

Real Grace Never Fails - Part 2

Phil 1:3-7

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, 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; NKJV

From the first couple of verses in our text we notice the closeness which Paul has for the church at Philippi. They had been very faithful in supporting Paul on his missionary journey. They had sacrificially given even though they had little and suffered persecution.

That may be why Paul speaks more highly of this church than any other. And in this epistle he displays a closeness not seen among the other churches. They loved Paul and their actions toward him proved it.

As we continue our message from last week we want to look at how Paul could be sure that those first century Christians would finally end up in heaven. These were rough times for Christians. The official worship of the pagan world involved temple prostitutes, both male and female. The religion was not simply secular or neutral. Secular is never neutral. But it was downright immoral. In the roman world they were given over to all sorts of immorality. These first generation Christians had not been raised Christians but had all been saved out of this corrupt situation.

In churches today we have a terrible track record. We have millions of people in America on church rolls that no one can find. Southern Baptists alone, out of 16,000,000 members have almost 4,000,000 they cannot find. They have dropped out of church and no one knows where they are at. So how could Paul be so sure that those believers in Philippi would really make it.

Well it didn't have to do with statistics or the great preaching that they had there. It didn't have to do with the excellent Sunday School in operation. All of those things are important but not guarantee success. It could be that today our failure has more to do with the failure of many people on church rolls to have ever experienced the grace of God in their lives than anything else.

Because as I will show from the Scriptures, real grace, God given grace never fails.

- I. Paul was confident
 - A. Because he had seen God working in these people's lives
 - 1. Paul had seen them turn from sin's control over their lives.
 - 2. Phil 3:17-21 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the

enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame — who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. NKJV

3. Paul had seen the change in them, the love and forgiveness they had for one another.
4. Phil 2:14-16 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. NKJV
5. He had seen their eagerness to bring others to Jesus to find forgiveness & redemption in Him.
6. Phil 1:3-6 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, NKJV
7. Phil 2:12-13 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. NKJV

B. Because he knew what God's plan for them was.

1. John 10:26 "But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.
2. John 6:35-40 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will

of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." NKJV

3. John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. NKJV
4. 1 Peter 1:3-5 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. NKJV

II. It was God's work that He had begun.

A. God is sovereign

1. Ps 135:6 6 Whatever the Lord pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places. NKJV
2. Acts 15:18 "Known to God from eternity are all His works. NKJV
3. Ps 33:8-11 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. 10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. 11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations. NKJV
4. Ps 115:3 3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. NKJV
5. Isa 46:10-11 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' 11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it. NKJV
6. Dan 4:35 35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?" NKJV

B. So if God is doing the work, He will complete it.

1. The conclusion then is that if God is not working in your life than you are not his.
2. Rom 8:9-11 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the

Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. NKJV

III. And He would perform it until completion.

- A. 1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- B. 1 John 3:7-11 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 **Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.** 10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. NKJV
- C. Heb 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. NKJV
- D. Eph 1:13-14 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. NKJV