

# The Beginning Of The Church At Philippi

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]      Good morning. Welcome to the house of God. And once again, we trust that it will be the voice of God which we hear, the face of God that we see, and above all, the blessing of God that we may know.

So let's begin our service of worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 71. Psalm 71, we sing verses marked 1 to 5, which is four stanzas, but five verses. Psalm 71. O Lord, my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone, then let thy servant never be put to confusion.

And we go down to verse 4. Free me, my God, from wicked hands, hands cruel and unjust, for thou, O Lord God, art my hope, and from my youth my trust. Psalm 71, verses 1 to 5.

O Lord, my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone.

And let thy servant never be put to confusion.

[ 1 : 5 3 ]      And let me in thy light to stand From the eternal sun On me, I say, and try not here But to me and begin Be thou my blessed hero To which I ever may start Against the land

May be to stand For the earth was a poor man Be me, my God Strongly in hands And to the land Yes, yes For now, O Lord You are dark my hope And if all I give my grace Let us pray

Our gracious Father in heaven We come before you The great God of all the earth Who called everything Into existence Simply by speaking We come, gracious God Upon your day In your house With your people Before your work And we ask And we ask, gracious God That you would Your spirit Who is present And how we thank you For that knowledge For that information For that information That your Holy Spirit Is present We ask that none of us Might resist Your spirit That none of us Might quench Your spirit That none of us Might grieve Your spirit And we come, gracious God

As your fallen creatures You made us in your image But we have turned Everyone To our own way To do our own thing Oh, gracious God We confess We have sinned against you And we have failed To fulfil The very purpose That you have had In bringing us Into this world And placing us On planet earth On earth We were made We were made To glorify you On the earth And we have forgotten Why we were made In fact We have turned against you Oh, gracious God Forgive us The sin of our heart In wanting to live Without you

Wanting to be the ruler Of our own lives Wanting to do our own thing Oh, gracious God Thank you That when we The human race First turned against you And went our own way We thank you That you did not Instantly consign The whole human race To a lost eternity Immediately Thank you Thank you For not doing that How we thank you That what we find Written in your word Is that you so loved the world You gave your only begotten son So that whoever would believe Upon him Whoever Would not perish But have everlasting life We bless you for the glorious gospel We thank you You are willing

[ 7 : 03 ] To send your son To pay for our sins For our sins Oh, gracious God What unworthy creatures we are But we give you praise this day And as we come to worship you Give us the right heart Give us the right spirit We don't have that naturally So be pleased to give it to us Give us to rejoice in God May we all be able to say truthfully What we sung Oh Lord, my hope and confidence Is placed in thee alone You are the God of salvation And it must begin with you So Lord, if there's any here And that good work has not begun Be pleased to begin it today

Here in this place Now before you Oh Lord, may your Holy Spirit Move effectively Oh, gracious God For your name's sake We thank you You are put in writing That your dear son That you delight In saving sinners Changing them Giving them a new heart Making them new creatures in Christ Lord, we thank you That Christ is alive forevermore And is the same yesterday Today and forever Bless us, Lord From the youngest child upward Bless us with eternal life The life that never ends Oh, gracious God May we all know it Heavenly Father We pray your blessing on your church

Here We pray that you fill this empty pulpit With someone after your own heart On your own heart A summon whose word You will bless And anoint And make effectual Oh, Lord For your own name's sake And we humbly pray We ask, oh, Lord That you'd remember us as a nation For we have departed from you And sadly We've done it intentionally We've removed from our statute book Every remembrance of your word Forgive us our sin And be pleased to raise up in both church and state Those who would lead us back to your word And to your ways Come down, Lord Come down, Lord Raise up in church And raise up in state

Those that would fear you and bless you Gracious God We pray for those in special difficulties Special trials and tribulations Particularly remember them Heavenly Father We do pray for any who may be bereaved And brokenhearted and sorrowing Give the oil of joy for mourning We pray thee We ask, Heavenly Father You'd remember those who are seriously ill We pray that you bless medication and treatment Therapies and surgery Where these things are available And where they are not available May it please you To heal apart from any human means If this be to your glory and their good

