

A Good Work (Philippians 1:6)

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Have you ever started something but never finished it? Maybe it was a project that you were excited about but after you got into it you lost interest. Perhaps it was a particular exercise program or diet that you started. You had good intentions, but you did not go through with it.

As a younger boy, I remember buying models of cars and trucks. There were a lot of pieces in the boxes. I started off with good intentions in gluing together the small pieces but somewhere along the way I lost interest and never finished most of the models that I had purchased.



Occasionally when I walk along the beach in Florida, I see the remains of partially built sandcastles. Apparently the children or sculptors of these sand castles got distracted or bored and left their castles unfinished. There is something sad about these ruins. Like the unfinished painting, the half-built house, or the incomplete manuscript, they are a haunting reminder of our human tendency to leave things undone.

In his book *Intercepted Letters*, William Marshall wrote:

"It is a great trial to one who is naturally fond of bringing a thing to completion, to see how many fragments—unfinished bits of life—are left over. He asks himself, 'What do I have to show for my labor?' Our trust must be that God will take up what is incomplete and wrap around it His completeness. 'He cannot fail.'"

What a difference between man and God! The Creator always finishes what He has started. All of His masterpieces, planned in eternity past and begun in time, will be brought to fulfillment in eternity future. This is when each believer will be completely conformed to His image (Rom. 8:29).

A favorite text of many, including myself, is Philippians 1:6 which reminds us that God does not leave our salvation undone. He completes what He begins; He finishes what He starts. This is true in relation to our past, present, and prophetic (future) salvation. Every aspect of our salvation will be completed by God. No stone will be left unturned.

Philippians 1:6

“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.”

God promises to finish what He starts. This is true in relation to the good work of salvation.

1. The good work of salvation is defined.

We must set the groundwork so we can understand what is being taught and said in this verse. What is the “good work” referencing in this verse and context?

Philippians 1:5 provides the answer:

“For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.”

Some suggest that the “good work” of Philippians 1:6 is only referencing the sharing of the saint’s financial gift which was given to Paul by the Philippian believers (Phil. 4:10-14). The people’s “fellowship in the gospel” or partnership and participation in the Gospel may be an allusion to this gift that was given to help spread the Gospel. Although their financial giving was a good work in helping to spread the Gospel, this explanation does not seem to be an adequate explanation of the good work that God began and will finish in their lives.

Homer Kent writes:

“To see it as a direct and limited reference to their monetary gift is unwarranted. Paul would not have hinted that their gift was only a beginning, and that more should follow.”

The view of a monetary gift being the good work that Paul is referring to is too narrow. It’s better to view verse six in a much broader fashion as Paul addresses these saints in his salutation. The “good work” (Phil. 1:6) is related to the “gospel”

(Phil. 1:5) and is referring to the work of salvation that God had brought into their lives through the Gospel. The people's faithfulness in helping to spread the Gospel reminded Paul of the great Gospel work of salvation that He began and will finish in their lives. God is faithful – He finishes what He starts!

Although they worked together in spreading the Gospel, it was their salvation through the Gospel that spawned Paul's praise. Their shared "fellowship in the gospel" (Phil. 1:5) caused Paul to give thanks for the Gospel work of salvation that God began and would complete in their lives (Phil. 1:6).

So the "good work" is the Gospel work of salvation which God began and will finish in the lives of His saints. These believers experienced the blessing of salvation and God was promising to finish "the good work" that He started. Salvation is something that God initiated in our lives, and He will bring it to a grand finale! God commences His saving work in order to continue His work in our lives, and He continues the work in order to complete it. When God gets involved in a person's life, He always finishes what He starts!

In Philippians 1:6, God is seen beginning and completing His great work of salvation in our lives. It is a work that encompasses our threefold salvation: Salvation in the past from the *penalty* for sin, salvation in the present from the *power* of sin, and salvation in the prophetic or future from the very *presence* of sin. This salvation begins with justification before God, continues with deliverance from present-day sin in our lives, and ends with the glorification of our body someday. God will bring His sovereign and saving purpose to pass in our lives which involves deliverance from sin's penalty, power, and very presence at the Rapture.

The expression "will perform" (epiteleo) means that God will complete, accomplish, bring to an end, and execute His saving plan for our lives. In other words, God will not let us down! God is faithful (1 Cor. 1:9). He will consummate His work of salvation in relation to our personal lives. What He began in the past is taking place in the present and it will be finished in the future when Jesus returns for us at His coming. This is the time when we will be glorified with a new sinless body that will never suffer or die.

