Remnant Life Church

November 15, 2026

God Is Not Finished With Me Yet

Philippians 1:4-6

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 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. Phil 1:4-6

<u>I want you to leave here this morning encouraged!</u>

- But to be encouraged is not always easy
- There are countless numbers of people living their lives today with heads hanging down and a sour look on their face
    - And, if you are looking at the circumstances of life through the eyes of the world, that is understandable
    - We seem to be accelerating faster and faster into a society and culture without behavioral parameters, without consequences, and one that is more and more blurring the moral lines of right and wrong
    - And no one is exempt from the effects of this continuing breakdown…not even Christians
- But should we not be different than those living their lives devoid of the presence of the Holy Spirit?
    - Must we slog our way through the muck and mire?
    - Is there not another route for us to take?
    - A private walkway reserved only for those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior?
- The answer to that is...NO there is not
    - Wait, you mean I have to go through the daily grind just like those who don't know the Lord?
        - That's exactly what I mean
        - It is not news to any of you that we are not exempt from the trials, the storms, the heartache and evil we witness every day
        - James 1:2-3 – *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*

And I have no doubt that there are likely some of you here this morning who are struggling

- Maybe you have had your head down and a sad or sour look on your face for a while now
- And even if that is not what people see on the outside, you still feel that way inside

Well, this morning I want to encourage every believer within the sound of my voice with this…

- …your present condition does not determine your final destination
    - And the reason for that is the focus of our time together this morning…
        - God is still working on you, working in you, and working through you
        - The potter is still molding the clay

        - We should all have a tee shirt that reads, 'Pardon my dust, I'm still under construction!'
    - I want to encourage somebody here this morning who is walking through a time intense enough to make you want to give up, stop fighting, and just take the easiest solution available to solve your problem
        - Even though it is likely not the right one
        - Not the godly one
        - Or the one that follows His will for your life
    - And for each of us who know clearly what that is like, or are in the midst of that time right now with that voice inside your head telling you that you will never get it right and will never get better than what you have always have been…
        - You need to speak 7 words and use them whenever the enemy starts lying to you…
        - *God is not finished with me yet!*
            - You may not be everything you ought to be, but praise God you am not who you used to be, and through God's grace you are not yet who you are going to be.
            - We can say and believe together that I still have growing to do, I still have things to learn
            - The potter is still molding the clay of your life
            - There are attitudes God is working on within you, habits that God is helping you to overcome, wounds that He is still healing, and areas of your life that you need to surrender more completely
        - And so, in recognizing that about your life, there are important things that we must all keep in mind and remind ourselves of

1. <u>Because there is still work God needs to do on you does not mean that He will abandon you</u>
    a. You may be an ongoing work of progress, but you are still and always in the hands of the Master
    b. Because in those places of weakness where you have struggled satan will lie to you attempting to keep you in a state of hopeless and helplessness
        i. The enemy will try to convince you that you should judge your entire life's story on one bad chapter
        ii. He wants you to take one or two failures and turn that into your entire identity
        iii. He wants you to see one season of weakness as the reason why God can never use you again
    c. All of these are lies
        i. You cannot judge a finished product while the Master is molding the clay

There are several examples of those in the Bible who felt abandoned by God while they were being shaped by God's hand

    d. Elijah went through an intense time of feeling abandoned until God showed up personally to correct his wrong thinking (I Kings 19:10-18)
    e. Jonah felt abandoned by God when he finally got around to going to Nineveh

i. He pouted, got depressed and even wanted to die when God did not destroy the city (Jonah 4)
    1. God had to correct his wrong thinking too because it was never God's intent to destroy them
    2. But that was seen by Jonah as God deserting him

f. Even Moses must have certainly had moments when he felt abandoned by God as he led the people through the desert
    i. But God was always there
    ii. And the people were being molded and shaped
    iii. Just as He is always here for us and continuing to mold and shape our lives

g. None of these men was perfect, but God was not finished with them yet

2. <u>Paul words to the church in Philippi that we read earlier are words for us today</u>
    a. Let's look at that 6th verse again
        i. He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
    b. Look at 2 portions of that verse
        i. He who began a good work in you
            1. That good work in you is given through the grace of God
                a. Our salvation, anything good of who you are is a gift from God and not through your ability to make yourself righteous
                b. We are transformed by God's love through Jesus
            2. Paul emphasized that again in his letter to the church in Ephesus
                a. Eph 2:8-9 – *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.*
                b. The ongoing work in your life is not through your own efforts but by the grace of God
                c. And then the 2nd part of verse 6…
        ii. Will carry it on to completion
            1. God not only begins the work in you, He continues it to the conclusion of His will for your life
            2. However, you must never lose sight of the fact that this statement, while true, does not mean that every dream and desire you have will be given to you
                a. It does not mean that there will not be hardship
                b. Or that every earthly problem will disappear from your life
            3. In Philippi, the good work in this passage is regarding God's saving and transformative work in the lives of those believers
                a. They still lived under Roman law and oppression
                b. They still had to deal with the loveless guidance of many of their spiritual leaders

c. But God was going to continue to operate in their lives changing them from the inside in spite of what was happening on the outside

