

A Sure Guarantee

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Date: 15 December 2019

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[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. opportunity to go to college. There was a man that he was working for who had a son that was an alcoholic and wanted his son to go to college. His son did not go, and he took Dr. McGee under, took Vernon McGee under his wing at that time and was paying for his first year of college.

[2 : 10] And as he was going through college, he said he wasn't sure how long it would last. And so he was always concerned about making it from one semester to the next. Now this was during the, his senior year in college was during the worst time of the Great Depression. It was in the late 20s. And when he graduated, he said he went back to his dorm room, still in his cap and gown, and sat down on his bed completely dejected. His dorm mate was there, his roommate was there, and he said, what in the world happened? You look like someone died. And Vernon said to him, he said, well it might as well be, because I believe that God has called me into the ministry, and it's during the Depression, and I have no money, and there's no way that I can go to seminary. And he said it was while he was still saying that, that their phone rang. And it was one of the ladies from the church where he taught a, an intermediate boy's Sunday school class. And he always thought that these two ladies, they were sisters who lived together. When he was corralling his intermediate boys onto the pew, they sat behind him, and he always thought they were disapproving. But they asked if he could come over to their home.

And so he said he did later that day. And he said the, the first widow handed him an envelope, and she said this was in honor of her late husband. Her sister did the same, handed him an envelope, and said it was in honor of her late husband. Well, he said that he stayed, he left as soon as it was fashionable to do so. And he said he went around the corner and opened the first envelope, and in there was a check for \$250. He opened the second envelope, and in the second envelope was a check for \$250.

He said, now, I had \$500 in my hand, and you would have to know what \$500 meant during the Great Depression.

He said, I felt like a millionaire. And he said later that evening, his Sunday school class had held a going away fellowship for him. And he said, when it was over, they handed him a check for \$100.

He said, I had \$700. I had \$600 in my hand. He said, I was able to go on that \$600 to my first year of seminary. And he said, I still wasn't sure if God would allow me to make it through.

[5 : 24] But he said, at that Sunday school banquet, he said, someone gave me the verse, 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.

Dr. McGee said, that became my life verse. And he said, I depended upon it all through the rest of my life up until this time. Now, let's consider this verse this morning. I trust that you have received your today's part of Philippians Journal. If you haven't, raise your hand, and one of our young men will get you your notes this morning. But as we continue, verse number six of Philippians chapter number one, we just read, being confident, Paul writes, of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now, the word here, being confident, confident is one word, and it's causative, and really could be translated, since I am confident of this very thing. Paul was so confident that it led him to a conclusion. And we're going to talk about that conclusion for the next few moments this morning. And Paul knew what he was talking about.

This firm conviction was based on Paul's understanding of the faithfulness of God. So Paul was confident of this very thing. Now we turn our attention to the next pronoun.

Now, in your Bibles, the pronoun is probably capitalized. What is that pronoun? Being confident in this very thing that, those of you who know your English, he is capitalized for a reason. Because Paul is talking about God. The Greek word theos is not in Scripture. It is assumed.

So Paul says that he who has begun this good work in you would refer to none other than God himself. So Paul was confident that God had done something. And what has he begun? Verse number six, that he who has begun a what? Good work, a good work in you. Now, what had the Philippians done for the apostle Paul? Do you remember? They had they had sent through Epaphroditus a an offering, a monetary gift. And so Paul said, this has helped to further the work of the gospel.

[8 : 27] And it provided for him while he was incarcerated for sharing the gospel, most likely in Rome. And so Paul is potentially referring to the good work that God had begun in them in their offering.

But if we consider the context and if we consider the construction of the rest of this verse, it is most likely that the apostle Paul is referring in a wider context to the salvation that God had begun the moment the Philippian believers had trusted in Christ as their Savior.

So as we go on that assumption, and I believe it's borne out in Scripture, and most commentators will agree that Paul is talking about their salvation, the work of grace that God worked in their life, that when he he drew them, they believed and trusted on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, that they were redeemed, they were given a brand new life, and a new life in Christ, part of the body, part of the body of Christ and the family of God. So he says that God has begun this good work in you.

God had begun in them and they had trusted in Christ as their Savior. Now as we look at what's the first takeaway from this, well number one, salvation is God's work. The Philippian believers didn't wake up one day and said, I want to be saved. I want to be a part of God's family, so therefore I will try hard.

Or I will go and I will be baptized. Or I will turn over a new leaf, and I will be good and earn my way to heaven. That is not the way salvation works. Salvation is God's work. As we see in verse number six, who began the good work? God did. God began this work.

[10 : 31] The good work that God started is that work of grace in the reader's lives that began with their reception of the gospel. And we see in verse 13 of Philippians chapter number two, for it is God who works in you both to will and to do his good pleasure. So God's at work in our life.

