

# The Author, Nature & Purpose Of The Work

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Date: 09 February 2025

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]      Could I welcome you to this service of worship? Let us sing to God's praise from Psalm 1. Psalm 1 That man hath perfect blessedness, who walketh not astray in counsel of ungodly men, nor stands in sinner's way, nor sitteth in the scornish chair, but placeth his delight upon God's law, and meditates on his law day and night.

He shall be like a tree that grows, near planted by a river, which in a season yields his fruit, and his leaf fadeth never.

And all he doth shall prosper well, the wicked are not so, but like they are unto the chaff, which wind drives to and fro.

Let us sing these verses. Psalm 1 That man hath perfect blessedness, who walketh not astray. That man hath perfect blessedness, who walketh not astray.

A thousand large men, nor shall there sinners wing, The night On his own day at night He shall be high At the earth grows

[ 2 : 3 1 ]      Near land by a river Within his feet shall yield his fruit Until he be in heaven And all the earth shall cross the world And all the earth shall yield his fruit At night in the earth And all the earth shall yield his fruit With his fruit and his fruit And all the earth shall yield his fruit Let us engage in prayer

We are reminded in the words that we have sung Of the blessedness of the man Who does not join with the ungodly Who does not sit with the market But the blessed man is designated as one Who reflects upon thy truth Who fills his mind with thy word So that he is likened to a tree that is fruitful A tree that is near a water source A tree that draws sustenance From that water source O may we be found This evening as those who draw sustenance From the well of life That our souls might also be fruit

And to the glory of thy great name Help us as we further wait upon thee this evening At this time of worship And bless our time together So that as we reflect upon thy truth And we have it in our hands O Lord may it please thee To place it in our hearts So that our hearts might reflect The teaching of thy word And in our daily conduct Our lives be regulated By thine own truth We bless thy name For thy truth And we bless thy name For the one Who is at the very heart Of the message of thy truth Even the Lord Jesus Christ Who came into us in dark and world

Entered this world in true human nature And in true human nature Who suffered And died and rose again O Lord we thank thee That he endured the cross In order that sinners such as we Might come to experience The marvelous joy of salvation And know what it is To be translated out of darkness Into thy marvelous light We pray thy blessing on each home and family Associated with the congregation Bless the children who attend Sunday school And those who give of their time and energies there O may there be a rising generation Who would glorify thy great name

Who would imbibe the teaching that is given And come to acknowledge How the teaching Has persuaded them Of the need of a Savior Persuaded them of their need To come to Christ And to be united to him Through faith in his name Bless any who may be present this evening And are strangers to the power of thy grace O Lord thou art able to break down Every barrier and prejudice That we erect in our unbelieving state As we seek to stave off the entrance of thy word But we bless thy land How the entrance of thy truth gives light And how it brings souls in subjection To the King of kings

[ 7 : 40 ] And Lord of lords Would remember again before thee Those who are grieving in a neighboring community As a consequence Of the events that unfolded Last Friday afternoon O Lord we would remember them In their grief and sorrow We cannot enter into their state In these hours and days But we pray O Lord That thou wouldst draw near to them And that thou wouldst minister to them In their grief and sorrow That they might know the loving Pastoral care Of the heavenly shepherd At such a time as this Bless we pray thee All that is done in thy name Here and elsewhere this day And to the ends of the earth

Prosper thy cause Grant O Lord that the peace The fragile peace that prevails in the Middle East May become a permanent peace O Lord thou knowest Whether that be the case or not Grant O Lord that Thou wouldst bring peace Above to the wall Between Russia and Ukraine Where there is so much senseless Loss of life In these places O Lord we pray That thou wouldst intervene In mercy and in grace Come with us We pray thee as we further wait upon thee Cleanse in the blood In Jesus name we ask it With forgiveness of sin Amen Let us further sing to God's praise Psalm 138 Psalm 138 At verse 4

Psalm 138 At verse 4 All kings upon the earth That I shall give thee praise Praise, O Lord, when as they from thy mouth shall hear thy true and faithful word.

