

# Philippians (Quality: Average)

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Date: 04 December 1960

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the Epistle to the Philippians.

Chapter 1 and the 6th verse. Be in confidence of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1, the Epistle to the Philippians and the 6th verse.

The Apostle Paul had a very blessed persuasion wrought in his breast that those who made up the Church of Christ at Philippi, having their names on the church wall there, each one, every one, had a good work begun within.

And there was the blessed guarantee that God would finish it as the margin reading runs.

[ 1 : 32 ] And when you think of the Church of Christ at Philippi, from that viewpoint, it stands out as a unique church.

Because it means that those who belong to the Church of Christ there were all sheep. No goats, all sheep, no tares.

And it may be that there are very few Churches of Christ nowadays to be found of such a character.

And yet the Apostle Paul had that solemn feeling within, even as it is meek for me to think this of you all.

Because I have you in my heart. And the Apostle Paul, looking at the subject and the setting of it, must have had some wonderful reflections as he was inspired by the Spirit of God to pen the Epistle to the Philippians.

[ 2 : 43 ] At the time, he was the prisoner of the Lord at Rome. And yet he would go back in his mind as to how God ordained that he should be found at Philippi years before.

And to preach the Gospel there, and to be used of God for the Church of Christ at Philippi to be founded and built up under his labors in word and doctrine.

A wonderful consideration that is, for one whom God has ordained to preach that he has been used by the Lord his God for a Church of Christ to be established and built up.

And you will remember as you read in the Acts of the Apostles that the Apostle Paul said that the Apostle Paul was journeying, desiring to preach the Gospel where God would have him to be.

And you read, we are saved to go into Bithynia. But the Spirit suffered us not.

[ 4 : 05 ] And then, later on, we were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia.

Not allowed to remain and preach the Gospel there. And then the Apostle Paul saw in addition a man saying, come over into Macedonia and help us.

And then you read, assuredly gathering, that this was the will of God where we should be. The Apostle Paul was found at Philippi.

And in searching around, he finds a gathering for prayer by the river side.

And there is Lydia, a hearer, a worshiper. And she becomes the first one to be wrought upon under the Apostle Paul's ministry.

[ 5 : 08 ] Lydia, of the city of Thyatira, the seller of purple, Herodot, whose heart the Lord opened. And thus the good work was made manifest as being begun in her.

And that was the first fruit of the Church of Christ at Philippi. And then later on, when Paul and Silas were in prison for Jesus' sake, you will remember how God wrought upon the jailer at Philippi when there was an earthquake in the jail.

And there was another earthquake of a different nature in the jailer's conscience. And he was wrought on by the Spirit of God and made manifest as one in whom the good work was begun and baptized and became a brother to Lydia in the church at Philippi.

And so you might go on. The setting of the subject is wonderfully instructive. There is this instruction in it. As I judge, Lydia, in the good work of grace begun in her, was led into the truth by gentle means.

And God is the sovereign in how he leads his people into the truth of which he is the glorious author. But the jailer, in the dealings of God with him, he was dealt with by terrible things in righteousness.

[ 6 : 59 ] And yet Lydia and the jailer were on the same church roll. And the jailer could not say to Lydia, I cannot accept you and recognize you as a sister.

What can you tell of the dealings of God with you in connection with an earthquake in your conscience? And that is how the Lord dealt with me.

But you are not to set up how the Lord has dealt with you as a standard whereby he shall deal with every other sinner in whom he begins this good work.

Sometimes the beginning is wonderfully clear-cut and definite. And sometimes it is very hard to define as the gentle dawning of the day when the night comes out.

But you must never, never forget, the soul that with sincere desire seeks after Jesus' love, that soul the Holy Ghost inspires with breathing from above.

[ 8 : 15 ]      above and now that is the setting of the subject and the apostle paul would have those things in his mind as he was inspired by the spirit of god to pen the epistle to the philippians and this church of christ that philippi was outstanding in the love and sympathy and care and regard it shows for the apostle paul while he was the prisoner of the lord at rome and there is one more thought i want to make plain which i judge needs to be remembered for the instruction therein now the apostle paul says in the context i thank my god upon every remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now and now the epistle to the philippians is outstanding because well now every line of it is to do with speaking well of the church of christ and the behavior of those whose names were on the church floor but there is one exception of the church of christian and the apostle paul names that i beseech you a dio and beseech sin tiki that they be of the same mind in the lord and there there was some matter which had arisen between you a dio and sin tiki wherein there had been brought about a difference and they were no longer walking in warm-women in warm-hearted fellowship as they had been wont to do and the apostle paul gets right down to a bedrock truth and beseeches that they be of the same mind in the north one is not to yield to the other on any wrong basis he does not say i beseech you a dio that she go and apologize to sin tiki and get matters put right between the two or it might be vice versa no he gets deeper down than that that they be of the same mind in the lord now i come back to this point which i think needs to be weighed up nowadays even as it is meet for me to think this of you all he still includes you a dio and syntheti although he administers a very gentle rebuke and gives a word of warning but he still accepts them as being on the church roll at philippi and those in whom the good work was begun and now you must keep that thing uppermost in your thoughts if you see at any time i'm not fitting caps on any brother or sister who seems to be a little aright and more than a little aright it may be in things divine going astray like a lost sheep or overtaken in a wrong spirit if you believe there is the good work begun within and that it is still there as it must be god being the author of it deep down that gives you

