

TITLE AND NUMBER: 57. God will finish what He has started

REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Philippians 1:4b, 6 and 9-11

I always pray with joy...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.

LOOKING FURTHER: Romans 7:15-20; John 15:3; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17



What does this Bible passage tell us?

As Christians, we are human beings, and sometimes we mess up. That can be really discouraging. In the passage above, Paul reminds us that it is God who started what he calls “a good work in us,” which he describes as giving us more and more love in our hearts. This will eventually bring the work of changing us to perfect completion. In John 15:3, Jesus tells His disciples that they “are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.” At the moment we receive Jesus as our Saviour, we become clean – forgiven and holy – and that cannot be undone even when we still make mistakes.

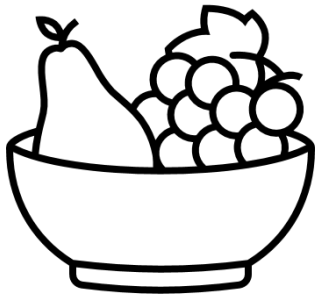
Paul’s prayer in Philippians 1:9-11 reflects God’s plan for us. He wants our love to grow; He wants us to gain more knowledge, more insight and more wisdom; and to be filled with the “fruit of righteousness”. What does that phrase “fruit of righteousness” mean? What does God want our lives as Christians to be like? Some years ago, I had the huge privilege of baptising my own son. As he was baptised, I read Ephesians 2:10; “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Now that my son is a young husband, father and worship leader in the church, it is a great joy to see that verse coming true in his life. God’s wish and plan for each one of us is that we bring blessings to one another.

I encourage you to see yourself as God sees you; as His workmanship and someone who He has already made clean because of His Word. When things don’t quite go as they should, don’t focus on failure but on the promise that He is taking you on a journey to become pure and blameless in Christ Jesus.

Reflections:

- “You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.” Reflect on one of the verses listed under “looking further” or any other verse that has been important to you, and thank Jesus that He has made you clean.
- Paul is praying a blessing on his readers. Thank God for people who have prayed for and encouraged you.
- Take a few moments to pray for others using the words Paul prays in Philippians 1.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