Yea, in the righteous ways of God, with gladness they shall sing. For great's the glory of the Lord, who doth forever reign.

Though God be high, yet he respects all those that lowly be. Whereas the proud and lofty ones are far off, knoweth he.

[ 10 : 29 ] Though I amidst of trouble walk, I life from thee shall have. Against my foe's wrath, thou stretch thine hand, thy right hand shall me save.

Surely that which concerneth me, the Lord will perfect make. Lord, still thy mercy lasts. Do not thine own hands' works forsake.

Let us sing these verses. Psalm 138, at verse 4 to the end of the psalm. All kings upon the earth that I shall give thee praise, O Lord.

All kings upon the earth that I shall give thee praise, O Lord.

When I say, O Lord. When I say, O Lord, thy mouth shall hear thy true and faithful word.

[ 11 : 44 ] In the righteous wish of God, with gladness day shall sing.

O Lord, thy name shall be thy name, O Lord. For kings to prove thee of the Lord to just forever reign.

O Lord, thy name shall be thy name, O Lord. O God, thy highest he respects, O Lord, thy glory be.

Where our love shall be thy love, O Lord, thy love shall come from your world to.

Think of thy love shall be thy love, O Lord.

[ 13 : 16 ] Surely that which concerneth me, the Lord will perfect me.

Lord, still I hear, be as do not I know, and to work for his sake.

Let us now read from the New Testament, from Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 1. Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 1.

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, who jarred at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, grace be unto you and peace, from God, O Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always, in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy for your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now, 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.

[ 15 : 03 ] 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.

For God is my record, how greatly I long after you more in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, and to the glory and praise of God.

But I would, ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel, so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places.

And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Some, indeed, preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds, but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

[ 17 : 02 ] What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached.

And I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor.

Yet, what I shall choose, I want not. For I am in a street betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.

Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith, that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

[ 18 : 42 ] Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God.

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which he saw in me, and now here to be in me.

Amen, and may God bless to us that reading from his truth. Let us further sing to his praise from Psalm 92 and at verse 12.

Psalm 92 and at verse 12. Psalm 93 and at verse 13. But like the palm tree flourishing shall be the righteous one. He shall light to the seed of grow that is in Lebanon.

Those that within the house of God are planted by his grace, they shall grow up and flourish all in our God's holy place.

[ 20 : 24 ] And in old age when others fade, they fruit still forth shall bring. They shall be fat and full of sap and they be flourishing.

To show that upright is the Lord, he is a rock to me, and he from all unrighteousness is altogether free.

We'll sing these verses. Psalm 92 at verse 12. But like the palm tree flourishing shall be the righteous one. But like the palm tree flourishing shall be the righteous one.

He shall like the earth as he can grow that is in Lebanon.

Those that within the house of God are prospered by his grace.

[ 21 : 53 ] They shall prosper in her holy place.

And in your days will not mercy, Then who sin for shall reign, Then shall be a child full of sin, And in your days will not be sin.

To show that the Christ is the Lord, He is the Lord to me, At each of all the righteousness, Is all you can't believe.

Let us now turn to the passage that we read. Paul's letter to the Philippians, Chapter 1, And reading again at verse 6, Be confident of this very thing, That he which has begun a good work in you, Will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

In the introduction to the sermon this morning, I mentioned how Luke, In the book of Acts, Wrote of how Paul came to Philippi.

[ 24 : 09 ] He received a vision Of the man from Macedonia, Someone in him, To come over and help.

And that resulted in the gospel coming to Europe. It was not Paul's intended destination, But it was God's intended destination for him.

And in that chapter, Part of which we read together this morning, There is evidence of the triumph of grace, Emerging from what could have been A deeply discouraging time.

For despite being incarcerated in prison, As we saw in the morning service, Paul's time in Philippi Was blessed to the jailer and his family.

There were others too, Like the family of Lydia, And probably the anonymous slave girl. Their very diverse backgrounds, And conversant experiences, Indicating how varied That small congregation was In its beginnings.

[ 25 : 33 ] Yet, Paul says nothing About his own ministry. It is all about God, And that is surely How it should be.

