

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – September 12, 2020

The lord be with you.

I have a Bible verse that I wanna share with you today for very personal reasons, as this verse changed my life, it is a verse that got me going as a Christian, and it's a verse that keeps me going today.

I discovered this verse when I was 18 years old, my whole life ahead of me, but I was discouraged about the Christian life. I was trying harder, it didn't feel like I was getting anywhere, and I really wasn't sure how long I could hang on... I don't know if you could identify with me and any of that, but the Christian life was not joy for me. And that's when I found Philippians 1:6, I read it. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

Now, at a time in my life that I was needing some confidence, the Apostle Paul's confidence became mine, that God, who has begun his good work in us, God is going to complete that good work. Now, of course, the good work that Paul has in mind in this verse is God's work of salvation in you and me, and I began to see, I think as if for the first time that salvation is really God's work. In fact, Jonah Chapter 2, verse 9 says, Salvation is of God and not of men. And when God begins a work, God completes it.

Then we first learn about God's work among the Philippian Christians, and in Acts Chapter 16 as the Apostle Paul planted the church at Philippi on a second missionary journey. In fact, the Philippi church is the first church in Europe, and God began his work there as Paul met with a little women's prayer group on the bank of a river, Paul gets beaten, thrown in jail. There's an earthquake, and Paul's jailer and some others come to faith in Jesus Christ.

It is God who began the good work in the Philippians, and it is God who will complete it, because of God always completes what he begins. Now, you ask my wife and she could tell you that I have projects that I had begun and I have not finished. Probably never will. That's a fact. And most of our lives are filled with some loose ends things that we never complete, but God always completes what he begins. God always accomplishes His plans and purposes.

So you see here that Paul's confidence for the future of the Philippian Christians, it is not confidence in the Philippians or anything in them or in Paul, but Paul's confidence is in God, that the good work of salvation God began in them. God will bring to completion. And as we look at scripture, we see that God actually loved us.

Well, before you and I came on the scene long before we were a twinkle in our parents eyes, in fact, Ephesians 1:4, says a God set his heart on us and He loved us, choosing us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love. So long before you and I were even thinking about God, God was thinking about us. It is God who began the good work of salvation in us. Why? You look at the name, Jesus, Jesus means the Lord saves. And Scripture tells us that Jesus came to save sinners. To seek and to save the lost. Hebrews 12 verse 2 tells us that Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. It is God who authors the good work of our salvation,

Water from Rock

and it is God who finishes it.

Something you might find helpful is it's a Greek word that's here translated as God brings it to completion. It is the same Greek verb, Jesus uses in John 19:30, as Jesus is dying on the cross. Jesus declares, it is finished. That's the word. It is finished. brought to completion. And it is because of Jesus' finished, completed work on the cross, that you and I can be confident that God who began the good work of our salvation, He will finish it. He will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. That means that in Christ, God has guaranteed our future for us, and it means that God is going to keep on completing us, keep on perfecting us until the day that we see Jesus.

I hope I've given you some idea of why this verse has meant so much to me, because you and I getting safely to heaven, it doesn't depend on us and our ability to hold on faithfully. Our confidence is in the God who began his good work in us, he will bring it to completion when we stand blameless before Christ.

I wanna lift up a blessing now that Paul lifts up in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, please receive this blessing as God's blessing for you, may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and may Your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way. Thanks for listening. Until next time.

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