

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

God's Perfect Work

Lesson Three

Philippians

Rejoice In The Lord!

Lesson Goal: To demonstrate to students God's continued presence with believers.

Scriptures: Philippians 1:6; 2:12, 13

For Memory: "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."

Philippians 1:6b

God's Perfect Work

Have you ever had someone start a project with you then drop out? It is not only disappointing, but if they have the plans, are the only ones who know how it is done, and own all the materials, the project will die.

Take the case of Marty, for instance. Marty wanted to learn to speak Spanish. He had some neighbors who spoke only Spanish and he thought that it would help their relationship if he could talk to them. Randy not only knew Spanish, but he had some books that helped a lot when learning Spanish. Randy offered to teach Marty. Marty was a fast learner and they got a good start. Marty learned enough words to tell his neighbors that he was learning Spanish. They smiled and in the next few days they tried asking him questions which he really didn't understand. Randy got busy with other things and didn't have time to continue the lessons. Finally, he told Marty that he could no longer help him...to just take the books and learn for himself. Marty was very disappointed and his neighbors didn't like the idea that he had promised what he couldn't do all by himself.**

When Paul wrote the people of the church at Philippi, he said very early in his letter that he was sure that God's "good work" was not going to disappoint them.* Now, one could assume that Paul was talking about the good work that the church was doing in supporting Paul, in growing strong as a church, and in giving to help those in need. That was certainly good work inspired by God.

However, Paul is not talking about that. He is talking about their salvation. Acts, chapter sixteen, tells us that Paul and his companions showed several persons the way to salvation while they were in Philippi. It is obvious that many more had joined them in following Paul's wise counsel to the Philippian jail warden. That warden had asked Paul what he had to do to be saved. Paul responded, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."

That was the beginning. God began working in them as soon as they prayed the simple prayer of belief. But, according to Paul, God wasn't through. The work of their salvation was a continuing work. It is both completed and in the process.

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It is completed because once they believed in Jesus as Savior and asked Him to be the Lord of their life, they were saved. However, the new life they were given, which no one could take away from them, was also only beginning.

When we are saved, God's Holy Spirit comes to us and assures us that we are His children. He also helps us understand who Jesus is and what He is like so that we can pattern our lives after Him. And the Holy Spirit let's us know when we are doing things that are wrong. He helps us better understand what the Bible says and how to live according to what it says.

A little later in Philippians 2:12, Paul tells the Philippians, and us, that we are to continue to work out our own salvation. He assures us that what is really happening is that God is working it out as we make ourselves available to Him.

So, Paul begins his letter to these folks with a prayer of thanksgiving for his friends in Philippi. He wants them to know that he is observing, even from a long way off, that they are allowing God to help them in their Christian growth. He is assuring them that God's Holy Spirit is going to keep doing that until Jesus comes back again. God's Holy Spirit is not like Randy in our story. He will always be with us and will never give up.

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

**Stories in these lessons are original with the author. The teacher should feel free to enlarge or change the story to be more appropriate to his or her purposes.



Teaching Tips:

1. You may want to substitute a story from your own life that illustrates God's partnership in sanctification...growing as a Christian.
2. It will be tempting to spend too much time in this lesson on Christian growth. Save that for later.
3. Songs that emphasize God's presence in our lives and our commitment to Him to grow in our faith commitment will be appropriate.
4. Pray with your students, thanking God for His partnership in our Christian growth.
5. Refer back to the last lesson on partnership and talk about what that means when the partnership is with God who is greater than anyone or anything.
6. God is the very best partner we could have in any task. We should look at Christian growth as a life-long partnership with God...who does "perfect work."

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Student Worksheet

For Memory: “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.”
Philippians 1:6b

God’s Perfect Work

=When Paul wrote the people of the _____ at Philippi, he said very early in his letter that he was sure that God’s _____ was not going to disappoint them.

=Paul and his companions showed several persons the way to _____ while they were in _____.

=The Philippian jail _____ had asked Paul what he had to do to be _____.

Paul responded, “_____ in the Lord Jesus, and you will be _____...”

=The work of _____ is a continuing work, both completed and in process.

=When we are saved, God’s Holy Spirit _____ us that we are His children. He also helps us understand who _____ is and what He is like, so that we can pattern our _____ after Him. And, the Holy Spirit let’s us know when _____ are doing things that are _____. He helps us better understand what the _____ says and how to _____ according to what it says.

=God’s Holy Spirit will _____ be with us and will never _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.