This is a letter That is full of Christ, And overflows with a A contagious sense Of great joy.

It is also very obvious From Paul's introduction In the letter That the church at Philippi Occupied A very special place In his affections.

The church there Was his crown and joy. I thank my God Upon every remembrance of you, Always and every prayer of mine For you all, Making requests with joy For your fellowship in the gospel From the first day Until now.

He did not forget The people of Philippi Neither did they forget him Because they continued To support his ministry.

[ 26 : 53 ] In this letter In the last chapter He wrote And you Philippians Yourselves know That in the beginning Of the gospel When I left Macedonia No church entered Into partnership with me In giving and receiving Except you only.

Even in Thessalonica You sent me help For my needs Once and again. Writing to the Corinthians You find them stating When I was with you Under need I did not burden anyone For the brothers Who came from Macedonia Supplied my need.

In other words They came from Philippi. So I refrain And will refrain From burdening you In any way. A special bond Was formed Not only between Paul And the Philippians But also between the Philippians And Timothy.

For during what is called Paul's third missionary journey We are told That he again visited Philippi.

And on his return To Jerusalem He was arrested. In the process Of his court hearings He was transferred To confinement in Caesarea.

[ 28 : 20 ] And from there He was sent to Rome Having exorcised His right as a Roman citizen To appeal To the Emperor Caesar.

In Rome He was under House arrest As he awaited The outcome Of the verdict. And it was during That time That the church At Philippi Sent a generous gift With one of their members A man by the name Of Epaphroditus.

This person Epaphroditus Became very ill In Rome And almost died. And in the next chapter Of this letter You find Paul writing I have thought It necessary To send to you Epaphroditus My brother And fellow worker And fellow soldier And your messenger And minister To my need.

For he has been Longing for you all Has been distressed Because you heard He was ill Indeed he was ill Near to death But God Had mercy on him Not only on him But on me also Lest I should have sorrow Upon sorrow.

And so this letter What we know As the letter To the Philippians Was the message That Paul sent With Epaphroditus While he remained Under house arrest In Rome.

[ 29 : 57 ] Over two thousand years Since the letter Was written It still speaks With a freshness And power.

Our circumstances And our situations Are very different From these Early Christians But in the message They received We hear the voice Of the Spirit of God Addressing us still Today.

As he wrote In his introduction It was written To all the saints In Christ Jesus Which are at Philippi.

However It was not Written exclusively For them It was meant By the Spirit For all the saints And saints there Is the equivalent Of believers Meant for all believers In every age And place Who confess That Jesus Christ Is Lord To the glory Of God the Father.

And so we find This What I have termed This precious Pearl of a verse In the letter And which I went To expand on A little further.

[ 31 : 24 ] Being confident Of this very thing That he Which has begun A good work In you Will perform it Until the day Of Jesus Christ.

If my memory Is correct I think it was Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones Who wrote once That this was A favourite text For himself In the Bible.

It is one of these Magnificent Magnificent Fundamental Profound Profound Statements Which leads To the very depths Of Christian Doctrine And Christian Theology.

I am open To correction But I suspect That this verse Has been underlined In more than one Bible As giving comfort Comfort And uplift To many believers In their journey Through life.

It is Incidentally One of three Verses That teach The doctrine Of the perseverance Of believers.

[ 32 : 33 ] The other two Being John 10 Verses 27 28 And Romans 8 38 39 The perseverance Of the saints.

The doctrine That no one Whom God Has brought To a saving Knowledge Of Jesus Christ Will ever Be lost. Perhaps Some May be Familiar With the Teaching Of the Westminster Confession Of faith On the Matter.

They Whom God Has accepted In his Beloved. Effectually Called And sanctified By his Spirit Can neither Totally Nor finally Fall away From the State of Grace.

And note The reformers Didn't say That they Couldn't Fall But that They wouldn't Finally Or totally Fall From the State of Grace. But shall Certainly Persevere Therein To the End And be Eternally Saved.

