

Philippians: Joy in All Circumstances
The Perfecting Work of God, Philippians 1:6-8

Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

...For I am confident...For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all...

Why is Paul so confident?

Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Paul's assurance rests primarily on God's faithfulness and sovereignty, not on human effort or circumstances.

1. God is the one who began the good work

The "good work" refers to God's initiative in salvation, regeneration, and the believers' participation in gospel advancement.

It started with God, not with the Philippians' own merit or willpower. Since God sovereignly initiated it, Paul trusts He will not abandon or leave it unfinished.

2. God always finishes what He starts

Paul's deep conviction is that the same God who begins a transformative work in believers will carry it through to full completion.

This completion happens "until/at the day of Jesus Christ," pointing to Christ's return, when believers will be fully glorified and perfected.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

3. There is evidence of God's ongoing work

The Philippians' perseverance in partnership "from the first day until now" (v. 5) gives Paul concrete reason for optimism.

Philippians 1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

Philippians 1:7-8 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Despite external pressures their faith remains active. This visible fruit reinforces Paul's trust in God's sustaining power.

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This is a good moment to remind ourselves that God is still working on each one of us. He seeks maturity and growth in each believer.

Theological maturity

II Peter 3:17-18 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Maturity in personal behaviors that impact unity

I Peter 2:1-3 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

Ephesians 4:15-16 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Maturity in discernment: good and evil

Hebrews 5:12-13 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Maturity in the Bearing of Fruit

Colossians 1:9-10 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

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