

A GOOD WORK

by Rev. G. Grant Verdoold
10 November, 2019

Text:

“³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵ for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1: 3 - 6

Focus Verse:

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1: 6

The Hook:

The Apostle said that he was persuaded, and, oh what a glorious persuasion this is!! “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1: 6. He was so certain of this, that he also proclaimed, “³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ 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.” Romans 8: 38 & 39.

You see his confidence assures us that GOD is able, and that GOD will accomplish HIS “good work” in us. The Greek word translated here as “has begun” is used only twice in the whole of scripture. It is used here in Philippians and again in Galatians 3: 3 (“Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”). Both times in reference to salvation itself. You see, when GOD begins a work of salvation in a person, HE perfects and finishes that work! Thus, the verb, “will complete” points to the eternal security of the believer!!

Oh, our blessed text this morning gives a world of comfort to the believer’s heart!

In the midst of calamities, whether they be the “wreck of nations”, the “crash of empires”, the “hevings of revolutions, or “the scourge of war”, the great questions often asked by many are these: Is Christ’s kingdom safe? Will GOD be glorified? Will GOD’s honour be increased? Is GOD’s throne secure?

The answer to all of these troubling questions is, “Yes! YES!!” Christ’s throne stands secure, and though the earth rocks beneath HIS feet, HE stills stands secure!! Christ stands upon a rock which will never be moved or swayed. Christ is the solid rock that will never be moved or shaken. “Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes’” Matthew 21: 42

Amidst the tumult and clash, amid the froth, maybe our thoughts have been pummeled, maybe our hearts have been brought low in these times, in this season of discontent. Yet there is a noble and holy truth which shall never fail, or be found lacking, and it’s this...Get ready for this great truth!

“⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2: 9 - 11. Praise HIS Name!!!

Our text today is a world of comfort, full of wonder! It brightens the heart and enlarges our hope. It dazzles the soul! “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1: 6.

You see, the life of a Christian is a series of miracles. Just like the lotus flower floating on the filthy Ganges River which submerges nightly into the murky river water, but undeterred by its dirty environment, it emerges the next morning without any residue on its pure white petals!! This is nothing but a miracle of GOD! This is a picture of the Christian life! We struggle in the filth and muck of the world all around us, but when we keep our eyes on Jesus, HE lifts us out of it all, and lets us shine with HIS brilliant glory!

The perseverance of the saints is a much-needed teaching today! Buckle on your helmets, my friends! Grasp your sword! Fasten on your breastplate of righteousness! Make sure your girdle of truth is tight around your waist! Pick up your shield of faith! Pick it up and hold it with a tightened grip! Fasten your feet into the shoes of the gospel of peace! (“¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—” Ephesians 6: 10 - 18)

“Be confident! Stand Strong!” Romans 8: 31. Remain in HIS holy confidence! “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1: 6

The Book:

This is what scripture calls “a good work”. The word used is “agathos”, literally translated as, “good”. It’s agathos! It’s good! Amen!

To bring a man or woman from darkness into light is good! To deliver him or her from the bondage of his/her natural corruption, is that not good? Of course it is good! To set the captive free is very good indeed! “¹ The Spirit of the Lord God *is* upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.” Isaiah 61: 1 - 3, “Oh, taste and see that the Lord *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in HIM.” Psalm 34: 8.

It is good for GOD Himself! It is good for society! it is good for the Church of Jesus Christ!

It is good for the glory of GOD! It is such a good thing that whoever receives it becomes the “heir of all good”! Did you know that you are the “heir of all good”! You are!! Moreover, whoever receives it becomes the advocate and author of further good! Is that not fantastic? This good is the best that any woman or man can receive!

To make someone healthy in body or wealthy in estate is good, or to educate a man or woman and train his or her faculties is good, BUT in comparison with the salvation of the soul, they sink into insignificance! The work of sanctification is a good work in the highest possible sense since it influences a person by good motives, sets a person on good works, introduces a person among good people, and it enlarges the heart, and in the end fashions him or her to be more like GOD Himself! That’s very good because GOD is always good!!!

Further, my friends, the inner life is a good work because it springs and originates from the pure goodness of GOD! This is very good because GOD is always very good!!!

As it is always good to show mercy (“He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8) so it is pre-eminently good on GOD’s part to work upon sinful and fallen mankind so as to renew them after the image of HIM who created them. “So, God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Genesis 1: 27

Brethren, the work of grace has its root in the divine goodness of The Father! It is planted by the self-denying goodness of The Only Begotten Son and it is daily watered by the goodness of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostle Paul recognizes that this is “a work”. It is something that must be accomplished. Brethren, in the deepest sense it is indeed hard work to convert a soul! “” Ezekiel 36: 26. If Niagara Falls were to suddenly start flowing backwards, it would be not as much a miracle as changing the will of a woman or man or redirecting the ragging passions of mankind! To renew the very core of an individual and tear sin from its hold upon the person’s heart, this is not only “the finger of GOD”, but the mighty work of The Almighty!!