Now, gracious God We pray for those going through trials and tribulations Heary burdens Heary burdens Lord, remember them We pray for those Razzling with addictions And gracious God And gracious God Show them your son Who has all power Who can rebuke evil And rebuke sin And gracious God We thank you for your forbearance with us We commend them to you We pray for you Growing up in an age of license Where taxpayers' money is used To encourage them To entice them To trifle and experiment With what your word prohibits Oh Lord Be with parents who seek To bring them up in your fear

[ 12 : 11 ] And in your ways Encourage them And assure them Their labour is not in vain As far as the Lord is concerned And now Lord As we turn to your word To read it To sing it To expound it Speak from heaven Speak with power Oh Lord Convict Encourage any that are discouraged Enlighten any walking Walking in darkness Wanting to do what's right But not knowing what's right Enlighten them We pray Oh Lord Strengthen the weak The weak of the flock Strengthen them today Through your word We pray Oh Lord The hungry soul Please

Please You feed The hungry soul We pray We pray For any wandering sheep Any That have gone astray Oh Lord Stretch out That long arm We read The Lord's arm Is not shortened That it cannot save It can reach Any wandering sheep And although we wander Away We cannot wander Out of your eye Or out of your reach So Father Bring the wandering sheep Back And keep us all Keep us all Keep us all in your love Keep us all in your fear Prepare us for anything unexpected In your will Remember what we've forgotten To pray for Hear in heaven Answer on earth

For we pray only And all For your glory In Christ's name Amen Boys and girls Great to see you out I'm going to tell you a story Today about a boy Who was He was great At building boats He had a real kind of gift Of building boats And he built this beautiful boat Down he went To the riverside He put a wee nail In the front of the boat And he tied a string to it So when he went down to the water He pushed out the wee boat And the boat sailed away And he'd just give a little Tank to the string And the boat would come back And he did this several times But one day he pushed it out And he pulled on the string And the string came out And the nail came out The front of the boat And the boat sailed away And he lost his boat

The boat had spent so much time Building He was proud of it And away it went Well Time passed as it did And quite a while afterwards He was in shock With his mother And there was a wee Window sill Of second hand boots In it there Second hand toys So the boy thought Wait Now his parents thought To go over And look at the second hand toys And there was a boat there And man And man It was awful Like the boat he made And he looked at it And he looked at it And he looked at it And he looked at it I think that's my boat I think that's my boat But how will I know?

Oh he says I know how I know So he went over And he picked the boat And he looked at the front And there was a wee hole Where the nail was The nail he put in For the string to pull it back So he knew it was his boat And he went up to the shopkeeper And he says That's my boat Oh no He says No But he says You can have it for a pound Oh He says I made that boat It's my boat I made it No No No But he says You can have it for a pound Oh He says I made that boat It's my boat I made it No No But he says You can have it for a pound Well All he had left in his pocket money Was a pound So he paid a pound The shopkeeper For the boat And he got the boat And he looked at it And oh He was happy He was happy And as he was going down the road With the boat He was kind of speaking to it And he says Oh Bodie I love you I love you twice

[ 16 : 55 ] First of all I love you Because I made you But secondly I love you Because I paid for you I bought you There's a message there Boys and girls Jesus Made us But we wandered away We wandered away And Jesus Had to buy us back But he couldn't buy us back With money All the money in the world Cannot pay for sin But Jesus' blood Can buy back sinners And Jesus Died And shed his blood To pay for the sins Of everyone That will be in heaven

Do you want to be in heaven? Do you want to be in heaven? Of course you do Well only the blood of Jesus Can forgive your sin And take you to heaven But do you know this?

He'll do it For everyone Who asks There's a verse in the Bible And it says Whoever Will call On the name of the Lord Will be saved The next time you see A wee boat Will you remember my story About the boy in the boat?