God's at work in your life today. And he began that good work, if you've trusted Christ as your Savior, both to will, to choose to do his will, to choose to trust Christ, and also to do his good pleasure.

This expression refers to the creation he had begun in them, in the gospel, but also in the Philippians' eager participation in the gospel. They were sharing their faith. They had provided Paul with an offering, and the ministry that they were accomplishing with Paul was not the good work itself, but it was a clear evidence of their salvation. They were working out their salvation. They were growing in Christ, and they were getting involved in the gospel. Now, the Philippians didn't begin the work of salvation in their own lives, only to have God come along later and add a little bit to it.

That's not the way salvation works. God has provided salvation through whom? Through his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the work that he accomplished on the cross. And he enabled the Philippians to receive that salvation. So what was God's work in their salvation? First, the Bible says that God draws us in. He salts the oats, so to speak. We read in John chapter 6, verse 44, No one can come to me, Jesus is speaking, unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. So the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, helps us to realize our need for him.

And then God made the way for salvation in the atoning death of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15, verses 3 and 4 says, For I delivered to you, first of all, that which I also received, that Christ, and here's the gospel, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. So salvation is accomplished in the death of Jesus Christ, and it is also proven that it worked in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. So he died to prove that he was buried, to prove that he was dead, and he rose again to prove that he was alive.

[13 : 33] Then God regenerates us. He redeems us. He regenerates the believer to have a brand new life. 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse number 17 says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, that, by the way, is a favorite saying of the Apostle Paul. Do you remember the illustration from a couple of weeks ago? We are in Christ. Christ is in us. So he says, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation. Old things have passed away. What we were, our propensity, our sin nature, so to speak, our nature is still there, but all the handwriting against us on the cross that said we're guilty and we're destined for hell, all that's been done away with. It's been passed away. It's under the blood of Jesus Christ. And he says, all things, and the tense of this word here is, all things are becoming new. It's a present tense verb here.

So, old has passed away. There is tense. It happened and it's still true. And all things now, they're in the process of becoming new. We are being sanctified every single day. Then God, as we see, begins the work of sanctification in our life. First, positionally, immediately on our trust in Christ. We're made right with God and we're in Christ. So, positionally, we're good. But then experientially, meaning the experience that we have as we live through life, we're growing more like Jesus Christ every day. Or we should be. And so, that sanctification as well is progressive as we become more like Christ in our attitude and in our actions. Verse number, Romans 15, 16, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Paul is saying, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. And then ultimately, glorification. Ephesians chapter 1, verses 11 through 14, summarizes the progression of God's work in our salvation. We read there, in Him also we've obtained an inheritance. This life is not all there is. Isn't that awesome? Now, for some of us who are so tied to this life and we think that this life is great, all our cool stuff and things, and our families and all these are great.

But everything that we see today, the Bible says, will melt away. This earth as we know it is going to be no more. But everything that we have done for Christ in this life will last, we will be ultimately glorified, and we'll ultimately receive the complete, the consummation of our salvation. We're going to be ushered from this life into the presence of God, and then we will know for the first time what it's like to live a sinless life. We'll know first what it's like to live in a glorified body that is not subject to death, or illness, or aches, and pains, and arthritis, and all the things that go along with that. We've obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. Verse 13, in whom you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, having believed, you were then sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Verse 14, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory. And this goes along with Philippians chapter 1 verse 6, that God who began the good work in you of salvation will continue to perform it until Jesus Christ comes back for His own. So we are bought with a price, we're sealed by the Holy Spirit, and it's the guarantee that God is going to come back, or that Jesus is going to come back and receive us into His presence. Isn't that great news? It ought to be, because there are so many that are living each day of their life in dread, just like Dr. McGee was. I don't know if God is going to provide for me tomorrow.

I'm just not sure. And was living in doubt day in and day out. There's so many people who live in doubt, and there's no reason for that, because God has done in us, He started the work of salvation.

And so God begins, God's work begins before our salvation in drawing us, and works all the way to our ultimate glorification in His presence in eternity. And the work performed in verse 6 of chapter number 1 means to carry through, and He will consummate what He began. If you look in verse number 6, you see that He has begun the good work, and He will complete the good work. By the way, those two words are technical terms that were used in the sacrifices. And the way sacrifices were accomplished and completed, they were very ritualistic. God had prescribed exactly the way they were to be performed. And so they had a definite beginning. The sacrifice had a definite point in which the sacrifice began, and there was a definite point in which the sacrifice was completed. If any of those steps were missed, it wouldn't be completed. So the term perform, or the term begun, and the term complete are those two technical terms for the sacrifice. So God began the work, and He completed the work, or He will complete the work when we are with Him in heaven. So we'll get back to this in a moment, but let's go on. So secondly, what we see, not only is salvation God's work, salvation is a good work.