Paul's reference to "the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:6) points to the day when Jesus Christ will return for His own in the Rapture. There are at least 18 references to this day

in the New Testament which are focused on the event of the Rapture (Rom. 13:12; 1 Cor. 1:8; 3:13; 5:5; 15:51; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16; 3:11, 20–21; 1 Thess. 4:17; 5:2, 4; 2 Thess. 1:10; 2 Tim. 1:12, 18; 4:8).

This means that the blessings related to our salvation experience will never end. God will keep His saving promises to us until Jesus returns for His Church, glorifies us, and takes us back to Heaven (John 14:1-3). In other words, when it comes to God completing His saving purposes related to our lives, we can be absolutely “confident” (Phil. 1:6) or *fully persuaded* that He will finish what He starts! There can be no doubt about it. You can take it to the bank, cash it, and know that it is yours!

2. The good work of salvation is explained.

This good work of salvation can be explained in three ways.

a. God saves us from sin’s *penalty* (doom) through *justification*.

This is the commencement of our salvation experience.

Philippians 1:6

“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.”

PAST Tense of Salvation

Deliverance from sin’s
PENALTY (DAMNATION)



Occurs Through JUSTIFICATION

COMMENCEMENT of our Salvation Experience

Every believing sinner was saved at the very moment he believed in Christ (Luke 7:50; Acts 16:31; Rom. 1:16; 10:13; 2 Tim. 1:9). The Bible teaches that “the wages of sin is death” or separation from God in Hell “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). When a person express faith in Christ the sinner is saved from the penalty of sin which is the ultimate expression of

God’s wrath and judgment in the Lake of Fire. This salvation occurs through receiving a justified position (legally righteous standing) in God’s sight through the

forgiveness and justification provided by Christ's shed blood on the cross. This is the good work related to our justification.

Romans 5:9

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood (*no longer reckoned as sinners but declared righteous before God*), we shall be saved from wrath through him."

The divine dilemma regarding the justification of sinners has been solved on the basis of Christ's shed blood. The shedding of Christ's blood and death on the cross provides the basis or foundation for our justification before God. Through the sacrificial shedding of Christ's blood, we are forgiven of all our sins and brought into a justified position and right relationship before God through the imputation of righteousness to our legal record in Heaven.



This Bible text is very clear. Our justification results in our salvation or deliverance from God's wrath and judgment in Hell (the wrath of God is turned away from us forever). Some people say, "I don't believe in a God of wrath and Hell." But what you believe or don't believe does not change anything. The Bible says there is a Hell and God's wrath is meted out upon sinners for rejecting His saving grace. One minute after you die, you will know there is a Hell.

Justification before God is a legal term that means we are acquitted of all our sins forever and given imputed righteousness in Christ. This means that from God's judicial and forensic perspective, perfect righteousness has been transferred to our legal record in Heaven. This means before God's throne we are accepted in His holy presence. Justification is a declaration of legal righteousness and acceptance before God. On the ledgers of our record in Heaven there are only two words: "Forgiven, Righteous."

Romans 5:1

“Therefore being justified (*declared legally righteous before God*) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

God accepts us in His holy presence because of the forgiveness and cleansing we have received through Christ’s sacrificial blood and death on Calvary’s cross. When Christ’s death is applied to our legal record in Heaven, we are forgiven and forever justified in God’s presence, given a standing of perfect righteousness before God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 explains it like this:

“For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Yes, God justifies us, imputing the perfect righteousness of Christ to our legal record, and therefore He accepts us forever! This means I am no longer considered a sinner in God’s presence; I am no longer considered an enemy of God; I am no longer condemned by God and under His wrath. I have been set free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).

This is called the doctrine of eternal security. God’s promise gives me security and safety. I’m just as “justified” as I was when I first believed. Why? Because God will perform it! He see it through!

Romans 8:33

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge (*legal charge of sin*) of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.”

In other words, no charge of sin can ever be placed upon our legal record in Heaven. How can this be? It’s because God declares every believer legally acquitted and righteous through the imputed righteousness which has been transferred to their legal account or record in Heaven.

Romans 8:38-39 speaks of the security of God’s love in Christ:

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

Paul said he was “confident” (Phil. 1:6) and now “persuaded” (Rom. 8:39) that God would carry through on His sovereign and gracious work of salvation. The words confident and persuaded are the same word in the Greek language (peitho). So God will not go back on His word and promise. God will finish what He began. He will perform it! God is certain He will do it but are you certain? Do you possess the assurance of acceptance in God’s presence forever? Do you doubt God’s promise of your legal standing before God and that He will come good on His promise?