And will you make a wee prayer? Lord I ask That you take me back Because you died To forgive people Their sins And I'm a sinner And I ask you To forgive me My sins And he'll answer you He'll answer you Will you remember that?

Okay then Very good Well let's praise God again This time we'll Continue in the same psalm Psalm 71 I will sing verses 7 to 12 Psalm 71 And verse 7 To many I A wonder I But thou art my refuge strong Full let my mouth be With thy praise And honour all day long And we go down to verse 11 They said God leaves him Him pursue and take him None will save Be thou not far from me My God Thy speedy help I crave Psalm 71 Verses 7 to 12 Dear God And yonder as you know

[ 20 : 26 ] Would you not cast me away For this child of mercy came And when my friend did get in Let me tear not the heart's in me For those that are mine and they I can speak with it And it's again our consultate

That for my solely way Please say God, please say Dear God, may I know thou not borrow me my God thy speed ye help thy view Now I would like to speak from something in Philippians chapter 1 but I want to read first of all how the Philipian church began so if we turn to the book of Acts chapter 16 and we'll read from verse 6 to verse 34 the book of

Acts chapter 16 and we'll read from verse 6 to verse 34 now when they had gone out throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia and were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia after they were come to Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia but the spirit suffered them not and they passed to Mysia and passing by Mysia came down to Troas and a vision appeared to Paul in the night there stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him saying come over into Macedonia and help us and after he had seen the vision immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them therefore losing from Troas we came with a straight course to Samothracia and the next day to Neapolis and from there and from thence to Philippi which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia and a colony and we were in that city abiding certain days and on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a riverside where prayer was wont to be made and we sat down and spake unto the women which resorted thither and a certain woman named Lydia a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira which worshipped

God heard us whose heart the Lord opened and she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul and when she was baptized and her household she besought us saying if you've judged me to be faithful to the Lord come into my house and abide there and she constrained us and it came to pass as we went to prayer a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us which brought her masters much gain by sooth saying the same followed Paul and us and cried saying these men are the servants of the most high God which show unto us the way of salvation and this did she many days but Paul being grieved turned and said to the spirit I command thee in the name of

Jesus Christ to come out of her and he came out the same hour and when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone they caught Paul and Cyrus and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers and brought them to the magistrates saying these men being Jews do exceedingly trouble our city and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive neither to observe being Romans and the multitude rose up together against them and the magistrates rent off their clothes and commanded to beat them and when they had laid many stripes upon them they cast them into prison charging the jailer to keep them safely who having received such a charge thrust them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks and at midnight

[ 26 : 57 ] Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them and suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken and immediately all the doors were opened and every man's bands were loosed and the keeper of the prison awakened out of his sleep and seeing the prison doors opened he drew out his sword and would have killed himself supposing that the prisoners had been fled but Paul cried with a loud voice saying do thyself no harm for we're all here then he called for a light and sprang in and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Cyrus and brought them out and said sirs what must I do to be saved and they said believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house and they speak unto him the word of the Lord and to all that were in his house and he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized he and all his straightway and when he had brought them into his house he set to meet before them and rejoiced believing in God with all his house and may God bless to us the very reading of his own word we'll sing once more to God's praise again Psalm 71 and this time we sing verses marked 16 to 19 Psalm 71 verse 16 and I will constantly go on in strength of God the Lord and thine own righteousness even thine alone

I will record I will go down to the 19th verse and thy most perfect righteousness O Lord is very high who has so great things done O God who is like unto thee Psalm 71 verses 16 to 19 and I will constantly go on which is the God the Lord and I know the righteousness and in thine alone I will be born for even from my good

O God I may I love in God as here do I have declared the wonder of the cross and do Lord yield me all and I for can be had it know To do as it I spend on heart to all to come I show and I must have my

Christ to stand O Lord is very high who has so great vision O God who is like young to thee well let's turn in our Bibles now to the epistle of Paul to the Philippians chapter one and we'll read again and I'd like to concentrate essentially on verse six Philippians chapter one verse six being confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of