Their Perseverance Does not Depend Upon Their Own Free Will But upon The Immutability Of the Decree Of Election Flowing From The Free And Unchangeable Love Of God The Father Upon The Merit And Intercession Of Jesus Christ The Abiding Of The Spirit And The Seed Of God Within Them And The Nature Of The Covenant Of Grace Well Three Thoughts From Our Text First The Author Of The Work Secondly The Nature Of The Work And Thirdly The Purpose Of The Work First The Author Of The Work Perhaps You Are Present This Evening And When You Were Surprised By Joy To

[ 34 : 40 ] Quote A Famous Author C.S. Lewis For That's How He Described His Conversant Experience Surprised By Joy You May Have Wondered If It Is True Of You But Will It Last Will I Continue Following What If And You Were Perhaps And Are Assailed By Doubt I Don't Know If These Anxieties Were Present In The Early Believers At Philippi But I Am Persuaded That These Anxieties Still Exist To The Present Of And Paul And Pen In These Words Is Surely Demonstrating His Own Confidence In The Completion Of What He Calls A

Good Work What Did The Apostle Paul Write Who Was It That Began That Good Work In You And You Notice He Doesn't Name Who It Is He Just Says!

Who Is The He Well Of Course The Obvious Answer To The Question Who Is The He It Is God Who Began The Good Work In You God God Is The Author In Fact You Might Say It Is All Of God From Start To Finish And Paul In Our Text Is Emphasizing The Initiative Of God In Salvation Remember He Is Writing As One Who Has Personal Experience Of The Work Of God In His Own Life A Man Home The Lord Intervened In His Life When He Was Busy Persecuting The Church Of Christ In The World So He Has Personal Experience Of Salvation As

God's Work And This Is Something That Paul Emphasizes Over And Over Again You May Remember What He Wrote In His Letter To The Ephesians And You Were He Wrote And Do You Remember What He Wrote After That And You Were Dead In Your Trespasses And Sins Did You Get That You Were Dead That Is The State Of Every Person By Nature And I Don't Think For One Moment That You Can Say That Dead People Initiate Anything But God Took The Initiative And Did What And Paul Goes On To Write In That Marvelous Chapter Second Chapter Of Ephesians Made Us Alive Together With Christ All The Marvel Of Divine Power

And Free Grace And That's Not The Only Occasion That Paul Makes Reference To!

[ 38 : 10 ] To The Colossians And You Who Were Dead In Your Trespasses And The Uncircumcision On Your Thresh God Made Alive Together With Him So Paul Emphasizes Repeatedly In His Writings That Unbelieving Sinners Were Dead So If You Are Unconverted This Evening That Is Your State You Are Dead You May Think You Are Very Alive But The Biblical Description Is That You Are Dead And It Is Not Just Paul Who Emphasizes This Truth The Apostle John Does It As Well If You Read His Prologue To The Gospel In The First Chapter You Find John Writing About Faith And Where It Comes From As Many As Received Him John

Wrote Who Believed In His Name To Them He Gave The Right To Become The Children Of God They Received In Other Words They Believed In His Name These Terms In That Context Virtually Mean The Same Thing John Is Explaining Where Belief In Christ Comes From And He Describes It Beautifully In The First Part Of That Verse What John Is Saying In That Verse Those Who Receive In Other Words Those Who Trust In Jesus Christ Those Who Place Their Faith For Salvation In Jesus Christ Are Accounted By God Appointed By God Adopted By God As His Own Children And You Feel That John Is Marvelling In This Glorious Truth He's Speaking About Faith And Christ

By The Usage Of The Term Of Receiving Him And You May Ask Why Is He Doing That Well If You Remember In That Chapter John Has Been Writing About The Rejection Of The Light But As Many As Receive The Light That Is Receive Jesus And It's As If John Were Giving Us In A Picture Perhaps Highlighting The Kind Of Hospitality That Might Be Received When For Example When Someone Shows Up At The Door In The Middle Of The Night In Need Of Shelter And Us Can I Come In Perhaps Your Inclination Might Be To Turn Them Away But You See What John Is As Many As Received

Him In Other Words They Welcomed Jesus Into Their Homes And John Is Using That As A Picture Of Faith If You Like In Christ Receiving Jesus Means Taking Him Into Your Life Your Home Your School If You Were A Pupil Your Work Your Marriage Your Dreams And Taking Him In For Who He Will Is The Saviour Of Sinners It Is A Picture Of Faith And After Showing You Showing Us That Picture Of Faith And Saying That All Those Who Believe Are The Children Of God They Are Not Just Pardoned For Their Sins And For Their Transgressions But They Are Welcomed!