This security and peace that Paul had can be ours as well. We can be confident! We can be reassured and fully persuaded that God will do what He has set out to do. Paul knew that God would not lose Paul and Paul could not lose God! God’s saving plan for his life was sure – it would come to pass! 2 Timothy 1:12 echoes similar words of confidence: “for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

Paul knew that God would come true on what He said! He would “keep” (guard) his soul, which Paul by faith had committed or deposited into God’s hand when he was saved. God would see him through all the way to the end! He was absolutely sure about it! In reality, Paul’s salvation and entire service was committed to God for His keeping and blessing.

We can be sure of a completed salvation because God is sure about it! Why aren’t you sure about your salvation if God is sure about it? In God’s mind, there is no possibility of failure or of partial fulfillment. He will bring His saving plan to pass in the lives of every one of His children. God is sure about it. Now why can’t you be sure about it? Salvation from start to finish is by grace (Eph. 2:8-9) and it’s according to God’s unalterable plan. Why don’t you just rest in God’s saving plan for your life?

Charles Spurgeon was so sure of his salvation in Christ that he once told his people that he would hang on to a cornstalk and swing over the fires of hell singing, “Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!” Now that is assurance! Beloved, we can be sure of our salvation because God is certain that He will see us through to the end! He will save us from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and someday from the very presence of sin.

When it comes to our salvation, we must be reminded that God must do it, and He must do all of it! It’s all for grace! There is no other way to be accepted before God’s presence since our legalistic works are not part of the grace and mercy of salvation

(Titus 3:5). Grace is not related to what we do, our baptism, our catechism, our church affiliation. Grace can only be channeled into our lives through Christ's saving work. It's only through justification we are saved from God's wrath and judgment in Hell.

"Born of the Spirit with life from above
Into God's family divine,
Justified fully thru Calvary's love,
O what a standing is mine!
And the transaction so quickly was made,
When as a sinner I came,
Took of the offer, of grace He did proffer,
He saved me, O praise His dear name!"

Robert Gromacki stated:

"A man becomes a Christian because God has begun to do a good work in him, not because he is doing good works for God (Eph. 2:8–10)."

Let us never forget this! Away with legalism!

2 Timothy 1:9 reveals that the beginning and planning of our salvation goes back even further – way back before the earth and universe were ever created! "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

God saves us the moment we believed in His Son. But this saving purpose was preplanned and then brought to pass by God's sovereign purpose and grace. What was planned in eternity past came to pass in eternity present.

"T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed."

God began the work of salvation. I had nothing to do with it. He planned my salvation, paid for my salvation, and prepared my heart for salvation. Let us never forget this. You are saved today because God saved you! And you can be sure that what He started in eternity past He will finish. God is not going to get the short end of the stick when it comes to our salvation.

Although man can and does respond to God's initiative through faith and personal choice (Luke 7:50; Rom. 4:5; 1 Cor. 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:9), God must get the credit for the whole transaction of salvation.

"His grace has planned it all,
'Tis mine but to believe,
And recognize His work of love
And Christ receive."

Philippians 1:6

"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."

We can be certain that our justification before God will never end because God says He will "perform it" (complete or execute it) until Jesus returns for us.

God does not underperform - He overperforms! Our salvation is based upon Christ's shed blood and His promise to perform (finish) what He gave to us! Our perfect justified standing before God cannot be changed or altered in any way because it is based solely upon the sinner being clothed in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.

One day a very cynical man met a lady friend in the shopping mall. Over a cup of coffee, she related to him the story of her recent conversion to Christ and her hope of eternal life. That prompted him to ask the question: "What if somehow when it all ends and you die, you find yourself in hell, not in heaven, what then?"

The relatively new convert looked him in the eye and said: "If I lose my soul, God will lose more. I will only lose my soul, but God will lose His honor!" Why? It's because God is true to His Word and has promised that "he which hath begun a good work in your will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

How reassuring and wonderful! The good work (the work of salvation) that God began in our life He will finish because He is good on His word! When we are saved, we get everything, and we get it forever!

Reflect on this before going on to our next point. If it would not be for God's saving work coming to pass in our lives, we would be on the broad road that leads to Hell

(Matt. 7:13-14). And our salvation has absolutely nothing to do with our human achievements and religiosity.

Jonah 2:9 illustrates that it's God who delivers us for Jonah said: "Salvation is of the LORD." Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and taken under the sea. He was inside the belly of this great fish for three days and nights before being disgorged from its belly onto dry land.

Jonah 2:10

"And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."



How much did Jonah have to do with His deliverance and salvation? Do you think for one minute that Jonah came out of the belly of this great fish and started bragging and saying: "Wow, I'm glad that I could somehow manage to work my way of this big fish. I had to get around the most horrible things inside his belly. You wouldn't believe what I had to go through to escape. I grabbed on to a piece of seaweed and made my way

up the throat of the fish and hung on for dear life. I then started pounding on the mouth of this great fish so he would open up and let me out."