[ 32 : 36 ] Jesus Christ 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 the church at Philippi was regarded as one of the better if not the best church that's recorded in the New Testament and that is astonishing when you consider who the first three members of the church at Philippi were we read about them the first three members do you remember how the whole thing began Paul gets a vision from God he's gone out on mission and he's been directed by the Holy Spirit and he gets this vision come over to

Macedonia and help us he knows it's from God so he obeys and he goes out now when Paul went out on a mission he had a particular strategy he went to the major cities and towns of the area or the colony as they went out and the first thing he would do when he went to the city was to look for a synagogue so when he came to the chief city in Macedonia which was of course Philippi he looked for a synagogue but there's no synagogue there's no synagogue in Philippi why well apparently you see the synagogue was a meeting place for the Jews and the rules the regulations were you could not build a synagogue unless you had ten men gathering regularly to support it

Philippi did not have ten Jews did they have one I don't know all they had was women Jewish women meeting at the riverside now Paul was a Jew a Pharisee of the Pharisees very very strict and all Paul's life he would have got it from his own household every morning the head of a Jewish home would have what we would call today family worship and the first thing he would do in the home that day the head of the house would thank God for three things he would thank God first of all he was not born a woman

I'm just repeating what the situation was he thanked God he was not born a woman secondly he would thank God he was not born a slave and thirdly he would thank God he was not born a Gentile now who are the first three members in the church at Philippi we read it a woman a slave girl and a Gentile prison warder I speak reverently doesn't God call you bluff here's the Pharisee of the Pharisee here's a beginning outreach to the Gentiles never known before led by the spirit the first three members the church at

Philippi a woman a slave girl and a Gentile prison worker we read it there let's just briefly look at Lydia now are you like me when I would think of Lydia what do you have in your mind I used to think of an old woman with a bannock over her head she had a little card table with pieces of cloth she was a seller of purple that's what I used to imagine no no nothing could be further from the truth Lydia was not an old woman with a shawl Lydia was a very well to do sales executive trading with royalty she was a seller of purple purple is a royal color Lydia sold to royalty

[ 37 : 58 ] Lydia mixed with high society Lydia was an upmarket business woman she was no shrinking violet a very well high to do she dealt in big business but she gathered at the riverside with the women praying the Jewish women praying and she wasn't she wasn't a full Jew she was only a half Jew but she gathered with the women down by the riverside to pray to God she responded to the gospel which Paul preached the Lord opened her heart he can do that she was a very high powered woman probably someone perfectly qualified to be the lady chair of the chamber of commerce but the

Lord opened her heart God can do that and he can do it today that's the first member in the church who's the second member we read it a slave girl a demented slave girl possessed by a demon dabbling in the old cult associated with witchcraft she's breaking the peace and Paul is grieved and he exercises the demon and of course she's now no longer of any use to her masters but do you know something Christ gladly receives the cast offs of the devil and his the second person who knows the grace of

God and the blessing of God and Philippi is this demented slave girl quite different from our market business lady Lydia selling purple but you know Satan himself often outstrips himself and Paul and Silas land themselves into prison exercising the demons has led to the imprisonment of Paul and Silas but as I said Satan outstrips himself because that leads to the third member we can say of the church at Philippi the Gentile prison warder the prison warder and all his family are converted to Christ Satan goes too far but we're looking at this not just

Christ can convert and save anyone but tell me our text is saying to us he's writing to the church at Philippi don't know how big or how small it is by now but we know the first three members and he says being confident of this very thing now would you be confident of starting a church with these first three members here's Paul led by the Holy Spirit being confident of this very thing that he who has begun a good work in you will continue it to the day of Jesus Christ but you see what do these three people have what do they have in common to start a church plant different backgrounds different cultures different education would you say there was unity there gifts there commitment there what do these people have in common well they are all sinners you do know don't you saints are sinners that their sins are forgiven they're all sinners and they all know they're sinners that world out here you'll get plenty people out saying oh look