Into God's Family They Welcomed Jesus Into Their Home And God Welcomes Them Into His And Then John Goes On To Tell In That Context How That Happened Look At What He Says To Those Who Believe In His Day But Were Born Not Of Blood Nor Of The Will Of The Flesh Nor Of The Will Of Man But Of God And It As John Saying These Three Negative!

[ 42 : 34 ] Terms Exhaust Every Other Possibility Apart From God Himself Wasn't Because Of Their Genealogy That They Believed In Jesus Christ John Knew Many People Who Had The Blood Of Abraham Flowing In Their Vaves Who Had Not Received Them Isaiah Who Had Been Promised To Abraham And He Knew Many People Who Didn't Have The Blood Of Abraham Flowing In Their Veins Who Had Received The Messiah Who Had Been Promised To Abraham So Remember What He Says In Chapter 10 Other Sheep Have I Who Are Not Think Think So, oh, you may protest.

What about the scripture that teaches, train up a child in the way he should go, even when he was old, he will not depart from it. That is certainly scriptural truth.

No doubt about that. But whoever did train up a child in such a way that that truth was fulfilled. Sadly, the environment can be good.

Sadly, the environment can contain all scriptural teaching. But this is also true. Apart from the grace of God, a person growing up in that environment can even be more hardened against the gospel than the person who did not enjoy such privileges.

Think about that. People who grew up in a Christian home, who enjoyed the privileges of teaching, can become more hardened against the gospel than those who did not receive and enjoy such privileges.

[ 45 : 03 ] And perhaps you've seen people who didn't have these privileges coming out of homes, where they didn't receive such an upbringing and such teaching, and they came to faith in Jesus Christ.

It's food for thought, doesn't it? Not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man. It's not through the efforts of an individual.

Maybe John means how children are born into the world. But John is saying, that's not the way Christians are born. How are they born?

What does he say? They are born of God. Who takes the initiative? God does. Why? Because we're dead.

We can't. God takes the initiative in salvation, and Paul is celebrating this truth, that salvation is all God's work.

[ 46 : 08 ] He gives, God gives new life, where there is but barrenness. And you will remember how Jesus reinforced the necessity of the new birth when he was having a nighttime conversation.

with one of the then leading teachers in Israel, Nicodemus. And you remember the thrust of the teaching of Christ. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Again, you must be born again. That has not changed, and will not change. That is a divine requirement.

Those who are born are given not just a new beginning, but they're given a new nature. And that requires the intervention of God in power.

They were born. The new life begins with God's working, not without doing. You could say, those who are born again came through the birth canal of grace.

[ 47 : 18 ] The author of the work is God. And just as an additional note to this point, when Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch, Antioch, after their first missionary journey, they gathered all the church together, and they told them all that they had achieved during that missionary journey.

Was that what they did? Certainly not. But they told the gathered church all that God had done with them.

They told the gathered church all that God had done with them. Acts 14.27. Not only does that show where the apostle wishes to place the emphasis, it is on what God has done.

But it is also surely an indication of the kind of humble person he was. To God belongs the glory, and rightly so.

Not to us, says the psalmist, O Lord, not to us, but to your name. Give glory for the sake of your steadfast love and your covenant love and your faithfulness.

[ 48 : 35 ] The author of the work is God. Secondly, the major of the work. It is described as a good work. It may be helpful to remember that in the Old Testament, God's activity in creation is described as a good work.

God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. Now, if you remember, before God made it good, it was without form and void.

It was barren, deserted, uninhabited. And that is an apt description, I believe, of the life of man prior to the beginning of God's initiative.