Is this what happened? No!

Jonah 2:1-2

"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."

If it were not for God's intervention in answer to Jonah's prayer, Jonah would have never escaped from the stomach of this great fish. The same is true for each one of us today. If God does not save us, then we will never escape Hell and the Lake of

Fire. The good news is that God will “perform” (complete) this good work of salvation!

Titus 3:5

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

John Newton at age 82 said:

“My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior!”

It’s God who saves you; you don’t save yourself. God begins and ends the work of salvation. He gets all the credit.

John 1:13 puts us in our place:

“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

It’s God who does the work of salvation in our hearts and lives. He draws us (John 6:44), delivers us (Col. 1:13) and frees us from sin’s penalty, power, and someday He will deliver us from the very presence of sin when we receive a new body at Christ’s return. Our threefold salvation (past, present, future) is accomplished by God and Him alone as the rest of this study will confirm. It’s God who gets all the credit.

This means we should stop being overly obsessed with your own perseverance and start believing in God’s perseverance. It is ultimately God who perseveres in the work of salvation - not men. God will bring His saving purpose to pass in your life. He has justified you and today He is constantly seeking to sanctify you through His power. This is God’s good work (not yours) and it’s the work He will “complete” (finish). This is God’s promise to you today! You can be sure about it. This brings us to our next point.

b. God saves us from sin’s *power* (dominion) through *sanctification*.

This is the course of our salvation experience.

Philippians 1:6

“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.”

The child of God is also being saved today from the habit and dominion of sin. This is the present experience of our salvation.

PRESENT Tense of Salvation

Deliverance from sin’s
POWER (DOMINION)



Occurs Through SANCTIFICATION

COURSE of our Salvation Experience

Philippians 2:12 refers to this aspect of our salvation:

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (*possessing a deep and profound respect for God and your own vulnerability to sin*).

The authors of Scripture also view salvation as something that God is presently doing in our hearts and lives today. Please note that we are never told to “work for” our salvation but to “work out” our salvation in a practical way in our Christian life. This is referring to the salvation that we already possess within us as His children (a victorious position of deliverance over sin). There is a present salvation (spiritual deliverance and transformation) that we are to be working out in our current lives as Christians through God’s indwelling presence. This aspect of salvation pertains to sanctification which involves being saved from the power of sin in our lives and experiencing “newness of life” (Rom. 6:4).

We work out our salvation by keeping in step (cooperating) with (obeying) the Holy Spirit who leads us in the will of God (Gal. 5:16) and points us to the indwelling life of His Son Jesus Christ (“I live by the faith of the Son of God” - Gal. 2:20). The saints were told to “work out” or put into practice in their daily living what God had worked in them by His Spirit (new nature, new life, new motives, etc.).

Roy Laurin once said:

“It should be noted that the believer is one who is perfect in his position while being made perfect in his condition.”

The believer's present experience of salvation is called progressive sanctification where we experience daily victory over sin and grow in our character, fruitful living, and become more spiritual. We have a perfect and provisional position of victory in Christ over the sin nature (Rom. 6:6; Gal.1:4; 2:20; 5:24; 2 Pet. 1:4) but we must now put into practice by saying "No" to sin.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 commands:

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication."

The word sanctification means to be set apart from sin's power and dominion. In short, God wants us to experience salvation or deliverance from sin's power in our daily lives as we live a separated or sanctified life from sin, Satan, and the system of the world.

Someone said:

"Don't shift into neutral and possess the disease of sanctified paralysis."

Many of us will take God at His word when it comes to being delivered from Hell and damnation. But when it comes to some stubborn sin that keeps coming back to haunt us, we doubt that God can really deliver us from this plaguing sin. We trust Him for salvation from the Lake of Fire but not salvation from some specific stronghold or sin in our life. Beloved, God wants to perform this inner deliverance in your life today. He has promised to see you through! He will do it! Let Him have His way. His power can make you what you ought to be!

Salvation in the sanctification sense means we are being saved or delivered from the power and enslavement of sin thorough God working in our hearts. We experience His liberating life, nature, and power working on the inside of us to deliver us from sin's bondage and bring about Christlikeness in our lives.

Philippians 2:13 brings this out:

"For (*looks back to working out our salvation in Phil. 2:12 and provides us with the answer how this works*) it is God which worketh in you both to will (*providing us with the incentive and new determination to live for God*) and to do (*providing us with the strength and power*) of his good pleasure."

God is working on the inside of us through the Holy Spirit's presence to change our lives, to save and deliver us from ourselves, from our sins, and from a life that is misspent in worldly living. God wants to transform us and make our lives into something wonderful and beautiful.