[20 : 14] Salvation, would you not agree that your salvation is probably the best? Well, no, let me rephrase, let me back up. Wouldn't you say, those of you who know Jesus Christ as your Savior, that your salvation is the very best thing that has ever happened for you in your entire life?

Amen. Because if we did everything else right, if that were humanly possible, apart from trusting Christ as our Savior, it would all be in vain. And it would all be worthless, as the Apostle Paul says.

So our salvation is a good work. We see in verse number 6, being confident, Paul says, of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work. Salvation lifts the sinner from eternal condemnation and ruin and makes that person a part of God's family and a partaker of God's eternal glory.

That's the awesomeness of salvation. Who would dare say that's not a good thing? Our salvation is the very best thing that could happen to us. And I think all of us could think of awesome things that have happened in our life. We can all think of experiences that were great. We have one of our grandchildren that says, this is the best day of my life. And you know what? A lot of us sometimes, you know, this is the best day of my life. And then two weeks from now, this is the best day of my life.

And it may be true if we don't consider our salvation. The moment we trust Christ is the very best day of our life. And you know, not everyone's affected as emotionally as others. Some people are elated, and they cry, and they're just, oh, it's just a super awesome emotional time. Others are more cerebral. They say, you know what? I made the decision, and now I know I'm sure, and I'm part of God's family, and yay. And then go on and grow and live a very, very effective Christian life.

[22 : 29] We're all made differently. But it is, I believe, the best day of our life. They all pale in comparison to that day. Let's take a look at, and the writer of Hebrews, I believe, would agree. How shall we escape if we neglect so what? So great a salvation. So we're not off base on saying that salvation is the greatest thing. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation by which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed to us, confirmed to us by those who heard him. Yes, it's a great salvation. And I love this quote that I read earlier this week, and this was the quote that I read. Salvation is simple enough for a child to understand, but it's also so profound that we could never plumb its depths. Salvation is so simple a child can understand it. A four-year-old can understand it and accept Christ. But it's so profound that you and I and the best minds on earth that has ever lived could never get to the bottom of fully understanding how salvation works. It's impossible. And so that is the greatness of our salvation. How true. And then thirdly, not only is salvation God's work, and salvation is a good work that we see in verse number six, but salvation is also a sure work. Salvation is also sure. The Apostle Paul started verse six, by saying, being confident, being assured of this very thing. That God, that he who has begun a good work in you, will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. We see that in verse number six. As we mentioned earlier,

God will carry through what he's begun in our lives, and he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now, typically, the phraseology in the New Testament is normally the day of the Lord.

And we know when that phraseology occurs, it's referring to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, at what we believe, and we call the rapture, when Jesus, in Thessalonians, when he says that he will come for those who are dead in Christ first, then we who remain alive and remain shall be caught up together, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And then that will usher in a time of great tribulation. And at the end of that time, the Lord Jesus Christ will come back, set foot on earth, set his rule and reign on earth, thousand years, and then a great battle, and then we will be ushered into the final state, into eternity.

But that is not the term that Paul used. Paul said the day of Jesus Christ. And most commentators agree, many commentators agree, and I tend to follow this line of reasoning, based on the context, is that Paul was referring to, because when will your and my, in this age of grace, when will our salvation be completed, consummated?

[26 : 18] When we, when we get up to be with the Lord. And when will that be? We won't have to wait till the second coming of Christ, after the tribulation.

No, we believe that the Bible teaches that we will be caught up together with the Lord in the air, so Jesus Christ, at that coming, that we believe is what he's referring to, the day of Jesus Christ, rather than the day of the Lord, the second coming.

I know we're getting a little deep here, but it makes a difference, and I believe it's important. So, we're looking at the day when we will be ushered into the presence of God, and that's when we will be able to enjoy the full benefits of our salvation, and our salvation will be completed.

If you think about it this way, as followers of Christ, every single day, we live between the tension of the already and the not yet.

Think about it this way. What are we already? We are already redeemed. We are already part of the body of Christ.

[27 : 30] Christ. And we are already positionally right with God. We are already citizens of heaven. And we're living in the tension of the not yet.

What is the not yet? The not yet is, we're not living in that eternal city yet. We're not yet, we have not yet experienced the complete separation of sin from our lives, which will happen when we're glorified.

And so, we're living in that constant tension of the already and the not yet. And so, this is what Paul's talking about, I believe, in verse number six. The span of time, God began the work when they were saved in their life internally, externally during their sanctification and internally.

But ultimately, it will be completed when we get up to be with the Lord in heaven. So, we're not living in that day of the Lord. We're living in the day of Jesus Christ.