4. What God is carrying to completion in your life is His presence during the storms and trials to keep and sustain you
    a. It is His on-going work in your life to deal with the challenges of a world that is moving further and further away from Him
    b. Because while there are consequences to those actions of the world, that does not change what He is doing in and through you
5. Romans 8:29 – *For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son…*
    a. God's purpose in your life as His child is to conform you to the image of His Son
        i. Sometimes God works in your life by opening a door
        ii. Sometimes He is teaching you to wait at a closed door
        iii. Sometimes He delivers you from a difficult situation and at other times He develops your character by teaching you how to persevere faithfully
        iv. Many times it is not changing what is around you but changing what is within you
        v. Sometimes when you ask Him to change your situation, He starts by changing your attitudes
        vi. And there are times when you ask Him to remove your critics and the difficult people from our life and He starts by teaching you humility

Paul's words speak a truth that should encourage us everyday

- He will continue to work in you through to completion according to His perfect will for your life
- And knowing that means you are never done being refined and changed into His image, regardless of where you have come from
    - Your past may explain you, but it need not define you
    - And knowing that means you can have victory over one of the enemy's greatest weapons – condemnation
        - You see he takes your past and keeps replaying it over and over in your mind
        - He is always trying to remind you of things you said, things you did, people you hurt, and the opportunities you missed or wasted
        - And if you listen to that voice, you will soon become convinced that your mistakes, your past sins, your failures of yesterday mean you cannot live differently tomorrow in a way that brings glory to God

- But here is something I want each of you to take with you this morning…
  - Your past failure is only an event in your life; it does not need to become the title of your life story
  - Again, the Bible gives us many examples of those who were not bound to a single poor decision, a moment of weakness, or terrible moment to define their entire life

- Let's look at just one
  - Peter walked, talked, lived, laughed, and experienced 3½ years with Jesus in as personal and intimate way as you can
    - He was one of the inner circle of the 12
    - He witnessed things, along with James and John, that the others did not experience
  - Yet on the same night that Jesus was arrested Peter denied Him 3 times
    - A man who so boldly proclaimed His loyalty to Jesus in front of all the other disciples, when the moment came, he failed miserably
    - But that was not the end of Peter's story
      - Because we read in John 21 that after the resurrection Jesus met with Peter
      - And 3 times in that conversation, one for each of the denials, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him
      - Three times Peter answered yes and each time Jesus told him to feed His sheep
        - Jesus did not pretend that Peter had not failed in that past moment
        - He addressed each failure and then recommissioned him to serve and lead again
      - And then, in the 2nd chapter of Acts, it is Peter who stands and boldly proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost
        - What changed?
          - It was not denying Peter's past – that failure was real
          - But Jesus changed the nature of the man through His restorative love
        - And so, while Peter's failure was real, it was not final!
        - Your failures are real, but they too are not final!

But that is the great difference between condemnation and godly restoration and why we are not bound to our past sins when we repent and ask God for forgiveness

- Condemnation says you failed and now you are a failure
- But God's Word tells us in I John 1:9 that *if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*
- What should that look like with regard to what you have done?
  - If you have sinned and have failed – then repent
  - If you have hurt someone – take responsibility and ask them for forgiveness
  - If you have drifted away from God – return to Him and seek His presence

- God sees you as His child and with a love that forgives and calls you to Himself
    - We do not see ourselves that way
    - Others will likely not see you in that way when you have failed
    - But He does see you in a way that will continue His good work in your life in spite of what your past has been

Let me share with you a final illustration and then I am done:

There was an old church in a small country town that had a bell hanging in its steeple. For generations, that bell had been used to call people to worship. It rang when babies were dedicated, when couples were married, when families gathered to pray, and when the community came together to mourn their dead.

But one day a powerful storm came through the town. The wind howled, the rain poured, and when lightning struck the church steeple, the old bell was damaged. When the caretaker of the church went to examine the building the next day, it was discovered there was a crack that ran through the metal of the old bell. When the church tried to ring it, the sound was no longer clear and beautiful – it was dull and lifeless. Instead of the beautiful tone the people remembered, the bell now gave off a rough, broken sound. Some of the townspeople said the bell had served its time, was damaged beyond repair, and was no longer of use anymore. Others said it should just be taken down and replaced because nobody wants to hear a damaged bell.

After many years of deliberation, the church finally called a craftsman who specialized in metallurgy, specifically the restoration and repair of old bells. He climbed into the steeple, examined the damage, and carefully studied the metal. When he came back down, he told the people he believed it could be restored, though many remained skeptical. He carefully removed it from where it had hung for over 100 years and had it taken to his workshop. Finally, after many months, the day came when he returned the restored bell to the church. The people gathered outside as he supervised the rehanging of the bell in the steeple. Then…he pulled the rope. The beautiful gong of the bell once again rolled across the town. It rang through the streets, over the fields, and into the homes of people who had not heard that bell sound clearly in many years. An elderly woman stood on her porch with tears running down her face. She said, “I thought I would never hear that old bell again.” A young man standing nearby asked, “How did the craftsman bring it back so clearly?” The elderly woman smiled and said, “Because he could see what that bell could become once more, even when the rest of us could only see the damage and believed it would never ring again.”

God sees you in the same way that craftsman saw the bell

- You may be damaged right now, but He knows what and who you can be restored to again
- The bell of your life may be not as clear and distinct as it once was, but He still hears how you should sound
- You may think you no longer have a useful purpose, but God’s plans for your life are always ready to be realized