Desolate, empty, dark, devoid of spiritual life. That is the lamentable condition of man, which is the result of divine judgment because of man's fall into sin.

That is but true darkness, cursed by the just wrath of God without form and void, with the darkness of evil and sin upon the face of a world.

[ 49 : 56 ] Perhaps, with the benefit of hindsight, this evening, you can read that into your past life. Or even this evening, perhaps you can connect with that now.

How would you describe your old life? Is your life chaotic? Is it disordered? Is it empty and self-centered?

Is it broken and dark? What made the difference in creation? And the answer the Bible gives, the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.



The very Spirit of God, who hovered over the primeval dark of the first creation, is still fluttering over this world, ready to act in the cause of the Savior, whose gospel salvation is available to all who believe.

Just as the Spirit of God hovered over the dark waters in the creation of the world, so He hovers over the dark carts of humanity, preparing them for the Word of God that will make them into a new creation in Christ.

[ 51 : 28 ] It is worth recalling that the first action of God in creation was to speak. And God said, creation is a product of the personal will of God.

And the fact that the Scripture records and God said, highlights for us how God's paschbos was achieved and worked out.

It was by the going forth of His Word. Joining the presence of the Spirit to the creative Word shows a pattern that is repeated throughout the Bible.

the activity of the Spirit joined to the ministry of God's Word. As the Spirit in the blessed Word created light in the beginning, so the Spirit in the blessed Word shines divine light into the hearts of sinners to create new life through faith in Jesus Christ.

God's Word is always effectual and God said, let there be light and remember and there was light.

[ 52 : 52 ] The Word of God possesses the power of God to accomplish the will of God. It brings about a profound change.

Notice what the Apostle wrote about this good work. Be confident of this very thing that you which have begun a good work in you. It is begun in you this good work.

In other words, the Word of God blessed by the Spirit turned your life around. Now, maybe that is not how you read it initially, but as you look back and reflect upon it, you will come to see how the Word was instrumental in turning you towards Christ.

Those who received and believed have been given, if I can put it like this, a new spiritual DNA. You know how important DNA is today, and particularly for police officers and so on.

A new principle, a new power within. In fact, Paul speaks of them as a new creation. Therefore, he says right into the Corinthians, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

[ 54 : 20 ] The old has passed away, behold, the new has come. And that is seen in new desires in the lives of those who have been quickened to life.

It is seen in a new perspective on life and eternity. It is seen in a liking for the Bible. Perhaps something they never even opened.

But when the Lord intervenes in their life, they come to read the scriptures. There is increased attendance on the means of grace.

there is attempting at prayer. There is a going to prayer meetings. And for some, that can be a huge struggle.

All sorts of ifs and buts arise seeking to prevent, to discourage and to deter. But where the good what can you has begun, it begins to show.

[ 55 : 24 ] Perhaps you try to hide it. Perhaps you seek to put a cover over it. But it will show itself in lots of ways.

It is even seen in the choice of companions in life. That's how the psalmist speaks of his own life. I am, he says, a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts.

In other words, he is saying, he is a companion of those who love the truth. And what Paul himself stated, about his own life was the life, I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Wonderful testimony to the power and grace of God. Now, that doesn't certainly mean that all your problems are solved or that all your sinful tendencies have been removed.

You will discover, if you have not already done so, that even the broken power of indwelling sin plagues your life and continues to do so.

[ 56 : 44 ] Many times you will find yourself echoing the words of the Apostle Paul when he stated, wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death.

The nature of the work, the author of the work, and finally the purpose of the work. The text states, being confident of this very thing, he which has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Whatever else we might read into these words, can we not say that they imply a long-term plan? God, who begins the work, is preparing those in whom a good work has begun, to see and share in the glory of a Son.

The term perform can be translated to carry on to completion, and it suggests putting the finishing touches to the good work.

I suppose from one point of view, we may seem to have a long way to go in growing in grace and holiness, but God can complete that work in the twinkling of an eye.

[ 58 : 14 ] The Apostle Paul is telling us that the work of grace is but begun in this life, but it is never ever finished in this life.