“Something beautiful, something good
All my confusion He understood
All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife
But he made something beautiful of my life.”

We see by Philippians 2:13 and other verse (Rom. 8:4) that Christianity is an inside/outside job. It begins on the inside and works to the outside. If we try to start on the outside, we will miss the purpose of God's saving or inner transformational work in our lives. God gives us a new heart (Ezek. 36:26) before He gives us a new start. Our real deliverance comes from within. God's life and nature exists within our inner being so we might experience His delivering power over sin. God gets to our hearts and begins to change us for His glory.

Tom Constable comments on Philippians 2:13:

“This verse is one of the most comforting in the New Testament. Sometimes we want to do right but seem to lack the energy or ability to follow through. This verse assures us that God will help us. At other times we cannot even seem to want to do right. Here we learn that God can also provide the desire to do His will when we do not have it. If we find that we do not want to do right we can ask God to work in us to create a desire to do His will. This verse gives us confidence that God desires both to motivate and to enable us.”

Of course, yielding to God is necessary for victory (Rom. 12:1) but in yielding we must take hold of God's power and sufficiency. We are trusting totally in His power to deliver us from sin, Satan, and worldly vices.

Kenneth Wuest has commented:

“It is not a ‘let go and let God’ affair. It is a ‘take hold with God’ business. It is a mutual co-operation with the Holy Spirit in an interest and an activity in the things of God. The saint must not merely rest in the Holy Spirit for victory over sin and the production of a holy life. He must in addition to this dependence upon the Spirit, say a positive NO to sin and exert himself to the doing of the right.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 reminds us of the goal of our present salvation and transformation: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The Spirit is working to bring our lives in conformity to Christ's character and will. This is the saving process of sanctification, progressive sanctification, which delivers us from the power of sin and transforms us into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:3-4 presents the way of our salvation or transformation within our Christian life: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

God in His grace has granted to us the complete resource of victory through His divine (Godlike) power and nature implanted within us. We have escaped the moral decay and spiritual rot of this world through our union or identification with Christ.

God has left nothing undone! Again, no stone is left unturned. God will finish what He began. He will perform it! This includes our everyday deliverance (salvation) from sin's power and enslavement.

I once saw a sign which read:
"Be patient! God's not finished with me yet!"

God's present salvation or sanctifying work in your life will come to pass. This is true in both a general and specific way as it relates to our growth and sanctification in relationship to God's purpose for our lives.

Paul VanGorder shares this:

"Every workman takes pride in a project completed and well-done. I thought of this recently when I visited the site of a new house my friend was building. The foundation had been laid, the walls erected, and the wiring and plumbing installed, but the structure still wasn't a house. It needed the finishers. Without the woodworkers, the cabinetmakers, the carpet layers, and the painters, the building was incomplete.

“We as Christians need a ‘finisher’ too. The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, which began at conversion, must continue until the One who began the transformation finishes it. And that can happen only by trusting and obeying Jesus, “the author and finisher of our faith,” the One to whom we are being conformed.”

God is not the architect of incompleteness. The Bible says, "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). Our part is to stay in fellowship with Him. He'll do the rest.

The story is told of the sculptor whose statue of a horse fascinated and caught the admiration of everyone. One day he was asked, “How did you take such an ugly, unpretentious piece of stone and make such a beautiful image of a horse?” His



answer: “I simply chipped away everything that didn’t look like a horse!” This is what God is doing in our lives! He keeps chipping away at us. He is still working on us to make us what we ought to be!

God has not written me off! He has not forgotten me; he has not sidelined me! He just keeps on working in my life! He is chiseling away at my life and the rough edges of my character and faith.

“He's still working on me
To make me what I need to be.
It took him just a week to make the moon and stars
The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars.
How loving and patient He must be
'Cause He's still workin' on me.

There really ought to be a sign upon my heart
Don't judge him yet, there's an unfinished part.
But I'll be better just according to His plan
Fashioned by the Master's loving hands.

In the mirror of His word
Reflections that I see
Makes me wonder why He never gave up on me.

But He loves me as I am and helps me when I pray
Remember He's the potter; I'm the clay."

God wants to make us into what He wants us to be and when we yield to His sanctifying power and plan for our lives, He will see us through. What sinful habit must you be saved from today? Is there one sin that has been eating away at you? Perhaps it is pride, an unforgiving spirit, covetousness, lust, gossip, or anger? We can experience salvation or deliverance from the power of sin today as we yield to the life of God and new nature which we already possess (Rom. 6:13). We must learn the secret of working out the inward delivering power of God in our daily lives ("work out your own salvation" – Phil. 2:12). If you are struggling with some specific sin in your life. If so, God will "perform" His work in you.

