorate beauty of those who have the authority in the church of God they've got to pray

I've got to pray for my people I don't know anything about it in that sense they don't know what I'm praying for perhaps if they did they might feel a little aback they would some of them but over these long years now you see I've watched this very solemnly I have to give an account yeah I've watched them grow up I've watched them depart I've watched them cleave knowledge therefore is highly desirable and is to be prayed for this knowledge is the knowledge that will show truth from error bondage from liberty how excellent is this how sweetly it is approved the same with the atonement of Christ the precious blood of Christ

I've watched this grow in those before whom I have ministered there where there was a day they knew little about it time has come when I believe it's their life their strongest plea blood of Christ for their sins well who begets this in them what word of truth is it that makes this so powerful in their life he that hath begun a good work in you is not this a good work to put you on your knees as a guilty sinner pleading the blood of Christ as the only remedy yes only the only remedy don't try and find another one will you there is none other name and there is certainly no other remedy

God has brought you if ever you were mentioned in the sincerity that the apostle speaks of here in this tenth verse that he may be sincere now get this word sincerity right you can have grades of sincerity they that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth this is the sincerity if ever you were mentioned on your knees before God and I spoke from this second chapter of knee work the prayer meeting Monday night the blood of Christ what a excellent thing it is your soul approves it out of the depth of your need there's nothing to equal it could well understand the apostle saying in his epistle to the

Hebrews speaking of Christ's entrance into heaven not without love I know it's old fashion but it won't be your old passion in the day of Christ will it no far from it it'll be the passport to endless felicity yes the blood of Christ John reaffirms this very beautifully in his first general epistle the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanses us from all sin I have heard this on more than one dying bed that I've had to visit some of our people that have now gone this is what they died on this is where they rested their poor dying heads upon the precious blood of

[28 : 05] Christ and that's a good pillow this is where they found their everlasting rest they have proved it in the hour of death that's what I want to do don't you it's excellent now this is tried they try as the margin says or approve put the two things together and the answer is easy metal instruments are tried when David was clothed with soul's armor he put it off he said he hadn't proved it what you proved you don't mind trusting do you but what you haven't proved you very much don't as to the security of it now in life in our passage through this sin stricken world carrying with us sinful bodies being men and women of unclean lips like

Isaiah was and carrying with us unclean bodies what we have to look to as the only efficient and effectual remedy but the value of it is beyond the telling it isn't in name only it's how it came whose blood it was who provided it in the first instant for it had no beginning until the Bethlehem's manger there it began there the precious fountain originated in actual reality in the purposes of God before the foundation of the world but in the actual working out this precious fountain in the sacred veins of the infant

Christ Jesus the incarnation there was this excellency provided they try it in their prayers they find relief oh that's lovely sinner are you in trouble today have you tried the relief we meet people who are poorly and we feel we can recommend them a good remedy I know there are plenty of quack doctors about but if you can recommend something you do don't you may I recommend to you if you feel your guilt and absolutely abject poverty and your religion yielding you nothing and you coming to a place you can't move

I say there is a door of hope in the blood of Christ yes and this is what the gospel is for to tell you this is so that it's knee work for you and confessing with the tongue as the next chapter goes out to speak if we confess that not otherwise it's no good if I may use a figure leaving the cork in the bottle no you have to take the cork out and only God can do that but when he took it out of the bottle in David's life through the instrumentality of Nathan you see what came out the 51st

Psalms they approve things that are excellent he that hath begun a good work in you now how am I to give a a cent and set our seal to this this is a good work divinely good supremely good words praise us good job they do never express the majesty and the glory of salvation here below it is this prayer here but the apostle refers to God uses other things doctrine this is doctrine what I've just been speaking of the righteousness and atonement of Christ is sound doctrine sound words which he exhorts

[33 : 44] Timothy to hold faster he also tells Timothy that all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine for reproof reproof well this is not surely something that fits into the 20th century is it?

is God still using this means? oh yes good thing too isn't it? he will never leave it will he? but oh God's reproof has in it that which instructs he is carrying on his work he's performing what he's begun he's doing it and where does this reproof come from?

flattering friends? those who would pat you on the back and say well done brother you're on the high road to heaven don't worry or does it come from those who say beware be careful thankful are the wounds of a friend the kisses of an enemy are deceitful and deceitful indeed they are beware of flatterers beware of that well done of the human nature rather seek the well done at the end of the journey which awaits the good and faithful servant this is how God teaches by reproof you know it some of you don't you?

and painful reproofs it's been too isn't it? scripture is profitable for reproof thou art the man says faithful Nathan he didn't carry favor from David did he?

couldn't do with God's word in his heart Jeremiah couldn't carry favor from those kings he served under Zedekiah Zedekiah comes to him dissembling and he says to him is there any word from the Lord?

[36 : 28] the hypocrite he didn't want a word from the Lord he wanted Jeremiah to alter his message Jeremiah had said that God had commanded them to go out and give themselves up to the enemy and their lives would be spared and Zedekiah would not do it and he ended up blind and in the enemy's hands and yet he comes to Jeremiah with duplicity is there any word from the Lord as much as to say if there is I shall be only too glad to hear it and do it pause Zedekiah oh to be preserved from such dissembling and hypocrisy in this the Lord corrects as well as reproves for this doctrine or this scripture is to put us right correct us this is painful work if never this means some tears disappointments correction correction he that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on you'll need correction we all must have it where should we be without it and it's correction from God you see therefore it's effective may take a long time to learn the lesson there is the correction what pains

God takes to correct doesn't it that if he is correcting you today I was going to say I don't envy you but I didn't really mean that I I am truly thankful if what your trial is to you although other people can't understand it or you God is correcting you putting you right where you've been wrong yes straightening out the crooked thing bitter work this very often in many lives both in the scriptures and outside of it but here lies the reality of it all he that hath begun he won't hand it over to a subordinate he won't say to

Paul well now look Paul you carry this work on for me in Timothy he won't say to any of his under shepherds that he never has said no look you carry this work on in the heart of your deacon I couldn't undertake the task you carry this work on in the life of this new person that's come to your chapel you take care of them now leave them in your hands you correct them you reprove them no but when God does it it's done and the last thing in that clause that we're quoting from is for instruction in righteousness instruction in righteousness profitable for doctrine reproof corruption instruction in righteousness how glorious is God's work we don't touch it do we nor do we want to having learnt the perfect law of liberty that it's

God's work but look at the means he uses according Paul says to my gospel in the second of Romans well it wasn't the gospel that Paul originated but it was the gospel committed unto him to preach and so it still is but the time has gone may the Lord bless these thoughts to us profit them to us grant us hearing the time is short yes ere we come to the last part of the text the day of Jesus Christ which if the Lord help I shall try and speak from the faith Amen again doesn't say