

Still in Process

November 16, 2025

Pastor Gilbert Silva

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

Have you ever tried to assemble a piece of furniture that looked amazing on the box—clean, stylish, perfect? But when you start putting it together, there are screws everywhere, extra pieces you're not sure about, and someone walks by and asks:

"Is it supposed to look like that?" And all you can say is, **"Not yet... it's still in process."**

That's exactly what Paul is saying in Philippians 1:6.

Your life may not look like the picture on the box yet, but nothing is wrong with you, you're just not fully assembled.

God is not finished with us. Like Nicodemus, Peter, Paul, Mary, Martha and so many others in the scriptures, we are in process, being shaped, refined, and transformed into the image of Christ step by step, day by day. None of the men or women in the bible that we admire were perfected in a moment. They, like us, had to walk through the ongoing journey of growth and spiritual formation.

This why Paul prays the way he does for the believers in Philippi.

Philippians 1:9-11 (NLT) I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. ¹⁰ For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return.¹¹ May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Did you notice the last part of the verse? The fruit (the evidence), of our salvation is not spiritual gifts, ministerial accomplishments, or material success. Those things have their place, but they are not the measure of spiritual maturity.

According to Paul real fruit is righteous character produced by Jesus Christ. It is the life of Jesus formed within us.

Philippians 2:3-5 (NLT) Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. ⁵ You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Gifts' may impress others, accomplishments may build platforms, success may draw attention, but only Christlike character proves that the work of God is truly taking root within us.

We need to take our eyes off ourselves and fix them on the only One who can finish the work He started in us.

Our growth doesn't depend on our strength, our perfection, or our performance it depends on His faithfulness. When we learn to turn to Him, trust Him, and follow His leading, we can rest in His grace. He will supply what we lack, guide us when we're uncertain, and carry us through every season until we reach the end of our race.

This is the point in Paul's declaration in verse six. In this verse he makes three things clear:

1. God starts the work

Although they had responded to the message about Jesus it was God who God began the work, realizing by the power of the Holy Spirit the new work in them, initiating, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a new life and a new nature.

Titus 3:4-5 (NLT) But, When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, ⁵ he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.

Their salvation did not start with their own effort or desire; it started with God's grace awakening their hearts.

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

The word "*began*" is important. It tells us that the transformation into Christlikeness, in how they lived, loved, thought, and related, was not completed the moment they believed.

Yes, we become a *new creation* in nature the instant we were born again, but the *development* of that new nature unfolds over time.

There was still much to learn, much to unlearn, and much to grow into as the Holy Spirit shaped us increasingly into the character of Jesus. Our faith journey didn't end at salvation; it started there.

2. God continues the work

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work...

God isn't inactive in our lives. He didn't begin the work in us only to step back and leave us to figure out things on our own. Our growth in Christ isn't the result of human will-power, self-discipline and effort.

This was the very issue that troubled Paul about the believers in Galatia. They had started strong in their faith, sensitive, dependent, and responsive to the Holy Spirit.

But somewhere along the way, they drifted into the trap of self-reliance, believing they could reach spiritual maturity through their own effort or religious performance.

Galatians 3:3 (NLT) How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?

God places His Spirit within us not as a distant observer but as an active companion. He walks with us, teaches us, convicts us, guides us and empowers us to live in a way that reflects Christ.

Our role is simple, yet essential: to respond. To respond with obedience to His teaching. To respond with humility to His correction. To respond with trust to His direction.

The question isn't "Are you changing?" but rather, "Are you listening and obeying?" Every step of obedience brings change. As we respond to the Holy Spirit's voice, transformation becomes the natural outcome.

As we listen, learn, and follow, the life of Christ becomes increasingly visible in the way we think, speak, and love.

Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT) Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, **obeying God** with deep reverence and fear. ¹³ For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Paul reminds the believers that obedience, choosing to live and love like Jesus, is the visible evidence of salvation at work in their lives. But notice what he emphasizes in verse 13: it is God who is working in you. He is the One giving you both the *desire* and the *power* to live a holy life.

Why do you think that when you gave your life to Christ, something suddenly shifted inside you? Why did the desire to live in a way that honors Him become so strong? And why do the selfish or sinful things you used to do without a second thought now trouble your heart and stir conviction?

It's because you are not who you used to be, and you are not walking this journey alone. Someone greater than you has taken up residence within you. He is actively shaping your desires, confronting what doesn't reflect Christ, and leading you into a new way of living.

That Someone is the Holy Spirit.

Conviction is not condemnation; it is an invitation. It is the Holy Spirit drawing us back to the Father, back to grace, back to transformation.

He lives in us, guides us, convicts us, strengthens us, and continually draws us toward Christlikeness. The change we feel, the new desires, new convictions, new sensitivities, is evidence of His presence and His transforming work in our life.

3. God Will Finish What He Started

Paul concludes the verse with a powerful promise: God will continue His work "until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns."

This means our transformation is not random, incomplete, or uncertain. God has a finish line in mind, and He is committed to bringing us all the way to maturity in Christ.

In this life, we will still wrestle with weakness, temptation, doubt, and imperfect moments, but our confidence is in God. He is the Master Craftsman who completes what He designs.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT) God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so

none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

This doesn't mean that we sit back and do nothing when it comes to transformation. Spiritual growth is not a passive experience.

While God is the One who finishes and perfects the work within us, He invites us to actively participate in the process.

We cooperate with His grace through prayer, obedience, surrender, and intentional steps of faith. God initiates the change, but we respond by aligning our lives with His Word and His Spirit.

Scripture is living and active because God Himself speaks through it. When we open the Bible, we aren't just reading words, we are being read, shaped, corrected, and strengthened by the Spirit.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT) All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (AMP) And we all, with unveiled face, continually seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are progressively being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory, which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit.

Romans 12:1-3 (NLT) Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NLT) And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into him and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Colossians 3:10 (NLT) Put on your new nature and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

As believers, we respond to His grace through obedience, prayer, and intentional engagement with Scripture. Our effort is never the source of our transformation, but it is the means through which God shapes us, matures us, and brings His work to completion.

Transformation takes time, but grace keeps working. The same God who began the process will complete it.