But until then, we can count on God to complete what He has started. Now, let me ask, is this practical for us?

[28 : 48] It is. Because if we're wondering every single day, am I saved today? Did I do something, think something, say something?

Did I forget something? That really put God off. And so, God said, you know what? I'm done with you. Well, think about it this way.

When everyone is ushered into heaven, ultimately, who will ultimately be there, I don't believe God, based on what we know about Scripture, I don't believe God will say, Well, look at all this sea of the redeemed.

Isn't it great? 80% of the saved made it up here. I consider that a success. I don't think God will say that.

Why? Because of the verses we just read. We were sealed until when? To the day of redemption. And it was, now, some companies give a guarantee.

[29 : 56] They can go out of business. Then what happens? You're stuck with whatever you have. Broken. There are some companies who will do everything they can not to make good their guarantee.

They'll say, well, you know what? You misused it. And if you read the fine print, God doesn't work that way. And so, everyone who's trusted Christ as their Savior, the Bible teaches, we're secure, we're safe, until the day of redemption.

And so, God, don't worry. We don't have to live in fear every day. It's just like, we do not have to live in fear, wondering, well, am I still in mom and dad's family?

Or, with your spouse? You know, are we still married? Well, did you do anything to end it? If not, then, and there's a difference between marriage on earth and our marriage, ultimately, with Jesus Christ, it is a covenant and it is unbreakable.

And so, therefore, we are sure. We're sure of our salvation. Now, that brings us back to Dr. McGee. You're wondering, okay, where did this all end up?

[31 : 12] Well, let me read his own words. He says, you see, I went through college, but I didn't enjoy it as I should have. I never had joy because I was always afraid I couldn't go on.

I just didn't believe God would see me through. So many times, we Christians act like unbelievers. In fact, we live and act like practical atheists.

I've used that phrase before. We live and act like practical atheists. He said, the graduation was a happy experience for my classmates. I could see those rich kids being hugged by their parents.

No one was there to throw their arms around me, but it wouldn't have made any difference if there had been a whole delegation of well-wishers because I thought I was through.

I felt called to the ministry, but there was no possible way for me to go on to seminary. However, I had a wonderful Heavenly Father who, through Philippians 1-6, put his arms around me and said, I will see you through.

[32 : 23] Isn't that an awesome down-to-earth story? Dr. McGee did, in fact, go to seminary, got his Bachelor's of Theology, then went on to Dallas Theological Seminary, got his Master's in Theology, and continued at Dallas Theological Seminary, and got his Doctorate of Theology.

So we've known him as Dr. J. Vernon McGee and for many, many years taught on his through the Bible. And every five years he would have taught through the entire Word of God in five years.

made possible because God had called him into the ministry and God doesn't call us and not equip us and not enable us to follow through on what he's called.

So, God began the good work. God will continue to work on it and ultimately complete it. So, in conclusion, is God drawing you to himself today.

If you've never yet trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior and you realize that not everything is right in your life and you're not sure if your sins are forgiven, well, trust what Jesus did on the cross not only to forgive your sin but to redeem you and make you a part of his family.

[33 : 55] Secondly, are you living every day assured of your salvation? If not, make sure your salvation. Make sure that you're trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ alone on the cross of Calvary, not your good works, not anything else that God could add or that you could add to your own life.

Trust in him completely. Then simply rest on his finished work and his promise that he's sealed you and he will come back for you. And then thirdly, because sanctification is part of this.

Are you growing in Christ as God continues to perform his work, his good work in your life? I trust that he is and I trust that Philippians chapter 1 verse 6 can mean something special to you.

Now it was Dr. McGee's life verse and if you've never heard of that term before, well, it's nothing magical. It's not a talisman. It's not anything that other than there's a verse in the Bible that means something special to you and it's something that throughout your life you go back to and it provides you strength and encouragement and it's a verse that you base your life upon.

That's all that a life verse is. I have spent some time in my life wondering, well, what's my life verse? I think I've had a few at different periods in my life.

[35 : 26] I would probably say that I've never really had what I consider a life verse but there are a few that mean something special and I always go back to but this is a good one.

Let's come back to it. God will continue to work in your life until we get to heaven. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you and we're so grateful for the good work that you began in our lives and that you will continue to work in our lives and that you will consummate it when we get to be in heaven with you that it will be completed.

We thank you Heavenly Father that you do not give up on us. We thank you that no matter what we do or say or forget we're still part of your family if we've trusted Christ as our Savior and you will continue to lead us guide us direct us discipline us when necessary.

We thank you Father for your unfailing love your mercy and your grace be with us as we go throughout the rest of this day. We pray in Jesus name and for his sake Amen.