

Midweek Study

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in pursuit of **HAPPINESS** Through Philippians



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God Will Finish What He Starts

Philippians 1:6

Do you sometimes feel as though you aren't making progress in your spiritual life? When God starts a project, he completes it! As with the Philippians, God will help you grow in grace until he has completed his work in your life. When you are discouraged, remember that God won't give up on you. He promises to finish the work he has begun. When you feel incomplete, unfinished, or distressed by your shortcomings, remember and be confident in God's promise and provision. Don't let your present condition rob you of the joy of knowing Christ or keep you from growing closer to him.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) 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;

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

CONFIDENT - *peithō*, which here means to be persuaded of and have confidence in. Paul's confidence was much more than human hope; it was the absolute confidence that comes from knowing and believing God's promise.

COMPLETE - *Epileō* is a compound, formed by the preposition *epi* and the verb *teleō* ("to complete") to give the intensified meaning of **"fully completed."** Paul was absolutely certain that God will fully complete His work of salvation in the Philippians. There is no possibility of failure or of partial fulfillment.

Life Principle: *God is not finished with people.*

1. Look at People's Future, Not Just Their Past.

Romans 8:29-30 (NKJV)

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Galatians 3:3 (NKJV) Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Don't Judge People on the Basis of How Far They Have to Go, but How Far They Have Come.

Sanctification - Becoming in practice what God has already declared you to be in truth.

1 John 3:2 (NKJV) Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

2. Be Patient With People's Progress.

To enjoy people we must allow for growth and for development.

I'm not the man I want to be; I'm not the man I ought to be; I'm not the man I could be; I'm not the man I will be in the life hereafter; but praise God, I'm not the man I used to be.

In your marriage, if you want to enjoy your marriage, you've got to learn to enjoy your husband or your wife right now while allowing for growth and development. Otherwise, by the time they meet your conditions you will have still another condition for them to meet. You've got to learn to enjoy them where they are right now. Parents, if you're going to learn to enjoy your kids you've got to learn to enjoy them in the process, while they're growing. Because there is no such thing as a perfect kid. And there's no such thing as a perfect adult. **If you demand perfection of the people in your life in order to enjoy them you're going to be miserable for the rest of your life.** Nobody's perfect.

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

3. The Christian Life is about Direction, Not Perfection.

Proverbs 24:16 says, "Though a righteous man falls seven times, he will get up..."

F. B. Meyer wrote, *We go into the artist's studio and find there unfinished pictures covering large canvases, and suggesting great designs, but which have been left, either because the genius was not competent to complete the work, or because paralysis laid the hand low in death; but as we go into God's great workshop we find nothing that bears the mark of haste or insufficiency of power to finish, and we are sure that the work which His grace has begun, the arm of His strength will complete.* (*The Epistle to the Philippians* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952], 28)

A Love Note From God: *"My dear child, Don't despair when you struggle with your faults – whether it's a short temper or trouble staying organized. Know this: I am at work within you, and you are my good work. I will complete what I have started in you. – Your heavenly Father.*

A Question to Ponder: What qualities would you like to see God develop in your life?