

LIFE Group Homework

September 18, 2011

Sermon Series: "What's So Great About the Gospel?"

"God's Great Promise" (Week 1 of 3)

Philippians 1:3-6

Getting Started

1. What point from Sunday's message stood out to you most and why?

2. Most of us have started some venture with great enthusiasm and intentions but, for whatever reason, not seen it through.
 - a. If this is true for you or someone you know, what was that endeavor? What was the intended goal?

 - b. What were your or this other person's original intentions in pursuing this endeavor? Did God play a role in this?

 - c. What led to becoming sidetracked?

 - d. Can you identify any consequences to becoming sidetracked?

 - e. "If God started it, God will complete it."
What is your initial reaction to this statement?

3. In baseball, a complete game refers to those very rare times when the same pitcher throws the entire game, from the first pitch to the last. What insights can be gained by comparing God's nature and activity to a pitcher who throws consecutive complete games?

Into the Bible

The Bible is filled with accounts depicting God as the sovereign creator and finisher of his good designs. Today we consider one such example provided by the account of Peter.

Read Matthew 16:18; 26:69-70; and John 21:15.

Matt. 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (NIV)

Matt. 26:69-70 Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said. ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said. (NIV)

John 21:15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." (NIV)

These passages depict a broad view of Peter's experience of following Christ's calling on his life. In the first passage, Christ set Peter apart for ministry and the vital role he would play in the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. This remarkable scene is followed quickly by Peter's apparent rejection of both his calling and his relationship with Jesus Christ. Later, John, another of the twelve disciples, recorded a beautiful scene in which the Lord faithfully and intentionally sought out Peter to restore him, in spite of Peter's human failings.

4. The truths in these verses closely parallel those found in this week's sermon text, Philippians 1:3-6. The main points from the sermon are given below. Note instances when these same truths are found in the life of Peter.
 - God is at work – He is sovereign

 - God is still working – We are a work in progress

 - The works God starts in us are good – These works please him

 - Whatever good works God starts in us, he will complete them – We are his greatest creation.

5. *Read Isaiah 40:31* - But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (NIV)
- a. Just like Peter, we all fail or get sidetracked from time to time. Have you ever sensed the Lord restoring you when you have stumbled along the path? How has he done this?

 - b. Has he strengthened you, or is he strengthening you, to complete a venture to which you were called? In what ways has he provided renewal?

Digging Deeper

6. If someone asked you to summarize what makes the message of Christianity such good news, what would you say? Would you choose some of the same points found in this week's sermon or would you offer other thoughts?
7. Today we explored the biblical truth that, in God's hands, we are works in progress – and that we can trust God to finish what he starts in us. One implication of this truth is our need for patience in the process.
- a. How might you be finding it difficult to be patient as God works in some unfinished area of your life right now?

 - b. Thinking about how God is similar to the pitcher who throws consecutive complete games, how could this comparison offer comfort to your current situation?

Group Prayer

Please use this space for note taking during the sermon. The following pages will be discussed at your next LIFE Group gathering.

What's So Great About The Gospel? Series (1 of 3)
Philippians 1:3-6

Northwest Baptist Church
September 18, 2011

God's Great Promise *Philippians 1:3-6*