a warrant to hope that god in his dealing with them will make that good work manifest and he will chasten them wherein they have heard and bring them back again into the fold and do suffer that word of exhortation and let it be a means of instruction to you if you can feel assured in your mind that a brother or sister has a good work begun in his or her breath then you have got a warrant to wait on god and beg a blessing toward them that he will make that good work manifest in the corresponding fruits of it remember that and then let us start afresh being confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of jesus christ this confidence which the apostle paul was the subject of was based upon what he felt of the love of the brethren he that love it is born of god the word of god tells us the word of god and he says even as it is neat for me to think this of you all because i have you in my heart and the margin is ye have me in your heart and by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another god is love the religion of jesus christ is a religion of love love love is the golden chain that binds the favored souls above and he is a hair of heaven who finds his bosom clothed with love and now leaving the church of christ at philippi let us look at this subject from one or two viewpoints 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 you may say oh i'm glad i should be if i could have some sweet assurance the good work is indeed begun in me but i cannot feel as i should like to feel about it oh how happy i should be if i could have some warrant from god a thus says the lord to assure me he has indeed begun his good work in me it may be as you look back over life's journey that you cannot search out any evidence that is very clear-cut and definite and now the apostle paul was in the happy position that he could remember the time and the place when that good work was begun it was when he was cut down on the damascus road when a light shone from heaven above the brightness of the midday sun and then the apostle the apostle paul known then as saul of tartus was born again the good work was begun and it begins like this

let there be light and there was life the entrance of thy word giveth life so it was with the apostle paul and having that blessed persuasion about the good work being begun it gave him a wonderful authority in the preaching of the gospel wherever he was led by god to go to preach he could speak feelingly out of the abundance of the heart that which we have seen facet handled himself of the good word of life declare we unto you it is a wonderful mercy if you are concerned about this good work being begun in you if day by day you are after the spirit the things of the spirit that you may get evidence upon evidence that it is begun and there are many people who are taught of god who are in life even in times who are not as sure about the matter as they would like to be at times and i like to think of the hymn writer being old and gray headed when he said lord decide the doubtful taste thou who art thy people's son shine upon the work of grace if indeed it be begun you find in the word of god there were those in whom the good work was begun and the beginning of it was very very striking and yet even then in later life such was their souls experience that they were brought very low and needed new evidence to confirm their souls that the good work was begun and god was still carrying it on think of godly david when he was the sweet singer of israel and often was inspired of god to record sweet blessed psalm and sing them on a high note of phrase and then he says afterwards leave not my soul destitute make not my soul dare cast me not away from thy presence take not thy holy spirit from me and he felt like that in right of end our soul desires anew thy sweet thy lovely faith to view and if you have got some sure evidence from god the good work is indeed begun there will be still time when you will be saying show me some token lord for good some token of thy special love some token of thy special love show me that i am born of god and that my treasure is above in thy light shall we see light the word of god declares and if that light is not communicated then you will be much in the dark about the dealings of god with you and you will be in obscurity and you will begin to understand some scriptures which otherwise might seem trained reading

to you we grow for the walls like the blind and walk at noonday as in the night and are as if we had no eyes but it is to bring you to be exercised unto godliness that you might add yet further evidence the good work is indeed begun and being carried on and you will be saying lead me in thy truth and teach me oh send out thy light and thy truth let them lead me let them bring me to thy holy hills and to thy thy tabernacles and now looking as grace is given at this good word mark the word work it is something that is wrought within and the evidence of it being wrought within the evidence of it being in our lives and our lives without and it is said to be a good word then one thing is evident man has got nothing whatever to do with it good work and now that means god's work whenever you see the word good you must always relate it to god good work he and he alone can do a work in a sinner's breath that can be designated a good work it is the spirit that quickeneth the flesh profiteth nothing good work that would help you to stand firm and sure on a bedrock truth that which is born of the flesh is flesh you can make nothing else of it whatever it may look like it matters not it is like the wild flowers you can make a difference in summer time in the field buttercups daisies cows clipps making the realm of nature look beautiful but they are weeds and you cannot alter their nature we is the category in which they come remember that when you find them in your garden you treat them as weeds and eradicate them again you might take a crab tree bring it from its native surroundings in the hedgerow and plant it in your garden and you might cultivate it give it all extensions possible such as you do in treating fruit trees but your harvest would be crabs could not be otherwise might be outside pretty colored crabs pleasing to the eyes but crabs would be their character if there is to be fruit worthwhile profitable to the husband man then there must be a new nature imparted to the crab tree it must be grafted it must have an apple graft put on and that will triumph over the crab stock the new nature will predominate over the old yes and you see that is just how man is as he is born as i have said that which is born of the flesh is flesh whatever man produces although at its best we call it moral righteousness