I'm only human I'm only human of course I'm not perfect but they don't let you call them sinners every Christian knows they're a sinner but that doesn't qualify you just knowing you're a sinner doesn't make you a Christian doesn't make you a member of the church what makes you a member of the church what makes a person who knows he's a sinner a Christian he knows Christ and he knows Christ died for sinners that's the difference you see there's people you probably met them they acknowledge they're sinners they know they're sinners but what do they do about it some go into convents some go into monasteries some turn to false religions some turn to ideologies some despair what's a

[ 44 : 26 ] Christian it's someone who believes Christ died! for our sins according to the scriptures now that's what a Christian is and these people that began the church they knew Christ that's what makes a Christian not even knowing you're a sinner that's essential but what do you do about it?

who pays for your sins? who's able to deliver you from sin? Christ Christ alone knowing Christ is a qualification for being a member in Christ's church just depending on Christ and that's all you ask any Christian and they say all they have is Christ back to this question being confident of this thing that he who has begun a good work in you will continue it now tell me how could Paul have such confidence in three people like that would you have enough confidence to if the free church press said we're starting something up in past the holies there's three people there there's someone from just a mental institution there's someone from the head of the chamber of commerce and there's some guy who professes he believes in Jesus would you have confidence to start a plant a church here's

Paul how can he have such confidence in them what's the answer the answer is he does not have confidence in them he has confidence in God because you see Christianity is a work of God in us that's what Christianity is it's a work of God in us those of you who know your Bible I'm sure you're very familiar with a verse in the following chapter in Philippians you might say to me look you see it's a work of God in us is it not the other way around because Paul says in chapter 2 verse 12 work out your own salvation with fear and trembling you see that's man's word is it really here's something you must always remember never read

Philippians 2 verse 12 without also reading the next verse absolutely vital Philippians 2 12 work at the end work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for or because as it could be translated because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure always read verse 13 when you read verse 12 Christianity is a work of God in us now when God works in the Christian he works in two things that I want to mention first of all he works the

Holy Spirit of Christ within a person every Christian has the Holy Spirit of God indwelling Romans 8 verse 9 spells it out very clearly now if any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his every Christian has the Holy Spirit within been regenerated by God regeneration is not something that happens to you once you believe it's the other way round you believe because the Holy Spirit is within you the Holy Spirit has convinced you of your sin and the

[ 49 : 27 ] Holy Spirit has shown you this Christ who died that sinners might be forgiven and you put your trust in him so a Christian has the Holy Spirit within them the second thing I want to mention that the God works in a Christian is what I'm calling the germ seed of every Christian grace every Christian has some of every Christian grace in germ seed form the Christian's duty responsibility to ensure that that brain grows and how does it grow it grows like the way everything else grows through exercise through food and through exercise through how does one grow in grace how does one grow in holiness it's vital to grasp there's no such thing as sudden growth in holiness blessed be

God there is such a thing as sudden conversion blessed be God there's such a thing as instant forgiveness of sin upon believing in Christ but there's no such thing as instant immediate holiness holiness we are justified forgiven immediately upon faith but you're sanctified made holy gradually and slowly I always like to say this with regard to Christian sanctification it's always first of all gradual and if you're a new Christian you'll complain how slow and gradual it is it's gradual and it's also accumulative little by little here a little there a little building upon each other precept upon precept line upon line it's gradual it's accumulative and it's imperceptible you don't see it in yourself that's true about growth in many areas have you got grandchildren you haven't seen them for a couple of years and they come up home and you say man you've grown and the parent says do you think so oh yeah oh she's the last time he was here two years ago he was only up to here and the parent says oh never realised that it's imperceptible that's the nature of growth it's not immediate it's not sudden it's gradual now God the Holy

Spirit within us sanctifies but he doesn't sanctify he doesn't grow the Christian in a vacuum he uses means a child a baby grows through food and through exercise what's the Christian's food the newborn Christian must take well scripture the Bible is food it's called milk desire the sincere milk of the word newborn babes need milk the food that Christians need is like milk to a baby but it's also the word of God is the food that's what grows you feeding on the word of

