

CONVERSATION GUIDE:

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- What's something you are absolutely certain about in your life, and why?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How does Paul's certainty about God's completing work challenge or encourage you in your faith journey?
- What do you think of the phrase, "Christianity is for people who stink at Christianity?" How does this perspective change your view of faith and growth?
- What's the difference between opinions and convictions in your spiritual life?
- How does understanding God's completing work in us affect how we view our failures and struggles?

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

- Reflect on areas where you're trying to earn God's approval rather than rest in His grace.
- Share with someone the hope of God's faithful work in their life.

GROUP FOCUS:

- Thank God for His faithful work in our lives.
- Share times when you have tried to earn God's grace.
- Request help from others (if needed) to rest in God's faithful promise to complete what He has begun.



WEEK 5 FAITHFUL TO COMPLETE IT (PHILIPPIANS 1:6)

TODAY'S VERSES:

Philippians 1:6 Exodus 21:24-26
Philippians 1:3-6 Exodus 34
Ephesians 2:8

FEBRUARY 9, 2025

WEEK 5 FAITHFUL TO COMPLETE IT

Paul has a profound confidence in God's continuing work in believers' lives. God's grace isn't just for salvation's beginning, but it carries through to completion. Paul's certainty rests not in human effort, but in God's faithful character and promises. As one writer says, *"Imperfect people who dare to believe in the grace and mercy of God are the very ones who have the credibility to say these things to others."*

The foundation of our certainty (*"I am sure of this"*). Convictions are deeply felt certainties; convictions are where we plant our flag and will die. Opinions collapse under pressure, where as convictions get us through the pressure. God's grace in our lives must go down to a conviction level, because that is where we need God's grace. When we understand the Gospel, we have a deep-seeded joy. To our own amazement, we start becoming sure, confident, that evil and darkness aren't the end of all things. Christianity creates in us, by God's grace, a new conviction that evil is not primary. Ray Ortlund says that when we understand our reality in Christ we want to *"become satisfied and...sink our roots down in the confidence that beauty and truth are primary, original, and enduring."*

Life for Paul was hard. This is why the book of Philippians will talk about some of that church's problems, and yet, he still tells them their future is glorious and secure. We have hope because Christ is *for us*. What matters is that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the grave, because once that domino falls, everything else begins to fall into place.

The nature of God's work (*"He who began a good work in you"*). God has a plan and His track record is 100% at fulfilling His plan. It started in eternity past, came to a head 2000 years ago when Jesus lived the perfect life we never lived, and then He died the atoning death in our place. Jesus is not merely a figure in the distant past – far from us. He, by His grace, moves His past accomplishments into us in our present reality. We who have trusted in Him are the early makings of His new world. With Christ, we are not on probation; we are on track for His complete grace. Every person who trusts Jesus is both flawed and miraculous right now – two realities simultaneously.

The promised completion (*"will bring it to completion"*). He will judge all evil forever and perfect all good forever. On that great and final day when you belong to Jesus, God will complete His work in you. All of the artifacts of human culture will ultimately glorify Him. Jesus doesn't despise our culture creating; He will perfect and redeem all human cultures. Our view of God is far too small, because He does not diminish us – He redeems us. Who God is, is far more important than our perceptions of our self. Who God is, in Christ, is more important than how we see ourselves. He redefines us according to who He is.

He chose us, the people who couldn't win and always lost and said, you are the ones I want.
