

Philippians 2026 Series – Lesson 3
“Two-Fold Ministry: Defense and Offence”
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Text: Philippians:6-8

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: 7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Introduction:

In our study of the first six verses of this first chapter of Philippians Paul said *“grace to you and peace from our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* Thus, in the introduction of this letter Paul establishes that grace is the beginning and the result is peace. We appropriate God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. At that moment the Holy Spirit enters us into an eternal union with Christ and the Holy Spirit will see us through right into the day of Christ Jesus.

We concluded that section with verse 6 which says, *“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 is a pivotal verse in this letter, so let’s review it again.

Paul identifies the basis of his confidence in the security of the believers at Philippi. It is not in the ability or resources of the believers, but in the ability and resources of the Holy Spirit - the one who *“...having begun this good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ....”*

“being confident” (pep-oi-thohs) **having been persuaded**

Nominative Masculine Participle

Perfect Tense – completed action in the past with continuing result

Active Voice – subject performs the action

Paul identifies that as a matter of principle he has in the past with continuing result developed confidence that prompts a boldness to go public with the persuasion that the one having begun a work in them will see it through.

“hath begun” (en-arx-a-menos) = ***having as a matter of principle once and for all begun***

Participle - expresses a principle

Aorist Tense - point of time, however the grammar and sin tax indicate this is a point of time divorced from time and perpetuated forever.

Middle Voice – the subject (God) participates with the believer in beginning the work. God is the initiator in the beginning of the work (The Father provided Christ and Christ provided the means, but it requires the participation of the individual in calling upon the name of the Lord for salvation to occur.

Most modern Greek Grammarians identify this as a “middle deponent” stating that the form is middle voice but is to be translated as being active voice because there is no active voice form for the word.

(The active voice in Koine Greek indicates the subject performs the action. The Middle Voice indicates the subject participates in the action and is affected by the action.) In lesson one last week we cited a Greek grammatical rule that stated, “the action of an aorist active participle must precede the action of the main verb.” The action of the Holy Spirit having begun a work in you” preceded the action of carrying it through to completion.” That is true but to understand this word as an active voice where the subject performs the action apart from the participation of the believer misses the point that the individual must accept that provision which is supported by the middle voice.)

But to see this word as active ignores the response requirement of the believer and is a one of tools of the Reform Theologians who teach that God determined in eternity past who he would save and who He would not save -that you really don’t have choice, if you were chosen you will be saved and if you were not chosen then you have no opportunity to be saved. God did choose who He would save and who He would not save. However, His plan provides salvation for all who will receive it, but we must receive it. *“God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”* (II Peter 3:9). Therefore we need to understand the work of the Holy Spirit in beginning this work in you required your participation, but He (The Holy Spirit) will see it through to completion. Every Scripture in the New Testament that speaks of Salvation is in a Greek grammatical form that affirms a once and for all act- Yes!

“a good work” (ergon agathon) work, good

(ergon) This is a singular neuter noun in the accusative case which identifies the work of salvation. The accusative case indicates the limits and boundaries of the work.

(agathon) This is a singular a adjective that describes a quality or attribute (good) and is in the accusative case to indicate the limits and boundaries of that

which is good of intrinsic value- good regardless of the form in which it is found. Every passage of Scripture in the Greek New Testament is in a grammatical form that affirms a completed act with continuing result – Yes! Once saved, always saved. The Holy Spirit initiates this work when you participate in receiving it.

“will perform” (epi-tele-sei) = will carry to completion in the future..

Verb- expresses action

Future - future tense

Active - subject (Holy Spirit) produces the action

Indicative Mood- Mood of reality

The Active voice here instead of the Middle Voice indicates the Holy Spirit performs the action of carrying us through to the Day of Christ. The active voice here is the doctrine of eternal security. Our security is the sole responsibility of the Holy Spirit.

“until” (a-chri) **right up into**: The work that the Spirit has begun, He (the Spirit) will bring to completion **right up into the Day of Jesus Christ.**

Pronominal Adjective -

Genitive Case - description - right up into.... the day of Christ

The Holy Spirit is the one who began the work (salvation) and Paul says that he is confident that the Holy Spirit will carry that work to completion right up into the Day of Christ.

“The day of Jesus Christ”

The Greek text says, **“...The Day of Christ Jesus....”** Remember, word order in the original language of the New Testament (koine’ Greek) is important as it places stress and emphasis for clarity of understanding. **“Jesus”** refers to His humanity and **“Christ”** refers to his role as the anointed sent one of God- His role as our redeemer. The stress here is upon our redeemer. Our redeemer is identified here as the man Jesus.