Have you ever considered conversion is a work comparable to the making of the world! It is only GOD alone who fashioned the heavens and earth, HE alone can create a new nature.

This is a work that is not to be paralleled! It is unique and unrivalled seeing that Father, Son and Holy Spirit must all co-operate in it! For, to implant the new nature in the Christian, there must be the decree of The Eternal Father, the death of the Ever-Blessed Son, and the fulness of the operation of the Adorable Holy Spirit of GOD! It is a work indeed!! A Holy work!! The labours of Samson were but trifles compared with this!

The Apostle Paul affirms that this good work was begun by GOD alone! It begins with the Holy Spirit of GOD!

Paul was no worshipper of Diana of the Ephesians. The dark pagan moments of Roman culture never dampened Paul's heart! Praise GOD! Paul knew the truth!

The Apostle declares that the good work was begun by GOD. He declares that the faintest desire to humble faith is the work of GOD! The first step towards ending the separation between the prodigal and his father was taken by The Father of All (See Post Notes: Proverbs 15). "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." Romans 8: 15. We have been adopted! Oh Abba! Father!! Amen!!

Why did GOD begin this good work? Because mankind is alien to all good! We are insensible! We cannot be restored to GOD except by an agency which is Holy and from above! Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." John 6: 29.

Man is dead in Sin! "And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins," Ephesians 2: 1. See that? We are dead in sin therefore life must come to us from The Giver of Life. "And the Lord God formed man *of* the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." Genesis 2: 7, "And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord."" Job 1: 21, "For with You *is* the fountain of life; In Your light we see light." Psalm 36: 9

The work that is in the soul of a true Christian is not of her/his own doing but is commenced by The LORD of all life! "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life." Job 33: 4.

The Apostle is absolutely sure that GOD will accomplish HIS "good work". Please hear this part! It is further implied in our text (Philippians 1: 3 - 6) that HE who began a good work in you will complete it! The Greek word used here is *enarchomai*, which according to Strong's Concordance means, "to begin, to make a beginning." In other words, it is ongoing until it is finished! GOD will carry it on! HE will complete it! HE will finish it! Its fruition will be accomplished by The Almighty GOD!!

Therefore, every good thing that is in a Christian, not merely begins, but progresses and is consummated by the fostering grace of GOD through Jesus Christ! Make sure you hear this! Every good thing that is in a Christian, not merely begins, but progresses and is consummated by the fostering grace of GOD through Jesus Christ!

Do you hear this! Salvation is GOD's work, not man's! It is GOD's work, not ours!

Brethren, this is the theology Jonah learned in the "Great Fish College". He learned some "holy fishology" there in the "University of the Great Deep". I believe it would be a good thing if many of our professors in religion could be sent there because humanity often gets

puffed up in human self-sufficiency. In the "College of Deep Experience" Jonah was schooled and disciplined.

His tuition was paid by GOD. His teaching came from GOD alone! (see Post Notes - Jonah). It is there that Jonah is made to know the vileness of his own heart as he peers into the chambers of the guts of the great fish. Jonah will confess from first to last that Salvation is not of he who wills or runs away, but is from GOD, GOD alone! It is GOD alone who shows mercy "And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth," Exodus 34: 6.

GOD's name is a memorial to all generations. Moreover, God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.'" Exodus 3: 15. "Who *is* like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who *is* like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Exodus 15: 11.

The Apostle Paul wrote as an inspired man. Even though he was imprisoned for his faith, he remained confident in the work of GOD. (Philippians 1: 6). He believed that if GOD began this good work, why would HE not carry it out! "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11.

GOD is able to see the end from the very beginning! HE is Almighty! HIS arm is not too short! Nothing is too hard for HIM! "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." Isaiah 59: 1, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You." Jeremiah 32: 17, "Behold, I *am* the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?" Jeremiah 32: 27, "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also." John 14: 19

Now I want you to notice the timing. Verse 6 of our text tells us that GOD will accomplish HIS "good work" "until the day of Jesus Christ"! Paul is pointing to the Second Coming of Christ! "16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And, thus we shall always be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4: 16 & 17.

Some churches have forsaken believing in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ! They have abandoned this great promise of hope! I urge you, do not lose sight of The Saviour's return! The Christian will not be perfected until The LORD Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the trump of the archangel, and the triumphant shout of GOD!

What about the souls who have passed away before HIS coming again? Their souls are doubtless perfect and made fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. "giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light." Colossians 1: 12. Holy scripture does not regard a man as perfect when the soul is perfected. It regards the human body as part and parcel of the whole person. Though the Greeks may have forgotten about the body, the Bible sees the whole. Since the body shall not rise again until the coming of The LORD (1 Thessalonians 4: 16 & 17), we shall only be

revealed in the perfection of our manhood/womanhood at the moment Christ is revealed in all HIS glory at HIS coming again.