You know, the Christian life is not one uninterrupted climb towards heaven, nor is it some kind of catapult into perfection, and then a continuous experience of perfection in this life.

It's a life filled with peaks and valleys, and sometimes the valleys are so deep and dark that we never think we're going to climb out of them.

So these words are some of the most encouraging words in all of the Bible, because the words suggest that God isn't finished with you yet.

How true that is. This is one of the most encouraging words, I would say, because without it one might easily despair.

[ 59 : 31 ] The Apostle Paul has said, this work is never finished. And perhaps that is of comfort, because you know what you're like, and you know that God needs to put more finishing touches to the work begun in your life.

And here is Paul saying, this work of grace is never ever finished here. As long as we are in this imperfect world, there will always be something more, much more to do.

As one writer puts it, then the day of Christ Jesus, we shall be where we would be. Then we shall be what we should be.

Things that are not now nor could be, soon, shall be our own. then we shall be where we would be. You'll be where you want to be with Him.

Then you'll be what you ought to have been, the way God made man before the fall of Adam, the very image of his old self.

[ 60 : 56 ] Things that are not now nor could be. soon shall be our own. I think it was John Newton who used to say, I'm not what I ought to be.

Oh, how imperfect and deficient I am. I'm not what I wish to be. I abhor the evil in me, and I would cleave to that which is good.

I'm not what I hope to be. Soon, soon I will put off with mortality, both sin and imperfection. But though I'm not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan.

can you join with Newton in echoing these sentiments this evening? Can you say with the apostle, by the grace of God, I am what I am.

Salvation is a certain one, because God always finishes what he starts. the apostle says, he who begun a good work will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

[ 62 : 26 ] And by implication, it's not going to be perfected, it's not going to be completed, it's not going to be finished until then. But it is a certain work.

The apostle is looking way beyond the end of life to the day of the marriage feast of the Lamb when the bride shall be presented faultless, pure and undefined.

It is absolutely certain that he will complete it. And the apostle Paul is saying, this will be the day when you are fully and finally perfected in the day of the appearing of Christ Jesus.

He is saying that your perfection will not occur until then. And strangely the Bible says something else.

It will not occur until the perfection of all other saints. The letter to the Hebrews chapter 11 is writing about the great saints of the Old Testament.

[ 63 : 39 ] And then he says and all these though commended through their faith did not receive what was promised. And you ask yourself the question why given that the one who had promised is faithful.

And do you remember the answer that was given in that letter? Since God had provided something better for us says the writer.

For us. The writer doesn't say since God has provided something better for them. That's probably what you might expect. But he says it's because God has provided something better for us.

What does he mean? And then you look at the next phrase for an explanation that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

And you see what the author of the Hebrews is saying that it will be the day of the coming the appearing the judgment the reign the rule of Jesus Christ when all the saints at the same time from Adam to the last person who is converted before the coming of Christ at the exact same moment will be perfected.

[ 65 : 04 ] Nobody ahead of anybody else in Christ or at the same time. He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

What a day that will be when it arrives. And oh my friend where do you expect to be on that day?

Do you expect to be on his left hand or on his right hand? Do you expect to be among those who are called the blessed of his father?

Or do you expect to be among those whom he says depart from me? Well you know the one sure way of being among those who are called the blessed of the father is by trusting today in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

The author of the work the nature of the work the purpose of the work. Let us pray. O eternal and ever blessed one we have to acknowledge that our conception of the day of Jesus Christ is yet so dim and so dark there is much that is beyond our finite comprehension of what awaits those in whom the good work has begun.

[ 66 : 51 ] We thank thee for the certainty of the completion of the good work where it has begun and we pray that that good work may begin and the lives of those who may be strangers to it and the glory shall be thine in Jesus name we ask it Amen Let us conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 125 Psalm 125 They in the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Zion Hill which at no time can be remount but stand ever still as round about Jerusalem the mountains stand always the Lord bespoke of compass song from henceforth!

Zion Hospital Hospital In the yordid that fill it comes, shall be thy sign on hill, which not your time can be removed.