it is not to do with religion that god is the author of whereby a sinner is made meat for the inheritance of the saints in life do remember that and it will help you to know what is found godly that which is born of the flesh is flesh and now that which is born of the spirit is spirit and when it says being confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it who is this he the holy spirit is he which has begun a good work in you poor sinner if indeed it is he can he and he alone can begin it and thus it is a good work you cannot do a good work with bad materials and the word of god tells us by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh living be justified by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of god not of work that any man should bear it and now this may seem very elementary teaching but i hope you will lay it to heart and prayerfully consider it this good work then must be that which god has wrought with him otherwise it cannot be designated good good in its origin a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven and then being good in its origin it will be good in its effect and it will be said of you and me with this good work begun within and they took knowledge of them that they had been with jesus in the first time when on the tree rich fruit we see it is then we cry a goodly tree much might be said along that line of thought being confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you and now when this good work is begun there is a beginning to reality you can no longer live your life as you've been living ere a sinner is born again his horizon is limited to time time things and all the purposes in life is to do with what shall we eat what should we drink where with all should we be close and to settle down in the things of this life in line one's nest well with all that this earth affords no other concern whatever reaching beyond time into eternity no oh but when this good work is begun although it may be almost imperceptible in the beginning of it but there it is the sinner finds something living and moving in his breath which he has never felt before

[ 28 : 39 ] he cannot feel as he has felt all his life hitherto in being in the world and of it but now he finds something within which the hymn writer terms an aching voice which this world cannot feel hitherto he has thought he has found some happiness in following after the flesh the things of the flesh the flesh because the flesh has been pleased in doing it but now he has come into reality and he knows life is real life is earnest and the grave is not its goal dust there are to dust return it was not spoken of at all the truth that is reality when a sinner awaits to the solemn awareness i have a soul a never dying soul i am bound for an eternal destiny either heaven or hell and once that knowledge is known and felt within the sinner cannot live the life he has seen living here before the thing is impossible he is now on the stretch that he may be fitted not so much for time but for eternity and he knows the truth that he knows jesus is the one who needs me i without him perish must gracious spirit make me heal help me in his name to trust and with pleasure in him as my portion boast and now can you journey back over your life however long you have lived and search out when you hope this good work was begun in you when you had to appear before the mercy seat and feel i hunger now for heavenly food and my poor soul cries out for god as the heart panteth after the walk of you so panteth my soul after thee oh god and you began to be after the spirit the things of the spirit and now that is a wonderful mercy and now that is a wonderful mercy you can name than to have some indubitable evidence that the spirit of god has moved in you and that he has indeed begun a good work in you get clear work sure evidence he has begun it he will not fail to carry it on and complete it oh but you must add that indubitable evidence which comes with the death the lord the spirit itself bearish witness with our spirit that we are the children of god and now let us look at some evidences of this good work what will will arise in our soul's experience when it is begun be in confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of jesus christ and now when

this good work is begun i've already quoted one scripture the entrance of thy word give it life and when this good work is begun it illuminates the sinner within he understands that scripture and he knows more of it as he journeys on through life which shall know every man and the plague of his own heart the holy ghost will make the soul feel its bad condition for the six and not the whole need the good position you will remember on that blessed day of pentecost when the spirit of god was poured out in a wondrous fullness it said that they were pricked in their hearts the good work of the church hundreds of them three thousand all together tricked in their hearts which means their hearts were opened like lydia's and like the husband man's plough opens up the ground to show what is underneath and so the heart is open the good work of the church is open when this good work is begun within and there comes a solemn awareness of one's undone state in the adam fall a little realization of what one is by nature the church is open when this good work of the church is open and there comes a little bit of a word that you have read become applicable to you woe is me i am undone and there comes this knowledge woe is me i am undone and what i have done has undone me thou art the man then you appear before god just as you are guilty lost ruined helpless and at the time you may be hopeless because you may not realize then god can be just and justify the ungodly you may be thinking how can god who is holy have anything whatever to do with a sinner unholy such as i am but this good work being begun will continue to illuminate you within and you will be brought like the woman in the gospel to fall down at jesus feet and tell him all the things and you will say ultimately what you've done earlier on a guilty weak and helpless worm on thy kind arms i fall be thou my strength my righteousness my jesus and my all god be merciful to me a sinner stay unto my soul i am thy salvation and that is a blessed evidence of the good work being begun the eyes of the blind shall be open can you go with that man in the gospel this sabbath morn one thing i know whereas i was blind now i can see oh it may be you cannot see very clearly as yet that the good work is begun but there is something within