Philippians 2:13

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure."

"His pow'r can make you what you ought to be;
His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;
His love can fill your soul, and you will see
'Twas best for Him to have His way with thee."

Those who work and build things out of wood know that it takes a lot of work to finish the wood and bring it to perfection. There are nail holes that need to be filled. The roughness in the wood needs to be smoothed. The procedure to achieve the desired effect is that the wood has to be sanded. This is a big job. The woodworker needs to sand for a while, then he will stop and run his hand over the sanded area to see how it feels. It might still be a little rough, so he sands some more. He keeps repeating this until the wood has the desired smoothness. He then stains it and varnishes the wooden piece in order to produce the finished product.

This is so much like our lives. God looks at us and envisions the finished product. But we aren't finished yet! We have a few holes to be filled. We have rough spots to be sanded. In one sense, Jesus looks down, rubbing those sanded areas, to see how smooth we are becoming. Maybe it isn't quite right, so we are sanded a bit more. Eventually, that area is okay but there is another one that should be sanded as well. The process continues all through life. When we reach glory, God will look at us and be pleased with His finished work in us.

God promises that He will keep working in our hearts and lives to sanctify us and save us from ourselves and sin. He will perform it! He will bring His purpose of sanctification to pass in our lives. God is not giving up on you! He has more victories for you to win and more things He wants to accomplish through you.

Dr. McGee gives a lovely and personal illustration to prove the point of God continuing to work in our lives to bring about His sanctifying and overall purpose for us as Christians. What God asks us to do, He will give us the spiritual and even physical provisions we need to do it.

“Because this is my life verse and therefore very meaningful to me, I hope you won’t mind if I tell you about it. I was a very poor boy when I went away to college. My dad had been killed in an accident in a cotton gin when I was fourteen years old. My mother took my sister and me to Nashville, Tennessee. I had to get a permit that allowed a boy of fourteen to go to work, and I worked for a wholesale hardware concern. I had to be up by five o’clock in the morning to pick up the mail and have it sorted and on the desks of all the officials in each department.

I should have been in school, and I wanted to go to school. Later I had the privilege of going back to school because a wonderful friend acted as a father to me. He had a son who was a drunkard. He had wanted his son to get a college education, but he didn’t; so the man helped me get a job, and I was able to go to college. Every year I thought it would be my last year. I never thought God would see me through—I had very little faith. The last year I was in college was during the depression; 1928 and 1929 were bad years. I couldn’t get a job and had no money.

“On graduation day, after receiving my degree, I returned to my room in the dormitory, still in my cap and gown, and sat dejectedly on the edge of my bed. My roommate came and asked, ‘What in the world—did somebody die?’ I said, ‘Just as well to. I thought God had called me to the ministry. I’m through college, the depression has hit, and I don’t even have a job for this summer. I haven’t a dime to go to seminary next year.’

“While we were still talking, the phone rang. It was for me. On the other end of the line was a dear little lady who asked me to stop by her home where she lived with her sister. They were both widows, and they looked as if they had come out of the antebellum days. They attended the church where I taught a class of intermediate

boys, and I herded the boys into the church service every Sunday morning. The sisters sat in the pew behind us, and I always thought they disapproved. But in their home that day each handed me an envelope in memory of her husband. I left as soon as it was polite to go, hurried around the corner, and opened the envelopes. The first contained a check for \$250; I hurriedly opened the other envelope and found another check for \$250. Do you know what \$500 was like during the depression? I felt like a millionaire!

That night the Sunday school had a banquet for me, a farewell banquet, and they gave me a check for \$100. So now I had \$600! That is the money with which I went to seminary the next year. That night at the banquet someone gave me this verse: "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." That has been my life verse ever since that night.

McGee then concludes:

"I could see those rich kids being hugged by their parents at the graduation. No one was there to throw their arms around me, but it wouldn't have made any difference if there had been a whole delegation of well-wishers, because I thought I was through. I felt called to the ministry, but there was no possible way for me to go on to seminary. However, I had a wonderful heavenly Father who, through Philippians 1:6, put His arms around me and said, "I'll see you through."



Yes, God will see us through the path He has ordained for our lives, as it pertains to sanctification and service. He will not stop working in us and through us. He will "perform" (complete) His good work in us! What we need is the touch of the Master's hand! Myra Brooks wrote this poem of an old violin.