God the revelation from heaven and of course the second thing is the Lord's supper it's a meal it's a main meal of the day and you cannot complain oh I have no strength if you're not taking your food can you so these two things are provided for new Christians the word of God to feed you as a child needs milk you need the input of the word of God and you need to take your daily meal the supper is provided as food for the newborn babe and then of course there's exercise to grow in grace you need food and you need exercise growth in the graces doesn't come naturally it's unnatural to us it's spiritual we're talking about spiritual growth it doesn't come naturally therefore it's a struggle it's a struggle there's always by definition you can say there's always some frustration irritation distress inconvenience if you're developing in graces and keeping the commandments you see chastity is not a virtue in a eunuch hormones hormones are not working well chastity is not a virtue in that case if you suffer from insomnia there's no virtue to get up early in the morning if you're suffering from a minute if you can't sleep there's no virtue to get up early if you're a multi-billionaire put in a thousand pound inflate no virtue multi-billionaires don't know how much they have from day to day it all depends on the stock exchange there's no virtue no grace if you're laid back by nature then god isn't likely to test and try you by being patient if you're laid back and need to be motivated well by definition growing in grace involves struggle so if you're finding it difficult to be to live the christian life you're probably doing everything right and one thing

I do want to mention you can't grow in grace without growing in other things you grow in grace by growing in knowledge grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ you see there's no verse in the bible that says we're predestined to salvation no verse in the bible that says that what does the bible say about predestination you're predestined to be conformed to the image of christ or to become christ like how on earth can you become christ like if you don't know what christ is like grow in grace and knowledge how do you grow in grace by growing in other things there's no button to press that will become holy you grow in grace in sanctification by growing in knowledge by growing in faith by growing in love and just something else the bible tells us through much tribulation you enter the kingdom i don't know how it works but god has ordained we grow in grace grow in sanctification through trouble through having problems through difficult times you say why is god allowing this to happen to me if he loves me because he's growing you in christ likeness christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and if we're to be christ like we cannot avoid these things god has ordained that through these things we enter the kingdom of heaven and you will not be thirty seconds in good morning and you will say what on earth were we worried about heaven will be so glorious what on earth were we worried about when we were down there well just two things in conclusion maybe you're here and you're not a christian you say how does this begin it hasn't begun in me how does it begin the good work has not begun how does it begin well let's begin by following

[ 59 : 54 ] Paul what did Paul say to the ignorant Philippian joker we read we read in act 16 he's a gentile he hasn't a clue about religion and he says to Paul what must I do to be saved and Paul without a foolish says believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved and your household as well that's where it begins that's the root and that's the way to get believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved one final thing I have used this verse as you've noticed and applied it to individual salvation to personal christianity if you like but what's the context the context is congregational he's not addressing



Lydia individually or the slave girl or the Philippians he's writing to the church collectively it applies to you as a congregation looking for a pastor looking for the next chapter here's the word of God for you today being confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work has God begun a good work in Calamish free church he who has begun a good work will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ may God the Holy Spirit make his word effectual to every one of us let's pray our father in heaven we pray that you might take the things of Christ and apply them savingly effectually to each and every one of us here apply it to us personally individually and apply it to this congregation abide here dwell here bless here we humbly pray keep us now all in your love and fear as we pray only in Jesus name amen we conclude our service of worship by singing from psalm 73 this time psalm 73 at verse 25 the last four stanzas whom have I in the heavens high but thee

O Lord alone and in the earth whom I desire besides thee there is none down to the last verse but surely it is good for me that I draw near to God in God I trust that all thy works I may declare abroad psalm 73 verse 25 to the end whom have I in the heaven life as thee O Lord alone and in the earth who I did die beside thee dead is none my my my!

my heart! God is God in heaven!

God is my heart God is the heaven heaven Oh Oh Oh Oh

[ 66 : 13 ] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore Amen Amen