you that makes you agree with a hymn writer some small glimmering light i have and yet too dark to see my way jesus present still i crave when oh when will it be day a gracious conviction of sin the knowledge of the plague of the heart oh they are evident that the good work is indeed begun but this will arise out of it oh there is repentance and their repentance is a very scarce price it would be a wonderful mercy if god should pour out a spirit of repentance on us in our denominational life but oh you and i need it repentance godly sorrow for sin you remember the selmish said did you ever say it on your own behalf i will be sorry for my sins oh that is a wonderful feeling to be the subject of to appear before god and out of the abundance of the heart for the mouth to speak to thee i come a sinner grace and well thou knowest all my faith repentance that needeth not to be repented of what will be the evidence that repentance flows from of good works and is genuine who so confesses and forsaketh his sins shall obtain mercy the lord knoweth them as of his and let everyone that nameth the name of christ depart from iniquity repentance is to leave those sins we've loved before and show that we in earnest grieve by doing so no more and it is essential as an evidence that the good work is begun he which has begun a good work in you and this repentance means a change of mind and that is what is given when a good work is begun in a sinner's rest a new heart will i give you a new spirit will i put within you i will take away the stony heart out of your flesh i will give you a heart of flesh as you are born your mind your karma mind will be saying we will not have this man to reign over us your mind but now you find within you another mind and in that mind you have a concern that jesus christ shall reign over you and you have the privilege to be his humble willing subject in the kingdom of his grace and that you might say wherefore we receive in a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace whereby we may serve god acceptably with reverence and with godly fear

and then there will be that evidence above all others behold this prayer oh where this good work is indeed begun the heart is opened and that word is fulfilled then began men to call upon the name of the lord i like to emphasize that viewpoint of the truth can you remember when you began to do it you should be able to do it when you attempted it may be with a stammering tongue to knock at mercy's door it may be Pontius

Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear, the upward glancing of the eye, when none but God is near.

[ 42 : 10 ] All this good work begun in a sinner's breath is made manifest at times, when a poor sinner can only feel my heart is sore pain within me.

And he says with the psalmist, All my desires are before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee. And there is this to encourage you, whene'er to call the Saviour mine, my soul with ardent wish aspires, can it be less than power divine which animates these strong desires?

And in this good work being begun, there will be living faith. Faith it may be as a grain of mustard seed.

But, from the moment the good work is begun in a sinner's breath, he becomes a believer. I like that character given to people thought of God.

You find the Spirit of God uses that word in the Acts of the Apostles, and believers were added unto the Lord.

[ 43 : 28 ] And that is a sure evidence that the good work is begun. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

And you find this, where the good work is begun. From that time on, you can ask that sinner, What think ye of Christ?

And you will find he is a believer in who he is. Dost thou believe on the Son of God? We believe and assure thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Lord, to whom can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And that faith, though it be as a grain of mustard seed, keeps the sinner with the good work begun with him.

Ask in the way to Zion, with his face, with the word. Ask in the way. You are not always sure you are in the way, as a pilgrim to Canaan bound.

[ 44 : 43 ] But you keep asking the way. Yes. And those feeble desires and wishes so weak, as Jesus inspires and bid you still see.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, in the beginning of it there will be living faith.

Faith in Jesus can repel the darks of sin and death. Faith gives victory over hell. But who can give us faith?

And without faith it is impossible to believe in you. For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him.

And I must come to the Amen. And you must, as great is given, think on some of the evidences I have sought to lay before you.

[ 45 : 52 ] And oh, that you might have something with thus saith the Lord to assure you that the good work is begun.

And then, if the Spirit of God has begun it, whatever comes upon you as you journey through life in the ultimate issue, it will only be overruled for this good work to be carried on and completed.

Every state, our distresses, shall be profit in the end. Every ordinance of blessing, every providence of friends.

And I want to be able to feel this, even as it is neat for me, to think this of you all.

Amen. ...

[ 47 : 08 ] ... Now it's like a baby, Lord.

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 50 : 29 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, the communion of the Holy Spirit be upon us and all who love the truth everywhere. Amen and Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.