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
"What am I bidden, good folk?" he cried,

"Who'll start the bidding for me?
"A dollar--a dollar--then two, only two--
"Two dollars, and who'll make it three?
"Going for three"--but no--
From the room far back, a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow,
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "Now what am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars--and who'll make it two?
"Two thousand--and who'll make it three?
"Three thousand once--three thousand twice--
"And going--and gone," cried he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not understand.
"What changed its worth?" Quick came the reply,
"The touch of the Master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap, to a thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.
A "mess of pottage"--a glass of wine,
A game--and he travels on:
He is going once--and going twice--
He's going--and almost gone
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

This is what we need in our Christian lives today. We need the touch of the Master's hand and God is our Master. He will see us through and make something beautiful out of our lives. The Master's hand is the only hand that can transform our lives.

c. God saves us from sin's *presence* (domain) through *glorification*.

This is the consummation of our salvation experience.

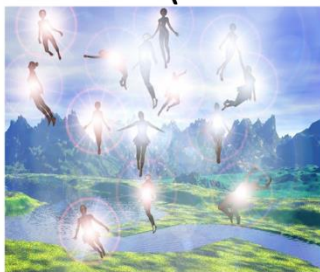
Philippians 1:6

"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."

This last phase of our salvation takes us to the day of Jesus Christ! The day of Jesus Christ is coming for His Church. It's our coronation day. It's our day when we will receive a new redemptive body and perfectly like Jesus Christ. God will finish this good work. You can count on it!

PROPHETIC Tense of Salvation

**Deliverance from sin's
PRESENCE (DOMAIN)**



Occurs Through GLORIFICATION

CONSUMMATION of our Salvation Experience

We are moving rapidly and confidently toward the conclusion and finale of our salvation. In the future when the Rapture occurs, we will receive a new glorified body that is free from the taint of sin, and which never again will suffer pain or the pangs of death. At the Rapture, we will experience the future and final aspect of salvation. It is salvation from the very presence of sin in a perfect redemptive body.

Peter speaks of this final "salvation ready to be revealed" (1 Peter 1:5) since the Rapture is an imminent event. This refers to what is going to occur at the Rapture when we get our glorified bodies. This final step or ultimate completion of the salvation of your soul occurs at the event of the Rapture. 1 Peter 1:9 declares,

“Receiving the end (*goal*) of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.” What a glorious prospect and blessed hope! Someday we are going to be given a new body that will be forever saved, delivered, and freed from the presence of sin, sorrow, sickness, Satan, and never again be severed through death from our saved loved ones. This will occur “at the appearing of Jesus Christ” or the Rapture (1 Peter 1:7).

Romans 13:11 speaks of this final climax of our salvation:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

This future and final aspect of our salvation is said to be “nearer than when we first believed” on Christ to be our Savior (Rom. 13:11) since our salvation will culminate and reach its climax at the Rapture of the church, when we receive our new glorified body.

Romans 8:18

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Someday we will receive a perfect body and be morally like Jesus Christ. This is the “glory” (beauty, splendor, and magnificence) that shall be revealed “in us.” Our bodies will experience a transformation that will finalize our salvation. We will be changed in a moment into the moral likeness of Jesus Christ. Our final salvation and glorification relates to our new body and perfect likeness to Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:17

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

An heir, of course, eventually inherits his father’s estate. That is just what is meant here. All that the Father has is ours! We have not yet come into the possession and enjoyment of all of it, but nothing can prevent us from experiencing it in the future. We will inherit everything that God has planned for us – a home in Heaven, a new body, reigning with Christ on earth. This is all part of our glorification. We are also joint heirs (co-sharers) with Christ. When He returns to take the scepter of universal government, we will share with Him the title deed to all the Father’s wealth on this earth and rule and reign with Christ.

Romans 8:23

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Once again, the redemption of our body is the major focus and final phase of our salvation experience. This refers to the time we will be delivered from the very presence of sin and never again experience pain, disease, and death. We will be “caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17). Our glorification day is coming!



The Rapture and Our Glorification

Some of our brothers and sisters in the Lord already claim their bodily redemption thinking that they will always be healed of disease and sickness. But sadly, they too end up getting sick, old, and eventually die like everyone else. Why? It’s because the redemption of the body is still future and is linked with the resurrection and transformation of God’s saints.

There is an aspect of our salvation that is still the future. As we struggle with sin, sickness, and sorrow in this life we can look forward to the day when the struggle will be over. The day of Jesus Christ is coming and everything will change. God will finish our salvation and what a grand finale it will be! He will perform it!

“It could happen in a moment, In the twinkling of an eye.
It could happen in a moment; He could split the eastern sky.
All our toiling will be over! All our sorrow and its pain!
When the Savior comes from Heaven, when his blessed face we'll see!
I am listening every moment,
For the mighty trumpet sound, what a time we'll have together
When the saints will leave the ground!