“The Day of Christ Jesus” must be distinguished from **“The Day of The Lord.”** The Day of The Lord refers to The Tribulation. The Day of Christ refers to the reality of the kingdom and begins for the Church at the Rapture and the rest of the saints at the Second Advent. These two days are compared in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 5:1-11.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³ *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.* ¹⁴ *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* ¹⁵ *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which*

are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall 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. ¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

I Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. ² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. ³ For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. ⁴ But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. ⁸ But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. ¹¹ Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

We pick up our study today at verse seven..

Verse 7:

“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.”

First, we need to get a corrected text here.

“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all,”

The Greek text says,

καθως εστιν δικαιον εμοι τουτο φρονειν υπερ παντων υμων
kathos estin dikaion emoi touto phronein huper pantohn humohn

“As it is just for me to keep on having this thought on behalf of you all,”

In other words, it was just for Paul to keep on having the thought that the One who began a work in them would carry it through to completion in them....

“because I have you in my heart” (this is not the correct reading in the Greek)

The Greek text says,

δια το εξαχειν με εν τῷ καρδια υμας

dia to echein meh en tae kardia humas

Corrected translation: **“because you have me in your heart”**

Paul is justified to think that the one that began a good work in them will see it through because they have Paul in their heart - in other words they give evidence of genuine salvation.

“inasmuch as” = These words are not in the Greek text, it simply says,

“both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.”

“partakers” *συγκοινωνους* **sun-koi-noh-nous** = co-participants

Paul says these Philippians are co-participants with him..

“both”

Paul identifies two areas where these Philippians are co-participants with him in grace.

“in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel”

“in my bonds” Through their concern and offering they have participated with him in his imprisonment. They were praying for him and had sent him some things to help him while he was in prison - (Reminiscent of Jesus’ statement - **“I was naked and you clothed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was hungry and you fed me, I was sick and in prison and you ministered unto me..”**.)

“in the defense and confirmation of the gospel”

This second area in which they were co-participants with him is two-fold:

“Defense of the gospel”

Ours is a defensive battle -

- put on the whole armor of God. (Ephesians 6)
- resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7)

“confirmation of the gospel”

There is more to this battle than defense - there is also an offensive to be waged. We must not only defend the gospel, but we must take the initiative in confirming the gospel. although **the battle is the Lord’s we are to fight as a good soldier...** We are to confirm the gospel.

- We confirm it first in our lives - we exhibit changed lives
- We confirm it next in our exposition and harmonization

In Verse 8 Paul indicates that God is his witness concerning his love for them.

Verse 8:

“For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.”

“long after you” επιποθῶ *epipothoh* = this is an intensive form of the Greek word for desire - Paul has an intensive longing for the Philippian believers.

But notice where this longing is...

“in the bowels of Jesus”

“bowels” σπλαγχνοίς *splag-ch-nois* = bowels. The word bowels or gut was used to represent compassion, deep affections or violent passion. We saw it form of it in our study in the “Doctrine of Forgiveness” in Ephesians 4:32 as well as in the parable of the Prodigal Son. It is a gut wrenching compassion which Paul identifies as the deep affections he has for them in Christ

“in” ἐν *ehn* = in the sphere of... in the environment of Christ and His teachings.

“Jesus” Christ χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ *Christou Iaesou* = Christ Jesus

Christ - His role as Savior - Messiah

Jesus - His role in humanity

So, Paul indicates that his intensive longing for the Philippian believers is in the sphere of the deep affections of Christ Jesus.

They will know we are Christians by our love.

Jesus said in John 13:34-35

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Some have asked, “How are you going to spend eternity with those folks when you can’t stand to be with them while you are here?” Well, thank God, the answer is that they will no longer have a sin nature and we will be able to tolerate them. More importantly, WE will no longer have an old sin nature. But was not that the objective of our series studies on Gracing Others, Living the Faith/Rest Life, Living in The Spheres of Grace, Living the Christian Life, and Forgiveness and graduating from the habitual use of I John 1:9 to more reliance upon James 1:16 “Stop being seduced.” Here in Philippians, the epistle of Joy, we will find the

principles for inner happiness. We can get off to a good start by following Paul's example and heeding his admonitions in the verses to follow.

Conclusion:

From our study, it is clear, that God will bring to completion the good work He has begun in us and we are to be co-participants with those who are involved in the defense and the confirmation of the Gospel. And, we should learn from the example of Paul to have an intense longing for other believers in the sphere of the affections of Christ Jesus. The role of fellowship in the study of His Word is important to our living out our designed ministry and in our support of others who need that encouragement. Those Sunday mornings when we just don't feel like going to church and dealing with people are the very times, we need to exercise discipline and go to church.

But it all begins at Salvation:

*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
With the heart man believes unto righteousness...
But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!*

“... and your joy no man taketh from you...”

(Luke 16:22)