The day of the Second Coming of Christ is set as the day of the finished work which GOD has begun, when in perfection body, soul and spirit shall see the face of GOD revealed with acceptance (“that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5: 27) and forever and ever we shall rejoice in the pleasures which are at GOD’s right hand. “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.” Psalm 16: 11. This is a good comfort! This then is what we are looking forward to! Persevere then! Persevere onward! GOD will wipe away every tear! “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:4. HE will wrap us with the fair white linen which is the righteousness of the saints! “And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” Revelation 19:8.

We shall wear the robes of the righteous. “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks *himself* with ornaments, And as a bride adorns *herself* with her jewels.” Isaiah 61: 10. HE who brought us to the cross will bring us to the crown! Always remember that! HE who made us look upon HIM whom we pierced ““And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son* and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” Zechariah 12: 10, and mourn because of HIM, will cause us to see The Holy King of Kings in HIS awesome beauty, holy grace and elegance of eternal light!! Yes, HE who looked upon us when we were yet dead in our trespasses and sins “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,” Ephesians 2: 1, and called us into spiritual life will continue to regard us with favour until our life shall be consummated in the land of eternal joy! “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21: 4. Praise HIS Name!!!

The Took:

Now I’m going to get really real here! Don’t waste your life! Do what is important! Remember, all lasting joy is on the Calvary Road! Let us learn how to persevere! We need some holy lessons in perseverance! Follow the example of the saints who kept the faith despite persecution! Keep following Christ even though, one day soon, some may try to take your life! As the old saying goes, “Keep on keeping on!!” Trust GOD! Nothing plus Jesus still equals everything!

Let this precious truth be yours today. Illustrate this truth to the world by how you live your life! They may not want to see it but show it to them anyway!! They need to see Christ in you! Let your life boast about the LORD!! “¹ I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. ² My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad. ³ Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.” Psalm 34: 1-3.

Our ground for holding on must always be resting in our GOD! Spread a passion for GOD's supremacy in all things for the glory for the joy of all people through Jesus Christ!"
Isaiah 61:3

Christ has come into this mutinous world, which by the way HE MADE for HIS own glory and paid for an amnesty with HIS very own blood!

This is the cheering conclusion! Here it is! Everyone who lays down their weaponry of unbelief will be absolved from all crimes against the Sovereign of the Universe!

By faith alone!!! "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."
Hebrews 11: 6, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love." Galatians 5: 6 By faith alone enemies will become happy subjects of an everlasting kingdom of justice, joy, mercy, loving kindness and great goodness!!! Advancing this cause with Christ is worth your life! (There is a time soon coming when this may be required.)

By trusting in GOD, it is a good work, it is a holy work, it is a noble work that HE will complete!! GOD will complete HIS good work in you!!! Amen!!!!

Has HE done this work in you? Never look back! Those who have, have never regretted it, even as they lay on their deathbeds!

My friends, GOD is not in a hurry! Keep praying for the lost. Pray for your friends and neighbours! It is never too late to come to the LORD! Pray for your family. The prodigal is just over the horizon! Pray them home! Never give up! Persevere then!

This doctrine has a voice for the unconverted! Let them hear it! Let them see you live it out day by day! To be regenerated or born again is surely the beginning of a good and divine work in the soul and GOD *will* complete it!!!

AMEN!!!!

POST NOTES:

Proverbs 15 New King James Version (NKJV):

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. **2** The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. **3** The eyes of the Lord *are* in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good. **4** A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. **5** A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent. **6** *In* the house of the righteous *there is* much treasure, but in the revenue of the wicked is trouble. **7** The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool *does not do* so. **8** The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright *is* His delight. **9** The way of the wicked *is* an abomination to the Lord, But He loves him who follows righteousness. **10** Harsh discipline *is* for him who forsakes the way, *and* he who hates correction will die. **11** Hell and Destruction *are* before the Lord; So how much more the hearts of the sons of men. **12** A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise. **13** A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. **14** The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouths of fools feeds on foolishness. **15** All the days of the afflicted *are* evil, but he who is of a merry heart *has* a continual feast. **16** Better *is* a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure with trouble. **17** Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred. **18** A wrathful man stirs up strife, but *he who is* slow to anger allays contention. **19** The way of the lazy *man is* like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright *is* a highway. **20** A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother. **21** Folly *is* joy *to him who is* destitute of discernment, But a

man of understanding walks uprightly. **22** Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established. **23** A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word *spoken* in due season, how good *it is!* **24** The way of life *winds* upward for the wise, that he may turn away from hell below. **25** The Lord will destroy the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow. **26** The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the Lord, but the words of the pure *are* pleasant. **27** He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live. **28** The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil. **29** The Lord *is* far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous. **30** The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, *and* a good report makes the bones healthy. **31** The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise. **32** He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding. **33** The fear of the Lord *is* the instruction of wisdom, and before honor *is* humility.

Jonah's Prayer and Deliverance

1: 17 Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. **2** And he said: "I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me. "Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, *And* You heard my voice. **3** For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, and the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. **4** Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' **5** The waters surrounded me, *even* to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. **6** I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God. **7** "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went *up* to You, Into Your holy temple. **8** "Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. **9** But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the Lord." **10** So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry *land*."