All our toiling will be over! All our sorrow and its pain!
It could happen in a moment Jesus Christ could come again!

There is a great and glorious salvation (deliverance) that still awaits us! What a day it will be when we are forever freed from the presence of sin, the pains of this life, and the pangs of death itself (Heb. 9:28).

1 John 3:2 explains it like this:

“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.”

Some glorious day we will be conformed to the image of God’s Son and we will experience unending splendor in a glorified body that is “fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Phil. 3:21). God will finish what He began. He will “perform” (complete, bring to an end) His good work in us! Our entire salvation will be complete and finalized when we receive a new body and stand in the presence of God without sin. In fact, God is so sure of our final salvation or glorification that He has already sealed the deal.

Romans 8:29-30

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

Soaring back into eternity past we discover that God already had our salvation and glorious destiny mapped out. This means that God’s plan will not be overturned or overruled. What God began at the moment of conversion (justification) and what He was doing throughout our lives as Christians (sanctification), He will bring to its completion when we stand before Him glorified. In this glorious moment, when we stand in His presence, we will experience firsthand that God was good on His promise, that He has seen us to the end of our journey.

What God starts He finishes! God will perform or bring to completion the entire work of salvation in our lives. Our salvation begins with justification, continues with sanctification, but ends in glorification! Every phase of our salvation will be brought

to pass. But the ultimate climax of our salvation experience is when we stand in the presence of Jesus Christ and are morally like Him. Beloved, God will bring us to this wonderful moment in time. What He began He will finish. This promise means that God will keep us saved, secure, sanctify us today, and perfectly and eternally sanctify our lives in complete conformity to His Son Jesus Christ. This is His ultimate saving plan that He will bring to pass.

“Yea, justified! O blessed thought!
And sanctified! salvation wrought!
Thy blood hath pardon bought for me,
And glorified, I too, shall be!”

A Threefold Salvation

**We HAVE BEEN saved from the
PENALTY of sin (JUSTIFICATION).**

**We are BEING saved from the
POWER of sin (Sanctification).**

**We SHALL be saved from the
PRESENCE of sin (Glorification).**

Salvation began with justification before God (Rom. 5:9), it extends to sanctification through God (Romans 6:11-13; 1 Thess. 5:23) and ends with glorification before God (Rom. 8:17, 29; 13:11). And God is sure to do it all! God is involved in every aspect and phase of our salvation. This is the “good work” that He has begun, will continue to do, and will finish when His Son returns for His Bride, the Church. It is salvation’s work. It is a great work. It is a good work!

Philippians 1:6

“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.”

Without God’s intervention we would have no hope of God’s delivering and saving power in relationship to salvation and sanctification. We would be doomed to die the sinner’s death and go to Hell; we would be certain to fail and live in defeat under the power of sin and Satan. We would miss the future deliverance of being rescued from our sinful bodies and given a sinless body at Christ’s coming.

Looking back, looking at our lives today, and looking ahead, we can only conclude that our entire salvation is a demonstration of God's amazing grace for He will "perform" (complete, finish, bring to an end) everything in His saving plan for our lives. 1 Thessalonians 5:24 gives this similar promise: "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

What a great and assuring promise! God will finish what He begins. You can be sure of it! The saving work that God began in our lives will be completed by God. God's work and plan will not be thwarted. God will perform what He started. This means that our past salvation experience (justification) and present salvation experience (sanctification) will be followed by our future salvation experience (glorification) and this will result in our completed salvation.

Augustus M. Toplady
"The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is Yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet."

In summary, God will bring His saving purpose to completion in three ways.

- **By maintaining our justification before God (Eternal Safety)** – Romans 5:9

*The assurance that we are eternally delivered from the *penalty* of sin.

- **By delivering us from daily temptations and making us more like Christ (Daily Sanctification)** – Phil. 2:12-13

*The assurance that we have victory over the *power* of sin.

- **By glorifying us with a new body (Unending Glory)** - 1 Peter 1:5-9

*The assurance that we will be released from the *presence* of sin.

God will perform it – every phase of our salvation experience! Our entire salvation is God's "good work" that He is bringing to pass in our lives, and He is faithful in accomplishing this work at every phase – past, present, and future.

Someone wrote:

“He Who began a good work in you
Will be faithful to complete it.
He Who started the work
Will be faithful to complete it in you.

If the struggle you’re facing is slowly replacing your joy with despair,
If the process is long and you’re losing your song in the night;
Well, you can be sure that the Lord has His hand on you,
Safe and secure He will never abandon you.
You are His treasure and He finds His pleasure in you.

He Who began a good work in you
Will be faithful to complete it.
He Who started the work
Will be faithful to complete it in you!”

